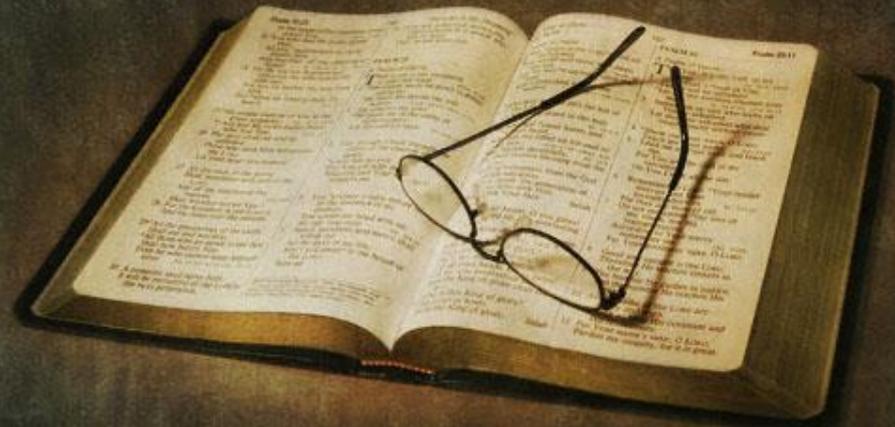


A Life-Transforming Touch

Mark 1:40-45



A Dreaded Disease

- The word leprosy in Israel was a generic term that described any serious skin disease.
- Hansen's disease caused horrible physical deformities.
- The man Mark described would have not been able to feel for years; his body, full of leprosy was probably mutilated from head to foot -- rotten, stinking, repulsive.
- Because leprosy was contagious, society ostracized and rigidly segregated people like him.
- Lepers were isolated from the religious life, functions, and feasts of Israel.
- This man had no hope and no future.

A Passionate Plea

- The leper did something forbidden and unlawful when he entered a crowd of people to be healed by Jesus.
- The leper had nothing to lose and everything to gain.
- The leper approached Jesus with deep humility.
- The leper came to Jesus in faith.
- The leper believed that if Jesus was willing to heal him, He could heal him.

Sympathetic Savior

- Jesus was “moved with compassion.”
- Compassion compels action.
- Jesus’ every miracle, every exorcism, every healing came from a heart that was deeply moved with compassion.
- Jesus placed his hand firmly on the leper.
- The word “immediately” serves to accentuate Jesus’ authority and power over illness.
- The leper’s transformation was sudden, instantaneous, and complete.

A Disobeyed Directive

- The leper disobeyed Jesus' command to keep the news to himself.
- Three reasons why he should have followed Jesus' instructions:
 - He disobeyed the Lord.
 - It hampered Jesus' ministry.
 - The leper's message confused Jesus' mission in the minds of the crowds.
- The primary purpose of Jesus' miracles was to validate His identity, authority, message, and mission.

Conclusion

- As followers of Christ, we are called to reach out with compassion, love the unlovable, and touch the untouchable.
- Leprosy was symbolic of sin:
 - Sin progressively enslaves us.
 - Sin defiles everything.
 - Sin disfigures us spiritually.
 - Sin can destroy our lives.
- Like leprosy, sin is terminal, except sin's death is eternal.
- Nothing is too gross, ugly, dirty or shameful for the Savior to cleanse.
- Nothing is beyond the scope of Jesus' compassion.