

Mark 1:40-45 – A Sprinkling of Spiritual Cleansing

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Allegorical preaching is a modern curse on the church of Christ. So what is allegorical preaching? **Allegorical (寓言式的) preaching is when the text is not explained with a redemptive historical interpretation (救赎历史观的解经)** but it is interpreted in an arbitrary (任意的, 主观的) manner. Allegorical preaching ignores the context or the meaning, but finds some arbitrary spiritual truths. Example: In the account of David killing Goliath, if the preaching were proper and the **redemptive historical interpretation were used, you would hear of God's love for and preservation (保守) of his people and the land from which Christ would come to redeem his people.** Allegorical interpretation (寓言式解经) would take that story to mean that if you have large troubles (giants, Goliaths) in your life, you have to learn to conquer them with spiritual stones. These false interpreters misuse the Bible that way. Their words might not be untrue, but the words don't come from that text. They make Goliath into a "type" that was not intended.

At the same time, you have to be careful not to ignore intended and confirmed "types." You can see people, places, events, or themes in the Old Testament as types of Christ and his work. Joshua was a type of Christ. The burnt offering 燔祭 was a type of Christ's sacrifice. Other parts of the Bible confirm these types.

Today you will see a type...a "type" of the work that Christ does in man. This story was about a real man, with a real disease, with a real cleansing, and how he was a true "type" of your spiritual cleansing.

Our headings are:

Compassion

Confirmation

Complication

Our goals are: **That you will see the filthiness (污秽) of man apart from the work of Christ, and therefore see the necessity of Christ's human nature in which he had to suffer and die.**

Compassion

40 Now a leper (长大麻风的) came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

1. A man, full of leprosy 麻风病 came to Jesus. Let's stop for a minute and talk about lepers. Lepers were outcasts from Jewish society and were not permitted to come close to healthy citizens. They were usually not allowed to enter into the synagogues (犹太会堂) or temple, except if the leprosy was not too bad and they were curtained off from other worshippers. They had to cover their lips and cry out: "Unclean." So coming to Jesus, a healthy citizen, in itself was a remarkable act of courage by the leper. Let me describe the leper. *"The patient's voice is hoarse, and comes rather through the nose than the mouth; the blood full of little white shining bodies...the serum (血清) is scabious (生疥癣的), and destitute of (缺乏) its natural humidity, insomuch that salt applied to it, does not dissolve; it is so dry, that vinegar poured on it boils (疖子); and is so strongly bound together by little imperceptible threads, that calcined lead (煅烧铅) thrown into it swims. The face resembles (类似于) a coal half extinct, unctuous (油腻的), shining, and bloated, with frequent hard knobs, green at bottom, and white at top. The hair is short, stiff, and had a gray/brown streak (条痕); and not to be torn off, without bringing away, some of the rotten flesh, to which it adheres; if it grows again, either on the head or chin, it is always white...the eyes red and inflamed, and shine like those of a cat; the ears swollen and red, eaten with ulcers (溃疡) towards the bottom, and encompassed with little glands (腺体); the nose sunk, because of the rotting of the cartilage (软骨); the tongue dry and black, swollen, ulcerated, divided with furrows (皱纹), and spotted with grains of white; the skin covered with ulcers, that die and revive on each other, or with white spots, or scales (鳞片) like a fish; it is rough and insensible, and when cut, instead of blood, yields a discharging liquor: it arrives in time to such a degree of insensibility, that the wrist (手腕), feet, or even the large tendon, may be pierced with a needle, without the patient's feeling any pain; at last the nose, fingers, toes fall off..."*

2. This leper came to Jesus in humility: imploring and kneeling down. The leper made no attempt to cover up his deplorable (糟透的, 可悲的) condition. If he did, he would never have found help. He was pouring contempt on all his pride.

3. This leper came to Jesus in faith. He knew no one else could help. This is what God demands of his children: a total resignation (听从) to him alone. He knew help could only come from outside. He had to receive. Quite like Sarah. **Genesis 18:13** And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' **14 "Is anything too hard for the LORD?** At the appointed time I

will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

41 Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." 42 As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.

4. Jesus touched the leper. Unspotted Purity reached out and touched the leper. Can you imagine how this leper felt, one who had leprosy all over his body, to be touched for the 1st time in years? But in doing this Jesus became defiled 玷污, 污秽 Leviticus 5:3 `Or if he touches human uncleanness--whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it--when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty. (或是他摸了别人的污秽, 无论是染了什么污秽, 他却不知道, ——知道了, 就有了罪。)

Christ's love moved him from heaven to earth. His love moved him from the cradle (摇篮) to the cross to touch man's soul.

2Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

5. Jesus compassionately healed the leper though these words: "Be cleansed."

Psalm 107:20 He sent **His word and healed them**, And delivered *them* from their destructions.

John 15:3 "**You are already clean because of the word** which I have spoken to you.

6. Lessons:

a. Lepers are used interchangeably (可互换的) for sinners in the Bible. It is often a "type." In fact, the Jews called lepers "sinners" because they believed they were cursed because of serious sins. That was not uncommon. Miriam, Moses' sister (Numbers 12), Gehazi, Elisha's servant (2Kings 5), and Uzziah, king of Judah (2Chronicles 26) were all cursed with leprosy because of their sin. And while lepers/sinners were separated from the pure, by the words of Jesus they are healed. Jesus words confirm how you broke the law and how he kept it for you, in life and in death.

b. Like lepers, sinners must come to Christ with a full sense and conviction of their sin. They must come believing that he is able to save them. They must know that their sin is incurable without the work of Christ.

Psalm 60:11 Give us help from trouble, **For the help of man is useless.**

Matthew 5:4 **Blessed are those who mourn**, For they shall be comforted.

c. The Word of Christ, heard and believed, produces freedom from all sinful pollutions.

John 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

d. What joy comes to the sinner who knows that all his sins have been forgiven!

Confirmation

43 And He **strictly warned him** and sent him away at once, 44 and said to him, "**See that you say nothing to anyone**; but go your way, **show yourself to the priest**, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

1. Jesus commanded the healed man to live better, not to speak about his healing, and to fulfill the law's requirement.

2. The warning to live better was necessary because this man was cursed with leprosy because of sin. "Strictly warned him" is used for the snorting of a horse. There is a sense of anger in the words. We have confirmation of this warning.

John 5:14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. **Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.**"

3. Why did Jesus warn him not to speak of his healing widely? Some scholars feel that Jesus said this so that he would not seem to be boastful. But that is not correct. Jesus has the right to boast about what he has done. The reason Jesus warned the man not to speak about his miraculous healing was because Jesus did not want people to overwhelm him with performing miracles and cause him to ignore his mission of preaching the Gospel.

4. What did Jesus require the man fulfill regarding the law?

a. The leper had to show himself to the priests so they could examine and reexamine him and prove he was healed. Leviticus 13. This examination was done by the spiritual leaders rather than by doctors. This was because this disease was specifically linked to sin.

b. With his healing confirmed by the priest, he had to make special sacrifices(献祭) of two clean living birds.

Leviticus 14:4 "then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed **two living and clean birds**, cedar wood(香柏木), scarlet(朱红色线), and hyssop(牛膝草).

Both of these clean birds typified (代表, 预表) Christ, not the man. They were meek, innocent, pure, and harmless,

but had to lay down their lives for the sinner. The 1st bird was killed in an earthen vessel over running water. This earthen vessel pictured the human nature of Jesus (耶稣的人性). And his blood had to flow for man's freedom. The mixture of blood and water was seen when Jesus was on the cross and the spear thrust in his side. 1John 5:6. The 2nd bird was literally buried in the blood of 1st bird and let go. (Leviticus 14:6) This pictured the burial and resurrection of Jesus (耶稣的埋葬与复活). He was put to death but raised for the justification (称义) of his people. (The bird is not the picture of man, but of Christ.) This is the Baptist's error (浸信会的错误): He makes the burial about baptism. But a consistent examination of the Scriptures debunks 指出...错误 that argument.) Then the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop were dipped in the blood of the bird and sprinkled on the leper.

Leviticus 14:7 "And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

The blood was sprinkled on the leper 7x, and then he was pronounced clean.

c. Without the confirmation by the priests, the people would not have accepted the leper as being cleansed.

5. Lessons:

a. See the link between the Old and New Testaments. The law pictured the nature and work of Christ. And that is the promise that continues, sealed by baptism. Remember what comes after Isaiah 52...

Isaiah 52:15 So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

b. Elders of the churches judge the spiritual cleansing of the soul. This is why elders made the decisions about who may be members of the church or not.

Complication

45 However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

1. The healed leper did not obey the words of Jesus. Luke says he began to publish his good news all the more!

2. Why did he not obey the words of Jesus? Surely he was too excited. You can have sympathy for the man's excitement, after all, there is no time between the scratching of a man and the light that it produces, but Jesus' work was hindered by his excitement. It might seem like a good idea, but it hurt Christ's purpose which was to preach the Gospel.

4. Lessons:

a. In a broad sense, the Gospel must not be done willy-nilly(胡乱地,违背意愿地). The church must strategize and figure out the best way to spread the kingdom. Harm is caused when people who are unqualified are sent out in the mission field. This is what hurt the modern missionary movement. Young kids just in or out of college were sent overseas as missionary with very little theological background. They could not answer hard questions that were raised. They compromised(妥协).

b. More specifically, you must not let lesser things distract you from promoting and preaching the Gospel.

Yes, people like flashy(浮华的) things and flashy preachers. Today people talk a lot about healing by miracles or healthy eating, even diaconal work(执事的工作), and the Gospel gets pushed aside.

Conclusion

The leper came in faith, knowing the hopelessness of his condition. Jesus forgave him, healed him, and sent him to fulfill what was required by the law. Jesus sent him to fulfill the law because he wanted the man to focus on the basis of his forgiveness and healing: The cross. (Same Gospel, same salvation, same Savior in the Old and New Testaments.)

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: That was wonderful examination of the work of Christ in his people's lives. How was that man is healed of his sins? Through the Word of God! So don't get distracted by the flashy things in this life. Promote and support the pure preaching of the Word of God. Focus on the cross.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you can't fix the greatest problem you have: A deadly infection of your heart. Your only solution is to call upon Christ to give you a new heart. He paid the full price for a new heart for sinners who sincerely call to him.