

THE END OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT and the Leper

EASTER RECAP- Baptism requests.....FINANCIAL BLESSING AGAIN!!!!...ONLINE

RIGHT BEFORE EASTER WE FOUND OURSELVES AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE GREATEST SERMON EVER GIVEN (NOT MINE 😊) JESUS SERMON.... :)

WE BEGIN OUR TEXT THIS WEEK WITH A BIG FAT, “THEREFORE”
OUR ANSWER IT A SERIES OF CHOICES JESUS JUST GAVE HIS
LISTENERS...AND TO “BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS!”

In other words...

Don't Follow men (Pharisees) BUT follow ME (Jesus/God/Savior/Lord/King)

The crowds following Jesus and His disciples who heard this sermon must have wondered about the religious leaders, (now called out by Jesus) who seemed to be good men (superficially), as they were teaching about Messiah and His kingdom...

HOWEVER, Jesus made it clear, they were BLIND GUIDES, for they were leading others astray and keeping the Jews from coming to Jesus. *Even if they were doing supernatural deeds—prophesying in His name, driving out demons, and performing many miracles, **BECAUSE** the Pharisees had NO FAITH IN JESUS!* In Fact they were used by Satan as Anti-Christ!

Concluding the sermon on the mount Jesus presents TWO MORE CHOICES...

Matt. 7:24 *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.”²⁵*

“And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.”

²⁶ *“Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.”²⁷ “The rain fell, and*

the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell — and great was its fall.”

²⁸ When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; ²⁹ for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. Jesus didn't need to consult a commentary about the Scriptures meaning when He taught the crowds... **HE IS THE LIVING WORD!**

POINT: Hearing and heeding Jesus' words of The Sermon on the Mount, is **wise**; ignoring them is **foolish**. The wisdom of men is the foolishness of God. **1 Cor. 1:20** *Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?*

Jesus Presents ONE LAST CHOICE of BUILDING YOUR HOME ON THE FOUNDATION OF SAND OR THE FOUNDATION OF HIMSELF, “THE ROCK”!

This follows His other choices in the Sermon on the Mount! (The Therefore)

Two kinds of roads: A WIDE **ROAD** OR THE NARROW ROAD to JESUS ☺

Two kinds of gates to knock on: A WIDE **GATE** OR THE NARROW GATE to JESUS

Two kinds of trees: A BAD **TREE** OR THE GOOD TREE from JESUS ☺

Two kinds of fruit: BAD **FRUIT** OR THE GOOD FRUIT from JESUS plus H/S ☺

Two kinds of builders: FOOLISH **BUILDER** OR THE WISE BUILDER on Jesus ☺

Two kinds of foundations: SAND FOUNDATION OR THE **ROCK** of Jesus ☺

The **sand foundation** spoke of Pharisaic righteousness that Jesus just taught AGAINST...Actions from prideful teachers with hypocritic hearts

The **rock foundation** represented the **Lord Himself** and the truths He presented, especially the truth concerning **inner** transformation!

The Gospel writer Matthew so far has **presented Jesus** to His Jewish audience as:

- The rightful heir to the Kingship of David.
- As the promised Savior of all men through Jesus genealogy
- As the ONLY TRUE Messiah through fulfilled prophecy
- With the 3-Fold witness of God at Jesus Baptism
- With the testimony of John the Baptist
- As the “**perfect** Lamb of God” Who overcame every temptation
- As divine healer of every kind of disease and sickness (chapter 4)
- As the authoritative teacher that only God could teach

IN OUR NEXT TWO CHAPTERS...

MATTHEW WILL LOOK AT INDIVIDUAL MIRACLES TO PROVE THAT JESUS IS MESSIAH SAVIOR/GOD/LORD/KING WITH IMMENSE POWER

A. His power over disease/**unclean** (Leprosy, Paralysis, Fever) (8:1-15)

B. His power over demonic forces (8:16-17, 28-34)

E. His power over men in authority (8:18-22; 9:9)

D. His power over nature (8:23-27)

E. His power to forgive sin that only God can do (9:1-8)

F. His power over traditions (9:10-17)

G. His power over death (9:18-26)

H. His power over darkness (9:27-31)

I. His power over dumbness (**Inability to Speak**) (9:32-34)

J. His power to delegate authority (9:35-11:1)

Let's look together at Jesus's first miracle. Recorded In Matthew 8

Matt. 8:1 *When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him. ² And a leper came to Him and **bowed down before Him**, and said, “**Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.**” ³ Jesus stretched out His hand and **touched him**, saying, “**I am willing; be cleansed.**” And **immediately** his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, **as a testimony to them.**”*

There are a few things that immediately jump out, as we read the account of this leper, who was healed by Jesus!

Before Jesus healed this leper. **Don't miss this...Jesus touched him first.**

This is unheard of! For any Jewish leader to touch a leper would make you immediately ceremonially unclean themselves.

But, Jesus is not any healer, He is the Lord God Himself who is our healer, not just of leprosy, but OUR healer over all uncleanness especially of SIN!

To understand this miracle, we must feel the weight of what a leper was.

1. This man was in **chronic pain**, disfigured, grotesque, and getting worse
2. Completely **isolated and** Required to shout: *"Unclean, Unclean"* everywhere there were people (Leviticus 13:45)
3. He would have lived **outside the camp / city separated**
4. **Spiritually** Considered **ceremonially unclean and cursed by God**
5. **Cut off** from Worship, Community and Family
6. **In Jewish thought**, leprosy became a **living picture of sin:**

It Spreads, It Corrupts, It Isolates AND it Makes one unclean before God

BUT, Notice the Approach of the Leper: He didn't back away from Jesus He walk toward Him as we often find Bold Faith in times of Desperation

*"And behold, a leper came and **worshiped Him...**" (v.2)*

This man does the unthinkable:

- He **came to Jesus** (breaking all social laws and taboo)
- He **bows down in reverence to Jesus=WORSHIP** (recognizing authority)
- He **didn't care what OTHERS THOUGHT!** (He kept His eye on Jesus!)

Now I have to STOP HERE for a minute as I was struck and convicted personally in my studies on what the Leper can teach you and I when it comes to our worship time together...Talk to Me NOW Outloud???

If Jesus were in this room, right here by this cross, how might you worship Him differently? Would you really care what others thought?

Are you and I afraid to break social customs when we are worshipping God?

I mean, are you more concerned about following the wave on Sunday?

If everyone is standing when we sing, must you stand?

What if God tells you to get on your face and bow before Him?

WE don't think twice about pumping fists and waving our hands at a sports game for those we idolize on the field, but somehow we won't consider using our hands of praise and lift them to Jesus!

Is our eye focused on what others think or focused on Jesus?

NOW DON'T GO FULL ON KING DAVID DANCING NAKED IN THE STREETS ON ME, BUT FEEL FREE TO LOOSEN UP JUST A LITTLE BIT AND LET YOUR SPIRIT WORSHIP JESUS AS WELL...IT'S POSSIBLE YOU COULD BE CONSTIPATED FROM TOO MANY YEARS SITTING ON YOUR HANDS 😊

You are FREE TO WORSHIP AS LONG AS THE LORD is LEADING AND AS LONG AS YOU LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT-HE is a God of order NOT chaos!!!!

BACK TO THE LEPER...

- He speaks honestly *"Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."*

DON'T MISS THE LEPER'S FAITH:

- He doesn't doubt Jesus' power, He ONLY questions Jesus' willingness

AND WATCH THIS: JESUS WAS AND IS WILLING TO CLEANSE ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OR UNCLEANLINESS (1 JN. 1:9)

THIS IS EXACTLY what Jesus does to YOUR uncleanness...He reached out and touched the unclean leper in the same way He reaches out and touches ANY uncleanness in YOU!

POINT: Instead of Jesus becoming unclean... He makes ALL the unclean clean
1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Jesus PROVED He has “DIVINE” AUTHORITY over leprosy and “DIVINE” authority over ALL SIN AND ALL UNCLEANLINESS

The Leper didn't have to wait for his healing, he didn't have to wait for his wounds to heal over time...His healing and Our corruption of sin is HEALED IN AN INSTANT...

Now it is only incumbent on us to ACT ON THIS TRUTH and NOT FALL BACK TO OUR OLD CORRUPT WAY OF LIFE!

POINT: You and I have been cleansed from our sin, when we come to Jesus by Faith and we must then rely on the HOLY SPIRIT to lead us in the NEW LIFE WE HAVE IN CHRIST JESUS, talking up our own cross and following Jesus 😊

POINT: REMEMBER THIS: Jesus moves *toward* brokenness, not away from it

LOOK AT THE PARALELS BETWEEN THE LEPER AND EVERY SINNER:

<u>Leper</u>	<u>Us</u>
Unclean	Sinful
Isolated	Separated from God
Unable to heal himself	Unable to save ourselves
Needed cleansing	Need redemption/cleansing from sin

BTW-Jesus doesn't heal from a distance—HE MEETS US WHERE WE'RE AT 😊

Finally: *“Go, show yourself to the priest...”* (v.4)

Why did Jesus tell the Leper to do these things?

1. To fulfill **the Law still in effect in Jesus Day** (Leviticus 14)
2. To give **public verification that the leper was valuable in this town**
3. To **restore the leper fully into his own community with open arms**

Jesus cleanses us individually because He knows our need for fellowship with others!

FINAL POINT: Don't buy the lie that you need to clean yourself first before coming to Jesus personally—**you come as you are!**

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

Jesus touched the untouchable,
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK HE IS ASKING US TO DO?

Who are the “lepers” in our world? The rejected, The messy, The forgotten...Jesus is asking you and I to move toward them and LOVE THEM the way that He loves us.....

Because Kingdom people move **toward** brokenness, not away from it

HEART TO HEART? I AM SOOOO PROUD OF EACH OF YOU AND HOW YOU LOVE ON OTHERS, BOTH THOSE WHO YOU KNOW AS FAMILY HERE AT CBC AND THOSE WHO COME HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME....But can I share this with you so we never take for granted how important it is for all of us to continue loving on EVERYONE who comes through our doors at this church!

We love the idea of Jesus touching the leper...

But we're not always sure we want to sit next to them.

We celebrate that Jesus reached out His hand...

...but sometimes we keep ours in our pockets.

That supposed Leper, might sit three rows behind you....

And it's easy to pretend they are not so close that you need to reach out to them...

And yet—that moment in Matthew 8...wasn't just about what Jesus did, when He reached out and touched the one no one else would consider touching...

Because to that man or woman who walked in last Sunday or today **you might be the closest thing to Jesus they may ever touch.**

For some people...**a handshake** is not just a greeting. It's a lifeline.

A hug is not just kindness. It's healing.

A simple touch can change someone's life because it says, "You are not invisible." "You are not alone." "You are welcome here."

And maybe...Just maybe the miracle God wants to do next Sunday...doesn't start on this platform. Maybe it starts...three rows behind you.