

Moments with The Master Series Part #1

Series Introduction: As one reads the Gospels, it quickly becomes apparent that the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ was a people centered ministry.

There are two verses that declare, in detail, our Lord's mission statement.

1.) **Luke 19:10**, "***For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.***"

2.) **Mark 10:45**, "***For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.***"

- Obviously, Jesus came into this world with the cross of Calvary in His heart and on His mind.
- He was literally born to die!
- **Mark 10:45** does tell us about Jesus coming to "give His life a ransom for many",
- It also tells us that He came to this earth "to minister".

This word literally means "**to serve**" and it comes from the same word that gives us the English word "**deacon**" or "**servant**".

Jesus came to this world to die for men, but He also came to serve men.

This attitude of service is seen time and again in the personal encounters Jesus had while He walked in this world.

Over the next several Sunday mornings, I would like to take a closer look at a few of the personal encounters of Jesus, as they are recorded in the Gospels.

So, today, I want to begin a new series entitled "**Moments With The Master**".

I want you to see that moments spent with Jesus are powerful, life changing moments.

As we observe Jesus and His interactions with the people of His day...

We will see how He will interact with anyone who will take the time to spend some ***Moments With The Master***.

A TRANSFORMING MOMENT

Mark 1:40-45 NIV - Jesus Cleanses a Leper

⁴⁰ Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

⁴¹ Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out *His* hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.” ⁴² As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. ⁴³ And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

⁴⁵ However, he went out and began to proclaim *it* freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

Intro: This passage finds the Lord Jesus in the midst of a tiring and trying preaching campaign.

We are told in **verses 21-34** that just the day before,

- Jesus had taught in the synagogue, **v. 21-22**;
- Cast out a demon, **v. 23-28**;
- Healed Simon Peter’s mother-in-law, **v. 29-31**;
- And healed many sick folks and delivered others from demonic possession, **v. 32-34**.

You would think that Jesus might need a period of rest after such a frenzied schedule.

However, **v. 35** finds Jesus up and in the place of prayer well before daylight.

When His disciples find Him, He tells them it is time to go into the neighboring cities to preach,

For that (**ministry**) was the reason He came to the world, **v. 36-39**.

In the midst of His preaching and teaching ministry in Capernaum, ***He is interrupted by a single man, a leper.***

It is this personal encounter that I want to focus in on this morning.

While there were great crowds there to *be healed, helped and taught*, one man managed to get a *Moment With The Master*.

Let's look in on this scene and witness for ourselves **A Transforming Moment**.

I. V. 40 THE CONDITION OF THE LEPER -

⁴⁰ Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

A. **His Disease** - We are told that this man, who approached the Lord Jesus was a leper.

Of all the diseases and afflictions that devastated the ancient world, **none was more feared than leprosy.**

A brief description of this horrific disease might be in order today.

- Little white spots were appearing all over his skin, just little white spots.
- And then those white spots begin to harden into nodules
- Nodules covering the face until they tell us that a man covered with leprosy like that would begin to resemble a lion.
- And then those nodules would begin to ulcerate
- Nodules would cover his vocal chords

So, you see, this disease of **leprosy just began to totally consume a man** until a man's body became little more than a pool of slime.

- So what a man became was walking death.
- It lasted an average of about 9 years
- A man finally just collapsed into a pile of corruption.
- It was a terrible physically debilitating disease.

As if this weren't enough, **the terrible social isolation** that went hand in hand with this disease, must also be considered.

- He was **no longer allowed** to have communion with other people.
- He had to leave his family,
- He had to leave his friends.
- **It was unlawful** for a leper to approach within 50 feet of a clean person.
- If it was a windy day, the rule changed to 200 feet.
- **He could not touch his family**, he could only see them from a distance.
- **The leper was required**, from a distance, to cry, "**Unclean! Unclean!**"

Some may say, "**Preacher, no one here has leprosy**."

Why do we need to hear this?"

I would answer that this way: In the bible, leprosy is far more than a disease. **It is also a type of sin!**

While no one in this room may be a leper, **everyone in this room** has problems **with sin!**

In **Leviticus 13**, we are given the regulations for diagnosing and dealing with leprosy.

Allow me to point out a few similarities between leprosy and sin.

1. **Leprosy is deeper than the skin** - Lev. 13:3 So is sin!

The outward manifestations of sin are **merely a window into the heart**

Matt. 15:18-19 NIV - But the things that come out of a person's mouth **come from the heart**, and these defile them.

¹⁹ For **out of the heart** come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

- You see, man isn't a sinner because he sins.
- Man sins because He is a sinner.....
- The lost person needs ***radical surgery in their hearts!***

2. **Leprosy starts out small and then it spreads** - Lev. 13:7

Just as that leper may have seen a tiny white spot on his skin one day, *it wasn't many days until* his flesh was consumed by disease.

Oh, what a picture of sin!

Look at David - A little spot of laziness turned into adultery, an unwanted pregnancy, lies and murder!

- **That little drink** will turn into a big problem with alcohol.
- **A little petting** on a date could turn into an unwanted pregnancy.
- **Let down** the walls a little here,
- **allow a little** sin there,
- before you know it,
- Your whole life has been ruined and ransacked by the devil!

3. **Leprosy defiles everything it touches** - Lev. 13:44-46

When a man was smitten with leprosy, he was totally and thoroughly defiled!

- **So it is with sin!**
- Sin has **a way of poisoning** a person's entire life.
- It will poison your family.
- It will poison your relationships.
- **It will devastate and ruin** everything it touches in your life!

Ask David if a few stolen moments with another man's wife were worth the devastation and calamities that came into his family as a result.

4. **Leprosy Isolates** - Lev. 13:46

The leper was isolated from the camp of the clean. He was forced to dwell alone on the fringes of society.

Sin also isolates.....

It drives a wedge between family members and ***it separates the sinner from God***

Isa. 59:2 NIV - But ***your iniquities have separated you*** from your God; ***your sins have hidden*** his face from you, so that ***he will not hear***.

5. ***Leprosy destines things for the fire*** - Lev. 13:52

Everything the leper touched ***was burned!***

So it is with sin! It destines those afflicted by it to the fires of eternal torment

- It is easy to see ***why leprosy of the physical variety*** was such a big deal.
- It is also easy to see how that cruel and terrible disease pictures the horror of sin.

THE CONDITION OF THE LEPER

B. ***His Desire*** - So, here is this man. ***His life has been devastated*** by the scourge of leprosy.

Perhaps he ***awoke that morning in the leper colony*** and ***heard that a man named Jesus was in town***.

- ***Maybe he heard how this Jesus had healed all sorts of diseases*** and had even cast out demons.
- Maybe, for the first time in a long time, ***hope awakened in a heart conditioned to feel only hopelessness***.

Leprosy was a cruel blow to a person's ***self-esteem!!!!!!!!!!***

- It made them feel ***unloved***
- ***Unwanted*** and ***uncared for***.

But, that morning, ***faith awakened in the heart of this leper*** and he knew he had to get to Jesus.

Whatever motivated him, this poor, wretched man began to ***hobble his way to Jesus***.

Can you see the multitudes as they crowd around the Savior?

Can you hear the commotion at the back of the crowd as the people realize that there is a leper in the midst?

Can you see the crowd begin to part with cries of fear and disgust as this man passes through their midst?

He makes his way through the frightened crowd and stops within arm's length of Jesus.

He kneels before the Lord and declared to the Lord his desire.

What he said to Jesus is very telling of his condition.....

1. His words indicate a desire to be free from his disease.
2. His words declare his faith in Christ's ability.
3. His words reveal his own sense of unworthiness before the Lord.

These three things are a picture of what should be in the heart of a sinner who wants to come to Jesus to be saved from their sins.

- There must be a desire to be free from the sin that binds you.

Conviction produces this desire in the heart of the sinner.

- There must be faith in the ability of Jesus to save the soul.

This faith is God's gift, and it is produced in the heart of the sinner by the Holy Spirit.

- Then, there will always be a sense of unworthiness to come before the Lord.

This is true, because none of us deserve to be saved.

When we come, the devil will tell us "You're not worthy to come to Jesus!"
He is right! But, don't let that stop you from coming!

That is the power of God's amazing grace!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

This old leper has reached the place where he knows he needs a miracle of God to deliver him from his disease.

- He was nearly gone and he needed divine intervention.
- So, he came to Jesus.

Friend, if your life has been wrecked and ruined by sin

- Let me tell you that **you too need** divine intervention.
- You need what only Jesus can give you.
- **You need a miracle!**
- You need to do like this leper
- **Get to the feet of Jesus!!!!!!!**

II. V. 41-42; 45 THE COMPASSION OF THE LORD

⁴¹ Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”

⁴² As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.

⁴⁵ However, he went out and began to proclaim *it* freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

The crowd watches, this leper falls down before the Lord and asks for a miracle.

- **What will Jesus do?**
- Will he also turn away in disgust?
- Will he call for the man to be stoned, as many people would have done?

No! Jesus does the unthinkable:

He shows this man compassion!

A. **As Revealed In His Touch** - It has been *years since anyone has touched this man*.

- It had been years since this man had *held his wife or children*.
- It had been years since he *felt the touch of a human hand upon his*.
- It had been years since he *had been able to kiss his wife*.
- He had been *isolated and lone!*

To touch a leper made one unclean and was strictly forbidden by the Law.

But, what did Jesus do?

He touched Him!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I don't know what that leper expected.

- Imagine his surprise when Jesus reached out His hand and touched him!
- He never expected that!!!!

Can you hear the crowd gasp in surprise and shock as they see Jesus reaching out to touch this unclean man?

What was different about this touch?

The leper did not transmit to Jesus the corruption of his disease.

Rather, **Jesus transmitted to the leper** the cleansing of His Deity!

Did you know that Jesus is still touching lives today?

Have you experienced **His touch?**

Do you remember how it felt to be locked in sin's dark dungeon, helpless and hopelessly lost in your sins?

Do you remember how good it felt when the Lord reached into the hell of your life and touched you?

You need to know that He will still touch you regardless of who you are, where you have been or what you have done!

- B. **As Revealed In The Transformation** - As soon as Jesus touched him he is made clean. His leprosy instantly departs and his skin is made a new.

He is literally given a **new lease on life**.

- He is given a new life!
- He can return to his loved ones.
- He can rejoin society.
- Everything changed when he felt the transforming touch of Jesus on his skin.

That is what happens spiritually when a sinner feels the saving touch of the Lord Jesus.

- **Instantly**, the blackness and deadness of sin is replaced with **the life and the glory of God**.
- The sinner is no longer lost, but found.
- Is no longer dead, but is alive.
- Is no longer an outcast, but is ***made a child of God!***

Jesus can instantly and eternally change your life and set you free from the bondage and damnation of your sins!

If you will come to Him, ***He will transform your life!!!!!!!***

III. V. 43-44 **THE COMMAND OF THE LAW**

⁴³ And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once,

⁴⁴ and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

- A. **The Demands Of The Law** - This leper was to go and to present himself to the priest and he was to get a certificate of cleansing on the basis of a ceremony in **Leviticus 14**.

You see, the priest must help the leper understand the place of his cleansing.

You see, **the leper couldn't go** in there where the priest was, the priest had to come out where the leper was.

And, you see, that's exactly what Jesus has done for us.

- You see, when we couldn't go to heaven where Jesus was
- **Jesus came down here** where we are!!!!

There's only one element that can cleanse you from your sins today and **that is the blood of Jesus.**

- You say, "**Well, my sins are so deep**",
- But the Lord says, "**My blood goes so much deeper.**"
- Oh, but, "**Lord, my sins have gone too far**",
- But He says, "**My blood has gone much farther.**"
- Oh, but, "**Lord, my sins are strong**";
- Jesus says, "**My blood is so much stronger.**"

- B. **The Desire Of The Lord** - Notice what Jesus says that this will be: "**for a testimony unto them**".

I would say that high priest had never seen a leper cleansed.

But, that day, he was put on notice that there was a man in town Who had the power to take away leprosy!

What a testimony it was when that poor old leper was glorious cleansed and applied at the temple for cleansing!

- What a testimony it is when Jesus changes a life!
- When He liberates a soul from the bondage of sin and sets that sinner free

It honors Him and it draws others to Him, notice **verse 45!**

- Everyone who had been set free from the bondage of sin ought to be out there "**publishing the matter**"
- Telling a watching world that Jesus sets sinners free and changes life forever!

Conc:

Friend, are you like that poor old leper?

Are you diseased spiritually and need help getting free?

Jesus Christ is still in the life-changing, soul-saving business.

If He is dealing with your heart, you need to know that you do not have to live in your sins for one more minute!

If you will come to Him right now, like that leper did, believing Him for your soul's salvation, everything will forever change in your life.

If God is calling you and you are ready for a new life, come to Him right now!

Whatever your needs may be today, you come to Him and He will take care of you!