

Desperate People July 27th & 28th, 2013

Matthew 8:1-4

Jesus had just given His disciples the Principles of the Kingdom;
now He would demonstrate the Power of the Kingdom!

A man who had Leprosy came to Jesus

- ❖ Lepers were excluded from society (*Leviticus 13:45-46*) and to approach another person was an act punishable by death.
- ❖ Leprosy was an incurable disease at this time.
- ❖ The leprosy was not a consequence of the man's sin.
- ❖ The leper, in desperation, approached Jesus.
 - ◆ Desperation will move a person to take radical action!
 - ◆ Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army had leprosy. He too was desperate enough to go the camp of his enemy, Israel, for help! *2 Kings 5:5*

The Leper knelt before Jesus

- ❖ The Leper humbled himself.
 - ◆ He did not have an attitude of entitlement!
 - ◆ He did not blame God or others for his condition.
- ❖ The Leper focused on the only solution to his hopeless state, Jesus!
 - ◆ Humility proceeds miracles.
 - ◆ Humility is an act of our will.
 - ↳ Humility is not a fruit of the Holy Spirit! *Galatians 5:22-23*
 - Humble* – “(tapeinos) primarily signifies ‘low-lying’ ... ‘of low degree, ...’”¹
 - “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”* *Philippians 2:3*
 - ◆ Humility is a vehicle that brings God's power into our lives.
 - “... Therefore it says, ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”* *James 4:6*
 - “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you,”* *1 Peter 5:6*
 - ◆ Naaman needed to humble himself before he was healed. *2 Kings 5:14*

The Leper had faith that Jesus could heal him

- “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.”*
- ❖ Jesus responded to the Leper by touching him!
 - ❖ Jesus said, *“I will, be clean.” And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.*
 - ❖ Jesus said that the Priests would confirm the healing. *Leviticus 14:1-32*

Why was this event significant to Jesus' disciples?

- ❖ Jesus would soon send his disciples out to proclaim that the Kingdom of Heaven had come! *Matthew 10:5-7*
- ❖ Jesus would give the disciples His authority to heal the sick and to cleanse the lepers! *Matthew 10:8*
- ❖ Jesus' disciples had learned the Principles of God's Kingdom; now they would experience the Power of God's kingdom!
- ❖ Jesus' disciples would learn the heart of God for people in desperate situations! *Matthew 9:35-38*
"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." *Matthew 9:37-38*

Endnotes:

¹ Vine, W.E. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997.

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