

Be Clean

Sermon Series: Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 5:12-16



Big Idea

Though we have been ostracized from God because of our sin, in Christ He stretches out His hand and touches us!

(1) A Desperate Leper (v. 12)

Whatever this disease might be, we can be sure about one thing: the individuals who suffered from it were forced to deal with three agonizing layers of ostracism: (1) from body, (2) from society, (3) from God.

Desperate times call for desperate measures so he makes a run on the city, he makes a run on Christ: “And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him . . .” (v. 12). This is the only posture a man can take if he is truly to receive from Jesus. It’s the posture of the ragged man outside the Shell station holding out a cup for coins. It’s the posture of a desperate beggar! If you have not gone face-down, palms-up before Jesus, you have not truly come to face Him or yourself rightly!

(2) A Willing Physician (v. 13)

Throughout the OT, ritual purity moved in the opposite direction. When the clean touched the unclean, it was the uncleanness that spread. But now, in Christ, the dynamic is reversing. The Holy One touches the unclean one and it’s cleanness that’s contagious! In Christ, the holiness of God is not shielded off somewhere deep in the Holy of Holies, it is breaking out and coming for the filthy of this world. He’s coming to touch you and me and bring us back in!

(3) A Gospel Portrait (vv. 14-16)

Jesus doesn’t want this man to forget what the OT made so clear: cleansing can only come through the shedding of blood. It is true, that the OT law held out in stark terms both the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. God established in Israel a whole system of cleanness and uncleanness as a physical way of keeping ever before them the spiritual realities both of His holiness and man’s sin. Sickness and death entered the world because of man’s sin. Leprosy pictures in the body what men truly are in the soul. And so God would consider lepers unclean, unholy, unable to live within the gates and worship within His house.

But, in it all, the OT law never stopped beating at the drum of God’s mercy and grace. The law, as Paul says, was “our tutor to lead us to Christ” (Gal 3:24 NASB). Tucked within all the laws concerning leprosy and cleansing is a picture of the grand solution: the cross of Jesus Christ.

Reflection Questions



- Which of the three layers of ostracism do you most relate with? Explain.
- Can you sing the words of this hymn from your heart? *“Nothing in my hand I bring, / Simply to the cross I cling; / Naked, come to Thee for dress; / Helpless look to Thee for grace; / Foul, I to the fountain fly; / Wash me, Savior, or I die!”* Why or why not?
- Do you think praying with the words “If you will...” is a sign of little faith or great faith?
- Why would God exclude the leper in the OT and then reach out and touch Him in the NT? Is there a contradiction here? How do you make sense of this?
- Are you scared to go out to the leper and touch him? What would courageous compassion look like in your life this next week?