

"The Eager Compassion of Jesus"

Mark 1:40-45

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Background

Join us on Sunday as we continue our sermon series "Jesus is Good News." This Sunday, we'll look at Mark 1:40-45 and see the gracious compassion of Jesus as he heals a leprous man. In this story, we'll see not only the immense compassion that God has for each of us, but the call for all disciples of Jesus to be compassionate people. See you Sunday!

Sermon Text *Mark 1:40-45*

⁴⁰ A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

⁴¹ Jesus was indignant. He reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" ⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

⁴³ Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ⁴⁴ "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ Instead he went

out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

2. Sunday Questions:

1. Trusting God's Willingness vs. His Ability The man with leprosy declared, "If you are willing, you can make me clean," revealing that while he acknowledged Jesus' power, he doubted His heart. In what areas of your life or spiritual journey do you readily believe in God's ability to bring restoration, yet secretly struggle to trust His *eagerness* or willingness to extend that grace directly to you?

2. Reclaiming the Narrative of God's Character The sermon explores the translation tension in Mark 1:41 between Jesus being "filled with compassion" and being "indignant". If Jesus' anger was driven by the damaging narrative that God is cold, punitive, or distant from human suffering, how does this change the way you view God's reaction to your own suffering or brokenness?

3. Dignity Over Distance Jesus was capable of speaking a word from a distance to heal the man, yet He intentionally reached out and touched someone who was legally "unclean" and socially isolated. Who are the modern-day "untouchables" or outcasts in our communities, and what is the difference between offering them distant, transactional assistance versus dignifying, relational contact?

4. Overcoming the Temptation to Externalize Compassion Pastor Darren shared an exchange where a church member asked what *he* would do for a person in need, prompting him to ask how God might want to use *her* instead. In what ways do we tend to delegate active compassion to ministry leaders, non-profits, or financial giving, and where might God be inviting you to take personal ownership of a need around you?

5. The Inconvenient Cost of Loving Others By touching and healing the leprous man, Jesus effectively traded places with him—taking on ceremonial defilement and ultimately being forced out of towns and into "lonely places". When has stepping out in compassion disrupted your schedule, reputation, or personal comfort, and what did that cost teach you about the nature of Christ's love?