Comparing Sin and Leprosy

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Matthew 8

1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

When you read the scriptures, you find out that Jesus Christ did many great things. Peter made the statement that He was a man that went about doing good. In His ministry here on earth, as He went from house, cities, towns, roads, and streets as He walked from place to place. Jesus Christ did many things. He healed people. He raised people from the dead. He touched the eyes that were blinded. He fed thousands and thousands of people with just a few loaves and a few fish. He did a lot of things that proved that He was the Son of Almighty God. The power that He possessed and the power that was within Him proved He was the Son of Almighty God. There was no doubt about that. There was no doubt when Jesus walked on the water. There was no doubt when He raised the dead. There was no doubt about the great things that He did. It proved that He was the Son of God. As we read the scriptures it will tell us and teach us that Jesus Christ would heal the sick and raise the dead. He would preach the gospel unto the poor and broken hearted. He would set the captives free and so forth. We know that when He was here He proved who He was. He proved that He was the Son of Almighty God.

The Bible says if you go back and read the last couple of verses of chapter 7 here. The Bible will tell you the people were astonished at what He was doing. They were absolutely astonished to see Jesus Christ heal people, to see people’s lives changed simply because of what this man was doing and the words that He was speaking. The reason being that they were so astonished is that they were so accustomed to religion that was dead. They were so accustomed to going to the temple and bringing a sacrifice. The sacrifice had to be killed. The blood had to be offered. They had to go through a whole bunch of rules and regulations and all kinds of rituals here. It was not changing anybody’s life. People believed what God had said in the Old Testament. They were doing those things the best they could, but it really was not changing their life because when they made their offerings and did the things that God had commanded; it did not change their heart not one bit. Every year they would have to go back and make an offering for the same sins over and over again. The guilt was still yet there. The shame was still yet there. However, when Jesus Christ came preaching and teaching then they saw something here totally.
different. They saw a man speak with power. They saw a man speak and lives would be changed. They saw a man that could lay His hands upon people they would be healed. They saw a man that could do awesome things and He was doing things that were changing people’s lives. They saw the authority and they saw the power in His life.

I’m glad we that are serving the God of heaven; we have a God that is the God of all power. He is the God that there are no limits to the power of Almighty God. It is great! Do you know what He can do? He empowers you and me to do those things that he has commissioned us to do. It is so great that He does that.

We are going to encounter here a fellow; Jesus is, in this story.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Jesus came down off of the mountain and He is met here by a fellow who is a leper. When you look at leprosy; it was a disease that was the most dreaded disease in the time that Jesus Christ was living upon planet earth. We hear the word “cancer” today. We hear those kinds of words today and the first thing we think about is that it is a terminal disease and that it is going to kill us. We know that is not always the case. We think that sometimes, however. When you got leprosy or you contracted leprosy; it was a disease that everybody hated. It was disease that was a dreadful disease. If you got leprosy the parts of your body that were affected would turn black and die. They would rot and fall off. Many times you would become paralyzed. Many times it would bring death to those who had leprosy. If you look at leprosy and the sin of leprosy and you read your Bible, you will find out that leprosy and sin itself are compared together. In other words, leprosy is compared to sin. Leprosy has a lot of the same characteristics as sin.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

The Bible says the leper came and worshiped Jesus. He fell down. He said, “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” Here comes the leper. If you were a leper, as I said earlier, there were a lot of things you could not do. If you will go back and read in the book of Leviticus; you will find out that leprosy was a disease that went below or deeper than just their skin. Go back into Leviticus 13, verse 3 and it will tell you. If you contracted leprosy, when the priest would look at you and the sores were under the skin then he would declare you as having leprosy.

I thought about today as I was reading that. Sin goes deeper than just our flesh. It goes deeper than just our skin. Sin today, goes right down where a man is put together at. Sin goes down into our souls. It is something that goes deeper than just this flesh. I know we may do a lot of different things today and people who are sinners today may do all kinds of sinful things. They may be very wicked people and may do all kinds of disgusting things. The problem is not with the flesh, or the skin; but the problem is with the heart. Their heart has never been made right. They have never been born again. It is a problem that goes deeper than just our flesh.
I would to God today that we would understand...it is great to clean up the outside; it is great to do things. It is great to quit our habits. However a man or woman that is a sinner tonight needs a heart change. The need their heart washed and made white by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It goes deeper than just the motions. It goes deeper than just the things that you are doing with this flesh. Sin controls this flesh. The motions of this flesh are controlled by the sins of our soul. The sins that are on the inside will dictate what we do with the motions of this flesh. It is deeper than that.

Sin is something that I want you to understand is just like leprosy. If you don’t deal with it then it will kill you. Sin will separate you and do a lot of things. I want you to understand tonight that sin is something that will destroy you and your life. You might say, “It won’t do that.” I promise you; sin will destroy your life. If we could uncap hell tonight and talk to a lot of people that is in hell tonight; do you know what they would tell you? They would tell us, “I should have repented a long time ago.” They would tell us tonight that sin destroyed my life. They would tell you that the life they lived was a sinful life. Whatever they may have been doing they would tell you that sin destroyed my life. The sad thing is that it is destroying families today. It is destroying mommies and daddies. There is not week that goes by that I don’t talk to someone that some person somewhere is hooked on drugs or alcohol. You might say surely that is not the case. It is the case. Do you know what we find out when we start talking to some people’s children? We will find out that they are hooked on drugs because daddy and mommy are hooked on drugs. They drink alcohol; kids do a lot of times because daddy and mommy drink alcohol. They scream. They holler. They cuss. They do all kinds of immoral things because daddy and mommy do immoral things.

Listen. Sin will destroy you. It will destroy your relationship with your husband or wife. It will destroy the relationship you have with your children. It will destroy you. You will end up in a lake of fire if you don’t repent. Sin will kill you.

People are taking and overdosing on drugs. They are dying every day. I did know but I don’t remember now, the people every day that were dying because they were overdosing on drugs. Some were middle aged. Some were old. Some were young. However, the numbers are staggering today. Do you know what sad thing is? There was a time that there was a big difference in people. There was a time that you did not have to deal with people who went to church. However, that is not the case anymore. Many people who sit in the pews, many people who go to church all across the country; they have problems. They have sin problems. The sin in their lives is going to kill them if they don’t get right with Almighty God. You might say “Preacher, you shouldn’t say that.” Do you know what one of my responsibilities is? One of my responsibilities is to let people know that you are not going to heaven living in sin. It does not matter what church you belong to. It does not matter what you have done in your past. If you are rebelling against Almighty God today, if you are living a life that is sinful, if you are living a life that is contrary to the will of God then you can’t go to heaven that way. You need to repent. Do you know why? I want to see you in heaven. When we walk down the streets of glory, when we walk and are able to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and then talk to David and ask David how he felt when he slung the stone and killed the giant; I want you to be there. When Lazarus was raised from the dead, we might be able to talk to him one day and ask him, “Lazarus, how did you feel when you woke up with the grave clothes all wrapped around you?” I want you to be there. We’ll ask Peter,
“How was it when you walked on water? How did you feel?” I want you to be there. The only way that you can be there is by being born again and allowing the Spirit of God to change your life. That is all that we need to get there. You can’t get there any other way.

Not only was leprosy an incurable disease, but it was also a disease that went deeper than our skin. Sin is a disease that goes deeper than our skin. Get that! Keep that in your mind.

If you read Leviticus 13:7, do you know what happens? It will tell you in verse 7 that not only is leprosy under the skin, but it will tell you in verse 7 that leprosy spreads. Leprosy was something that when you contracted leprosy; it was not just something that affected one part of the body and then it just stopped there and everything was just fine. You may have lost a hand or something but it did not affect the rest of the body. Instead, do you know what leprosy did? It continued to grow and after a while it just may start out with your hand, fingers or toe but after a while it would go up into your arms and into your feet and then it would be touching every part of a man’s body.

Sin is the same way. Sin is something that will spread. I have seen in people’s lives before. I have seen people start out doing small things that we may not think is real bad and they did not think is real bad. They did not repent of those things. God would check them. God would speak unto them. God would tell them that they needed to quit and not do those things anymore. However, they continued to do those things but also every time they would do something they would dive into it just a little deeper. If you talk to a drug addict today you will find out that when he started using drugs; he started out on something that may have just been alcohol or smoking cigarettes. He may have started smoking a little weed every now and then but he got up to the place where he is using hard stuff now. He is using meth or he is on some kind of a heroin. Sin will spread. If you don’t deal with your sin, it is just like leprosy after a while it will get control of the whole body. That is what the enemy of our soul wants to do. He just doesn’t want us to stop with us sinning just a little bit. He wants to control our whole lives. He wants to control my speech. He wants to control what I think about. He wants to control where I go. I promise you something. If you don’t deal with the sin in your life it will take you down a road that is a lot further than you thought you were going to go. It will take you places and make you do things that you said you would never do. Sin is something that will spread. Sin will engulf your body. It will take control of you if you don’t deal with it. It is deadly. It is dangerous. It is deeper than just skin. Also, when you read down in verse 44 and 45 of Leviticus 13; you will find out that leprosy made you unclean. It would defile people. If you had leprosy, there were some things you could not do. You had to walk around with black clothes on. You had to walk around with a black garment on. You had to dress and put something over your upper lip. When you met someone you had to declare and holler out. You were only allowed to get so close to someone. I believe it was six feet. It would defile you and make you dirty. Sin does that very thing.

We have a lot of folks and a lot of good people today that their lives have been tainted and touched by sin. They are living immoral lives. They are living lives that they never thought they would. Do you know what they have done? They have become defiled. They have become very unclean. Listen. We are living in a world today where we have all kinds of vile people seemingly on every corner. We have
people who are defiled and unclean. They are not satisfied with being unclean, so they are trying to make you unclean also. Sin is something that will never be satisfied in dwelling in just one individual but sin and uncleanness and those things that defiles wants to get a hold of God’s people and defile everybody they can. Sin will defile you. Sin will make you dirty. Sin will make you talk and use language that you should not use.

You might say “Preacher, you are meddling.” I’m not meddling. It is in the Bible. Read it! The Bible says that filthy communication corrupts good manners. That tells me that there is a speech that a Christian should have that we should not talk like the world. We should not be going around telling dirty jokes. We should not be standing and listening to jokes this world is telling. Sin will make us dirty. It will pollute our lives. It will soil us. It will get us in a mess. Sin will kill us if we don’t deal with it. I don’t care who you are. Everybody listening to me tonight—if you don’t deal with sin in your life it will pollute you. It will make you dirty. It will defile you. We need to get that! I think we do here. We had better get it.

The Bible says “…without holiness no man shall see God.” That is in the book also.

Not only is sin deeper than the skin, not only is leprosy deeper than the skin, not only does leprosy spread, not only does leprosy defile us; but leprosy also isolates us. It does that. Do you know what they did? When you contracted leprosy, they had leper camps. When you contracted leprosy and they priest told you that you had leprosy you were not allowed to go back home. You were not allowed to go back and see your husband, wife or children. You were not permitted to go to church or synagogue. Do you know why? It was because you were somebody who was highly contagious. This was a disease that was highly contagious. Do you know what you had to do? You had to go outside the camp, you had to go outside the city and you had to live outside there. Do you know why? They had to live outside because their lives were polluted. They were contagious. They had something that could kill other people. Therefore, they had to go outside. They were isolated from their families. They were isolated from coming to the house of God and worshiping. They could not do that any longer.

I thought about sin and how it does the same thing to people. It isolates people today. If you are going to sin, most people want to do it when nobody else can see them. If they are going to do some kind of a sin we might try to hide it. I can remember many years ago, a long time before I was saved; I used to do things that I did not want Deb to know. I would come in from doing things that I should not have been doing and I would say something to make her mad so that she would go off and leave me alone. Do you know what that is friend? Sin will separate you from your family. Sin will separate you from those that you love.

Today we have many dads and moms that have died and are in the grave today. They have left this world and do you know why? It is because of sin. They have been cut off and isolated from their families. Listen friend. Sin is a deadly thing. Sin will separate you from those you love. When you talk about somebody and when you sin against somebody you are separating yourself from the love of Almighty God. If you don’t love God’s people, then you can’t love the God of heaven. When you talk about God’s people and run your mouth against God’s people then you are speaking against the God of
heaven. God is going to do some separating and I promise you that you are not going to like it. You say, “Preacher, you should not talk like that.” It is high time that we understood and got our speech under control and understand that sin is separating us from the blessing of Almighty God. I don’t think there anything any greater that separates people from God than sinning with their mouth. In my understanding of things and how I look at things—sin is sin and we understand that—but the sins of the tongue are the sins that separates and isolates people more from the blessing of God than any other thing. It is true. Our tongue the Bible says it is a little member. It is not very big but it is full of deadly poison. It says that. We can use our tongue to be a blessing. We can use our tongue to praise the God of heaven. We can also use our tongue to distract and destroy and to tear down and that will isolate us from the blessings of Almighty God.

You can sit in these seats. You can send me nice cards. You can do all kinds of things. However, if we are allowing our tongue to be out of control then that is a sin that is separating us and isolating us from the God of heaven. Do you really think that a God that would demand the death of His Son on a cross that we could be saved—people get saved and we become the children of God, we become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ—do you think the God of heaven is going to sit by idle and allow someone to destroy His kids? Do you know what I would do? I would give my life for my kids. Also I would give my life for your kids. That is how much I love your kids. The God of heaven is the same way. He is not going to allow some bully to come by and mistreat His kids. We are His children. Saved people are His children. Not all church people are saved. Those that are saved, those that have been born again are His children. I promise you that the God of heaven is going to defend His children. Amen! Aren’t you glad for that? That should be an encouragement. Since God is going to take care of us and since God is not going to allow us to be bullied that should be an encouragement for us to live right. Shouldn’t it? It should be!

Not only is leprosy something that is under the skin, not only is it something that spreads, not only is it something that defiles and makes us unclean, not only is it something that isolates but the only thing that can be done with leprosy when you read verse 52 in Leviticus 13, your clothes, your skin that would fall off, the clothes that you had on, the bed that you slept on, the skin, your arms and limbs—the things that were falling off had to be burned. The only thing that was permitted to deal with leprosy and what leprosy touched had to be burnt.

I’m going to tell you something tonight. I hope you get this. Sin is like leprosy. When sin is not dealt with then only thing left for sin is the fire. There is no other place, folks. There is no purgatory. I want you to get that. There is no place where good sinners and bad sinners go. There are no compartments that if you had just been a small scoundrel and not a big scoundrel that you get to go here and you stay there for a while and your family pays so much money then they bring you out—that is a lie!

There are two ways sin can be dealt with. One is by repenting of your sins, asking Jesus Christ to forgive you of your sins, cleansing you of your sins, washing away your sins by His blood—that is one way. The other way is that there will be a day that you will stand before the God of heaven, the God that has spoken to you many times and has asked you so kindly and gently to “Just come and follow me. Just
come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden; I will give you rest. I will forgive you if you will just come to me.” He has done that with people time and time again.

Get this! There is coming a day and it may be today; you will receive your last invitation from Almighty God. There will be a day that He will speak to you and invite you to repent of your sins for the last time. When that is I don’t have any idea. It may be tonight or it may be 25 years from now. I don’t know. I will tell you this. There have been times in my ministry that I have stood in church on Sunday night and God has drawn people.

One service we were at on a Sunday night; and God spoke unto a man that was not very old. He stood and he cried. The tears ran down his face. He stood there but would not come. God spoke. God called. I can still yet see him tonight just as plain as anything holding to the seat with the tears running down his face but he would not come.

The thing is that God is not going to make you come. God is going to ask you come. God is going to draw you to come. God is going to speak to your heart gently and kindly. However, God is not going to make you come.

There is no doubt in my mind that fellow had all kinds of plans. He had told some other people that he planned on getting saved, but before we got back to church on Wednesday, this young man was in eternity. He had a tragic accident and he went out to meet the God of heaven. I hope that he got saved. I hope that he repented. I hope there was time. I hope there was. However, I don’t know that.

Don’t believe the enemy to try to convince you that you have time. Don’t let the enemy trick you into thinking that you have plenty of time or you are going to have plenty of time to repent because you are one breath away from eternity, my friend. The breath you suck in you may never blow it out again. The heart that is beating now may not be beating 2 beats from now. Then you are gone. When you die, when life leaves this body; there is no other repenting. There is no place that you are going to find a place to repent when you die. That is the end for you, as far as, repenting goes. That is not the end. However, if you die in your sins the fire is going to get you. You will stand before the God of heaven, bound hand and foot. You will be cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth and where this soul will never die but live on forever. The Bible says where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. The fire will never go out. There will never be a time that you will be rescued from the lake of fire. There will never be a time where mom, dad, husband, wife, co-workers, or children there will never be a time that they will come and get you out. There will never be a time that you will get to see them again. You might be in the lake of fire right beside of your mom or dad and that will be the last thing on your mind. Do you know why? It is because the Bible says you will be gnawing your tongue for pain. The rich man was praying. The rich man was asking for just one drop of water so that his tongue could be cooled. He prayed that prayer but that was a prayer that was not answered. He had done stepped across the line. He had stepped into a different dimension. He had stepped into eternity unprepared to meet God.

If you are listening to me tonight and you are unsaved, I hope tonight—I’m not asking if you are a church member. I’m not asking if you have been baptized. I’m asking you tonight, if you don’t know that you
are saved tonight, it is my prayer, it is the God of heaven prayer that you will receive His Son tonight before you leave here because tomorrow may never come for you. There are folks who got up this morning who were planning on doing all kinds of things today and the undertaker will take their shoes off of them tonight. Here is the thing. We put our shoes on, you put your shoes on but some of these guys here in town may take them off of us tonight because we don’t know. Life is very short. Life is temporal. We are here for a short time and then it vanishes away. You will either deal with your sin by asking Jesus Christ to forgive you of your sin and cleanse or the fire will deal with your sin.

Here is your choice: Come and follow Jesus Christ or end up in a lake of fire. That is your choice.

Jesus died for you. Come tonight.

Don’t turn Him away.

I did not finish the story here, this lesson. This man, this leper asked Jesus to heal him. He knew that Jesus could heal him. He said, “Lord, if it be thy will thou canst heal me.” Jesus reached out His hand and touched him and the leprosy this man had was gone.

Listen. I know the enemy will tell you that you have a disease that is filthy, dirty, that you are a sinner and are unclean and you have done all kinds of things. The enemy will tell you that Jesus could not love you. However, He touched this leper on this night. He was a man that was unclean. He was a man that was defiled; Jesus Christ took his hand and He touched him. He will touch you tonight. He is touching you tonight. He is speaking tonight. Don’t turn Him away.

If you are here tonight and you are unsaved and God has spoken to you and you know that you need to make things right with Him.

Come—