

WEEKLY REFLECTION

Most of us may quickly gloss over this week's passage of Luke 5:12-16: the story of Jesus healing a leprous man. We understand that the consequences of leprosy were undesirable, and by healing the man, Jesus must have freed him from a gruesome fate. Yet, have we grasped all that there is to grasp in this passage? Do we understand everything that Jesus is teaching and preaching through this act of healing?

As was briefly shared, leprosy brings great and terrible consequences: it disfigures one's appearance and causes them to lose certain body parts. It causes one to be cut off socially and spiritually as well. Lepers were driven away from their communities and made to live outside the city. They needed to warn people of their presence by shouting "Unclean! Unclean!" The leprous man may have had a family of his own—friends, siblings, a wife and children, or even elderly parents to take care of, but he would have been cut off from all of them. He would have been cut off from God as well, as he would not have been permitted near other people or the temple.

In just a few verses, Jesus has captured the heart of the gospel story. He who was clean willingly made Himself unclean. He risked infection and social and spiritual death, all to restore the leper to community, to a state of ritual cleanliness, to full health.

When we read through the healing of the leprous man, we might think "Why not me, God?" Self-pity can consume us. But let us choose to turn towards Him in full humility instead, trusting that He has plans for us all, and they are *good*. Let us remember that in the final state of things, we will be fully and wholly restored—but until then, we choose to trust whatever He has placed in front of us, *because* He cares about us so much more than we could ever know, understand, or believe.

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

We tend to gloss over Luke's account of Jesus' healing of the leprous man for various reasons. One of them is our lack of understanding towards all that he faced.

Based on what had been shared on Sunday, what do you think the leprous man lived through? What do you think his physical, social, and spiritual suffering was like? Can you think of any equivalent or similar examples in our modern-day context?

QUESTION TWO:

Continue to put yourself in the leper's shoes, and think about what he endured to fall before the feet of Jesus. What did the journey look like for him? What do you think it was like for him physically, socially, and mentally?

Do we approach Jesus in much the same way?

How do we approach Him in everyday life, and what are our attitudes towards Him?

QUESTION THREE:

As we reflect on this week's passage, what stood out to you about Jesus? What stood out to you about yourself?

It is also worth noting that Luke describes in the passage how Jesus often withdrew to desolate places and prayed (v.16). What does this tell you about Jesus, especially as the crowds started to gather around Him more and more?

In light of what you have shared, what has changed for you about your understanding of Jesus? How might that impact the way that you approach Him, and how you live your life as a Christ-follower?