

March 16, 2014

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

Mark 1:40-45

“Power Fishing, Part Three: Cleansing a Leper”

- I. The Title – 1:1
- II. The Prologue – 1:2-13
- III. The Body: The Public Demonstration of Who Jesus Is and What He Came to Do – 1:14-15:41
 - A. The Galilean Ministry: Who Jesus Is (the Christ) - 1:14-8:30
 - 1. The Gospel Call (1:14-20)
 - 2. Power Fishing (1:21-2:17)
 - a. Teaching with Authority (1:21-28)
 - b. Healing with Authority (1:29-39)
 - c. **Cleansing with Authority (1:40-45)**

Discussion Questions:

1. Mark's Gospel isn't written simply in "sentences" but in "sequences." Please note the sequence in Mark 1:1-13: Jesus affirmed by the Old Testament Prophets, by John the Baptist, by God the Father, and by God the Spirit. Note the sequence in 1:14-20: Jesus preaches the need to repent and believe in the gospel, and then He illustrates what repentance and believing looks like by calling four men to follow Him. What sequence do you see Mark developing in 1:21 – 2:17? How does this build a case for Who Jesus is and What He came to do?
2. Read Mt. 8:1-4 and Lk. 5:12-16. What other details do you learn about the healing of the leper? Why didn't each author tell the story exactly the same way?
3. Read Lev. 13-14 and Numbers 5:1-4. What do you learn in those chapters about leprosy? How shocking would it have been to people to see a leper come close to Jesus?
4. In Mark 1:40-44 a form of the word "cleansing" is used four times. Why isn't a form of the word "heal" used like in the previous verses? What is Mark's point about cleansing a leper? How is leprosy an illustration or symbol of sin?
5. In v. 40 what do you observe in the attitudes and actions of the leper? How is he a model of the right way to approach King Jesus for cleansing? How is the approach of the leper to Jesus different from the idea that we must "name it and claim it"?
6. How is the way the leper approached Jesus a model for the way a sinner should approach Jesus for salvation?
7. Why do you think Jesus was moved with compassion? How is this in keeping with what you know to be true about God? Why was Jesus able to touch the leper without being defiled? What does Mark want us to learn from this about Jesus?
8. Jesus was willing to cleanse the leper. Is Jesus always willing to cleanse / heal people right now? What are some reasons why Jesus might not want to heal a person today? Is Jesus always willing to heal / cleanse / forgive sinners who humbly come to Him for salvation? How do the stories in sequence in 2:1-17 help you answer that question?
9. What would it be like to be completely defiled by leprosy and then completely healed? What changed in the man's appearance? Who could he now go see, touch, hug, and kiss? Why does Mark say that Jesus "sternly warned him and immediately sent him away" to go see the priest? How would this be a "testimony to them" (the priests)? Note: some translators say it is a testimony "against" them. How would the response of the priests make it a testimony TO them or a testimony AGAINST them?
10. What were the consequences of this man's disobedience to what Jesus sternly warned him and commanded him to do? What impact did this have on the cleansed leper? What impact did this have on Jesus? (Note: compare 1:38 with 1:45) What impact did this have on people who wanted to see Jesus, hear the Gospel, and/or be healed?
11. How does your understanding of leprosy help you better understand our problem with sin? Are people basically good and in need of a little help from Jesus or are they completely defiled and in need of radical cleansing? Does knowing this produce compassion in your heart for them? What will you do about it? To whom will you proclaim the gospel so they can be cleansed?