

LUKE 5:12-16

27 DECEMBER 2020

ICE BREAKER: Describe something you were extremely grateful for this past year.

GROUP QUESTIONS:

(Read verse 12-13) **Leprosy** was a gruesome and contagious skin disease common in the 1st century. Leprosy led to the wasting away of cartilage and muscle tissue, including one's hands, feet and face. The disease could spread to other people simply by physical contact. Therefore, people took every precaution to **keep their distance** from lepers for fear of infection.

Apparently, this leper was in the final stages of his leprosy. Luke the physician describes the man as "**covered with leprosy.**" Yet, notice **how Jesus healed** the leper. He did not just say the word of healing from a distance. He did not just wave his hand over the man. Rather, "Jesus **reached out his hand and touched** the man."

1. Why do you think **Jesus healed** this leper **in this manner**?

(Read verse 12) Not only did people keep their distance from lepers, but lepers themselves were to required stay away from people. Among the Jews, the leper was ordered to "wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, '**Unclean! Unclean!**' As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must **live alone**; he must live outside the camp (Leviticus 14:3)."

Risking punishment from violating these regulations, this leper did not stay away, but **courageously** sought out Jesus. In **desperation**, "he **fell with his face to the ground and begged**" for Jesus to heal him from his **ugly disease**.

2. Why is **desperation** often necessary for us to finally bring the **ugly areas** of our lives to the Lord?

(Read verse 14) Upon healing the leper, Jesus commanded him to not delay, but **immediately show himself to the priests** to verify the authenticity of his healing. In so doing, Jesus enabled the leper to be restored into the community. At the same time, Jesus purposed the miraculous healing to **bear witness** to His Gospel to those who were the **most skeptical**—the religious rulers of the day.

3. Looking back, what have you noticed about the **purposes** of **Jesus' healing** or **miracles** in your life?

(Read verses 15-16) As His ministry expanded, his message spread, and his fame grew, "Jesus **often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.**" Jesus was **not withdrawing** from **worldly pursuits** or **sinful habits**. He **withdrew** from **doing good**—**healing people** and **proclaiming words of life** into their lives.

Jesus purposely withdrew from these good and noble tasks to "lonely places and prayed." Jesus did not disregard serving others, but always gave it **priority**. Although helping people is a **good** thing, our time with God the Father is the **best** thing. Many times, the enemy of the **best** in our lives is the **second best**.

4. How has a **good thing** become an **enemy to the best** in your **walk with the Lord**?

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE & USE PRAYER LIST AS BIBLE BOOK MARKER

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to share Christ with this week.)
