

## A LEPER CLEANSED

**TEXT: LUKE 5:12-15**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. We are going to look tonight at a miraculous healing -- "a man full of leprosy" (5:12) was cleansed (5:13).
2. The Bible teaches that God does heal the sick in answer to prayer, but these modern-day so-called "faith-healers" like Benny Hinn and Oral Roberts are all crooks.
3. I have read two books about Hinn – *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn* and *Blinded by Benny*. Both books prove beyond a doubt that the man is a deceiver. I have also seen videos of his "act."
4. Just recently, Benny Hinn was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit at a hospital in California with heart problems.
5. It looks like the professional faith healer cannot heal himself.
6. If these false prophets truly had power to heal, they would be healing lepers in Africa and other places where are still hundreds of thousands of people suffering from leprosy.
7. In fact, there are lepers right here in America.

### **I. THE NEED TO BE CLEANSED**

1. In Luke 5:12 we read, "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy..."
2. This man desperately needed to be cleansed.
3. In Scripture, leprosy is a type of sin from the standpoint of its being incurable and defiling.
4. In nearly every case of healing we see in the Bible, the leper is said to be "cleansed" (5:12, 13), reminding us that in the Bible leprosy pictures the defilement of sin and the need for cleansing.
5. A sin that is repeatedly condemned in Scripture is the sin of "uncleanness."
6. Romans 1:24 says, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves." This sounds like what is happening today in America.
7. Second Corinthians 12:21 says, many "have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed."
8. First Thessalonians 4:7 says, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

9. Leprosy is a vivid picture of sin. There are certain things to be said of leprosy that are all true of sin. Leprosy, like sin is a loathsome disease; it is an infectious disease; and it is an incurable disease.
10. Like sin, leprosy is deeper than the skin (Lev. 13:1-3). Like sin, leprosy spreads (Lev. 13:7, 8), and as it spreads, it defiles (Lev. 13:44, 45).
11. Because of his defilement, the leper had to be isolated outside the camp (Lev. 13:46). And because of his sin, the impenitent sinner must be kept isolated in hell.
12. Leprosy was greatly dreaded and a very dreadful disease. It was both disfiguring and fatal. The heathens did not know what to do with lepers, but God instructed the Israelites to quarantine them (Lev. 13:46).
13. From these Biblical instructions, leper colonies were later established. Lepers were forbidden to approach other people. To prevent accidental contact they were required to call out "Unclean" (Lev. 13:45).
14. Lepers had no way of earning a living and had to depend on charity. The psychological effects of all of this seem to have been as serious as the physical effects.
15. In the New Testament we see our Lord healing lepers, and He declared that this was one of the signs that He was the promised Messiah (Luke 7:19-23).

## **II. THE DESIRE TO BE CLEANSED**

1. We see in Luke 5:12 that this "man full of leprosy" saw Jesus, and fell on his face, and besought him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."
2. In Matthew 8:2 we see that the leper came and worshipped our Lord, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."
3. He desperately needed to be cleansed, and he wanted to be cleansed.
4. Today there are many sinners who are deeply involved in destructive, ugly, horrifying sins, and they too desperately need to be cleansed.
5. But many of them have no desire to be cleansed. They are content in their wretched condition.
6. Leprosy is defiling, and so are the popular sins of today – adultery, fornication, pornography, homosexuality, drugs, and alcohol.
7. "The cleansing stream, I see, I see! I plunge, and oh, it cleanseth me! Oh! Praise the Lord, it cleanseth me, It cleanseth me, yes, cleanseth me!"

8. "And I know...yes, I know...Jesus' blood can make the vilest sinner clean. And I know...yes, I know...Jesus' blood can make the vilest sinner clean."
9. This poor man was "full of leprosy" (Luke 5:12). He was in bad shape. His was an advanced case. Humanly speaking, he was quite hopeless. But he had faith in Jesus. He said, "Thou canst make me clean" (5:12).
10. Mark 1:41 says, "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean."
11. Then our Lord healed this leper and he was immediately healed (5:13). Have you ever wondered why Oral Roberts and Benny Hinn have never been able to heal a leper? After all, lepers are not difficult to locate!
12. It is because these healers are fake, and it is impossible for a fake healer to cleanse a leper!
13. Doctors and investigators have looked into some of these alleged healings claimed by faith healers like Benny Hinn and have discovered that they were all phony. But when Jesus healed people, it was real and it was "immediate" (5:13).
14. Jesus not only healed the leper, He "touched him" (5:13). This means that our Lord became unclean Himself. We have here a picture of what Christ did for us on the cross.
16. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:21).
17. Matthew 27:46 says, "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
18. People have wondered why Jesus said these words (Psalm 22:1).
19. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin..."
20. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree..." (I Peter 2:24).
21. Christ touched this leper and the man was cleansed.
22. Our Lord then gave the man specific instructions (5:14). He was to tell no man, but was to show himself to the priest and present an offering as prescribed by Moses in Leviticus 14.
23. This would be a testimony to the priest that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Leviticus 14 was in the Law but it is doubtful that any priest ever met a cleansed leper. That is, until Jesus came!
24. Our Lord told him to tell no man (5:14), but according to Mark's account, the man "went out, and began to publish it much" (Mark 1:45).

25. I heard a preacher say, "The Lord told the cleansed leper to tell no man, but he went and told everyone. The Lord told us to tell everyone, but we tell no one!"

### **III. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING SAVED**

1. People have wondered whether or not our Lord ever healed a person without also imparting salvation. I personally believe that everyone in the Bible who was healed was also saved.
2. For example, Mark 1:45 says, "But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter."
3. He not only went all over telling people about his healing -- he went everywhere telling people about the Healer!
4. And here in Luke 5, we read that the man healed from the palsy went home "glorifying God" (5:25, 26). That man was forgiven, healed and saved!
5. What good would it do for a man to be healed from sickness, then continue to live for a few more years, and eventually die and go to hell?
6. Man's spiritual condition is far more important than his physical need.
7. While we should try our best to eliminate physical suffering, man's greatest need is spiritual -- he needs to be born again.

### **CONCLUSION:**

I read an interesting story in H.A. Ironside's commentary on Luke: I remember reading some years ago in a medical journal of a dance which was held in the city of Calcutta, India, where there were many beautiful ladies, noblemen, people of wealth and culture. One young woman, the belle of the evening, was dancing with a Scottish doctor. He said, when he brought her back to her seat, "May I have a word with you? I hope you won't take offense. I couldn't help but notice it, but upon your shoulder there is a certain spot. Has it been there long?" The young lady's face colored. "Yes, doctor; it appeared some months ago, and it has bothered me considerably." He said, "I wish you would come down and see me tomorrow. I would like to call in a specialist along a certain line and have him look at this spot." The young lady was rather frightened, but she did as he asked, and the next day after a thorough examination of the spot, she received word that she had the disease of leprosy. One little spot upon her shoulder and yet the disease was working within, and soon it would be

manifested more and more, and that beautiful body would be marked and scarred.

Isn't that just like sin? And yet so often it seems to be such a little thing to begin with; some habit which one knows is not right, so insignificant, and it grows and grows until at last sin is manifested in all its terrible corruption. A little sin leads to something worse, and it increases until it is emphasized in the whole life and is a spiritual form of leprosy.