

'Luke' - Extra Teaching Points #7

Luke 5:12-39 (NASB 95)

Luke 5:12-16

*"While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."¹³ **And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed."** And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴ **And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."**¹⁵ But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. ¹⁶ But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray."*

Vs. 12 Matthew and Mark also record this event, but Luke alone says "full of" or "covered with" leprosy; it was apparently a medical term for an advanced case.

- There were different degrees of Lepers or stages of Leprosy.
 - This man was in the end-stages of the disease.

This is the only recorded instance of someone asking for healing IF JESUS WAS WILLING.

- Some Christians believe that God always wants to heal, but it seems obvious Jesus didn't always heal everyone.

Q: Vs. 13 "And He stretched out His hand and touched him." Jesus didn't have to touch this man to heal him... He healed others with just a word (John 5:8; Matt 15:28; Luke 7:7-10)...

Why did Jesus touch this man?

- Jews didn't touch lepers because it was against the Law to touch anyone who was unclean.
 - If you touched an unclean person you would become ritually unclean.
 - In the case of leprosy, you could even contract the disease yourself!
- But when Jesus touched unclean people it went the other way—they became clean!
 - The Law did not have in it the power to overcome uncleanness; rather, uncleanness had more power over people than the Law.
 - A clean person could not resist becoming unclean when having contact with an unclean person.
 - This is why God told the Israelites to drive out the people living in Canaan. If they let them stay, they would be contaminated by them (Numbers 33:55-56; Deut. 12:29-31).
- **Jesus was always teaching in everything He said and did. When He touched the unclean and they became clean, rather than Him becoming unclean, He was showing that His cleanness was being transferred to them.**
 - **This is why we are not called to go and kill all the unbelievers around us for fear they will contaminate us; we are to go and make disciples of them... contaminating them with the cleanness we have received!**

Q: Vs. 14 Jesus said, "tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest." Why didn't Jesus want the man to tell others who healed him?

- Quite often, Jesus would tell people He healed not to tell anyone about it... but they almost always did.
 - **It seems likely that Jesus didn't want people getting all excited about healings and miracles.**
 - The healings and miracles were signs to validate the message; they were not meant to be **as** important as, (and certainly not **more** important than), *the message*.

- Jesus didn't want people to be fascinated with the sensational; He wanted to preach the Kingdom of God. ([Mark 8:11-12](#); [Matt 12:39-42](#); [Luke 11:29-32](#))
- **I think Jesus wanted people to go tell others about what He was preaching; not about the signs and miracles.**
 - He probably didn't want to be swamped by masses of shallow people only interested in signs and miracles. Instead, He wanted to reach those who were interested in the Kingdom of God.
 - This should cause us to rethink some of our "draw-a-crowd" thinking.

Q: Why did Jesus want him to go to the priest?

- Going to the priests was prescribed by the law ([Lev 13:1-17](#)) in order for the person who was healed to be readmitted into society.
 - The priests served in much the same way the CDC does for us today.

Luke 5:17-26

*"One day He was teaching; and there were **some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.** ¹⁸ And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him. ¹⁹ But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus. ²⁰ Seeing their faith, He said, **"Friend, your sins are forgiven you."** ²¹ The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" ²² But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, **"Why are you reasoning in your hearts? ²³ "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴ "But, so that you may know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,**" — He said to the paralytic — **"I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home."** ²⁵ Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God. ²⁶ They were all struck with astonishment and began glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today."***

Vs. 17 Pharisees and teachers of the law started to converge on Jesus.

- Jesus was a phenomenon by this time, and they weren't sure who He was or what they thought of Him... but they came generally with a critical eye.
 - They may have been critical because He did things like touching lepers, which a "good Jew" shouldn't do.
- Even if they knew nothing of the things Jesus was doing, they would likely still have had a negative view of Him because He wasn't one of them.
 - Pharisees and teachers of the law were the ones the people normally respected and listened to; now all of a sudden this unknown guy (Jesus) is getting a lot of attention and respect.

Q: Vs. 17 says, "The power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.**" Why might Luke go out of his way to tell us "the power of the Lord was present?" Were there times when the power of the Lord wasn't present for Him to perform healing?**

- Jesus didn't just walk around filled with power.
 - Jesus was a man. He had emptied Himself of His equality with God ([Phil 2:6-7](#)), and had to depend on His Father.
 - Sometimes God wanted Jesus to heal people and sometimes God wanted Him to do other things like teach or cast out demons.
- **We might think Jesus had all this power to do whatever He wanted to do, but Jesus said He didn't do anything of His own authority ([John 8:28](#)).**

- He didn't even say the things He wanted to say, but only what God wanted Him to say ([John 14:10, 24](#)).

Q: In [Vs. 20](#) when the man was lowered through the roof, why didn't Jesus address his physical condition first?

- Some think it was because his spiritual condition had to be taken care of before his physical problem could be resolved.
 - Some physical problems are brought on by sin... but not all physical problems are the result of sin ([John 9:1-3](#)).
 - In [John 5:14](#), Jesus healed a man and told him to sin no more so that something worse wouldn't happen... implying His inability to walk had been the result of some sin.
 - Maybe this guy was injured doing something he shouldn't have... or maybe dealing with the guilt of something he did?
- **It may be that Jesus forgave the man's sins first to make a statement to the Pharisees and teachers of the Law about His identity.**
 - No one can forgive an offense or a sin that wasn't committed against him or her.
 - By saying to the man, "Your sins are forgiven", Jesus was claiming to be God.
- **It could also be that Jesus was once again dealing with what He saw as the most important issue anyone has to deal with—sin.**
 - Jesus didn't come to earth to heal sickness and injury; He came to preach the gospel of the Kingdom ([Luke 4:43](#)), and save people from sin ([Matt 1:21](#)).

Q: What does Jesus mean by His question, "*Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk?'*" Both are equally easy to say, so what is Jesus getting at?

- I think Jesus is asking, which is easier to verify?
 - Verifying the forgiveness of sins is tough, but verifying a lame man being able to walk again is pretty easy.
- Jesus probably did the thing considered harder to do and easier to verify—make a lame man walk—so the man and all the witnesses could know that He had already done the thing that no one thought was possible, much less verifiable!
- **Q: How can you verify the forgiveness of your sins?**

Extra Thoughts on the name "Son of Man:"

Q: In [Vs. 24](#), Jesus calls Himself the "Son of Man" for the first time. Luke records Jesus calling Himself this 26 times, and if you include all the gospels, there are over 70 references to Jesus calling Himself "Son of Man." This was by far the most common way Jesus referred to Himself. Why? What does this name mean?

- There is some debate as to whether the title "Son of man" is a humble title, or an exalted one.
 - In one sense, Jesus is claiming to be just like everyone else; and yet in another sense, He is definitely different.
- [Dan 7:13](#) refers to "*a son of man*",
 - "One like a son of man" is different than the title "*the Son of Man*".
 - "One like a son of man" is essentially just a human.
 - In [Dan 7](#), the "One like a son of man" is Christ, or at least His kingdom.
 - Daniel is comparing different Kingdoms: Human Kingdoms are like wild beasts, and the Kingdom of God is like a man.
- The name, "Son of Man" lays stress on His humanity, yet it is used as a statement of authority.
 - **I think Jesus used this reference so often to state His authority because He became a man, yet qualified Himself to save mankind from sin by being a sinless sacrifice. Both humility and exaltation!**

Luke 5:27-32

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, *“Follow Me.”*²⁸ And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him.²⁹ And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them.³⁰ The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, *“Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?”*³¹ And Jesus answered and said to them, *“It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.”*³² *“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”*

Vs. 27 Levi was also called Matthew and became one of Jesus’ apostles and the author of the gospel of Matthew ([Matt 9:9-17](#); [Mark 2:14-22](#)).

- Tax collectors were about as respectable as prostitutes.
- They were considered to be traitors and sellouts to a foreign power.

Q: Vs. 31-32 Jesus got invited to a lot of parties. He went to those parties in order to call “sinners to repentance”, and yet they kept inviting Him. How was Jesus able to call sinners to repentance, and still be someone sinners wanted at their parties?

- It could have something to do with His view of them, and their view of Him.
- He didn’t look down on them... He saw them as sick people who needed a doctor.
 - People must have seen Him as someone there to help them, rather than someone looking down on them, or trying to suck them into something.

Luke 5:33-39

*“And they said to Him, “The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers, the disciples of the Pharisees also do the same, but Yours eat and drink.”*³⁴ And Jesus said to them, *“You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?”*³⁵ *“But the days will come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days.”*³⁶ And He was also telling them a parable: *“No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.”*³⁷ *“And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined.”*³⁸ *“But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.”*³⁹ *“And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, ‘The old is good enough.’”*

Vs. 33 The “they” who questioned Jesus, are the disciples of John and the Pharisees ([Matt. 9:15](#); [Mark 2:20](#)).

- At this time, Herod has John in prison, and John’s disciples seem to be hanging out with the disciples of the Pharisees.

Vs. 34 In [John 3:26-30](#), John had told his disciples that Jesus was the bridegroom.

- John was saying the people were the bride, Jesus is the bridegroom, and he was the match maker/best man.
- Jesus is reminding them of what John had told them—He is the bridegroom.
- **Those who are happy for the bridegroom can’t fast while they are partying with Him.**

Vs. 36-38 They were being critical of Jesus and His disciples because they didn’t seem religious enough... they were acting like it was a party. Jesus responded with two parables.

Q: What is wrong with cutting a piece off a new garment to mend an old one?

- First, the new garment is worth more than the old.
- Second, you ruin the new to repair the old.
- Third, the repair won’t work.

Q: What's wrong with filling an old wineskin with new wine?

- A wineskin was a goatskin sewn into a bag. When wine is put in the bag, it ferments and stretches the bag.
- An old wine skin wouldn't be able to stretch any more. The new wine would ruin the old wineskin and spill out and be lost.

Q: So what is Jesus telling them?

- Jesus is telling them that His movement is new and dynamic, and is going to require some changes in their thinking.
 - **Something that is new and dynamic can't be confined to something that has already done all the changing it is going to do.**
- They wanted Jesus to put His movement into their structures; but their structures would never be flexible enough to contain His movement.
 - Jesus wasn't saying there were no rules in His movement, just that the rules in His movement were not going to be defined by the old system of religion.

[Vs. 39](#) This parable is also told in [Matt 9:16-17](#); [Mark 2:21-22](#)... but only Luke records this last verse.

- Old wine is alcoholic.
 - It numbs the senses, and people can become addicted to it... so much so that eventually they are not able to tell that new wine is better ([John 2:10](#)).
 - **People who are drunk with their old religious ways are not going to be able to appreciate either their need for what Jesus is offering or how much better it is!**
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Follow Up Assignment

Q: In [Luke 5:29](#), Levi's response to being asked by Jesus to follow Him, was to throw a big party for Jesus, and invite all his friends. What has been your response to being asked to follow Jesus?

Q: Do you approach sinners differently than Jesus did?

- If so, what needs to change in your approach?

Q: Jesus' followers always seemed to look like they were having a good time or a party. Does your ministry or small group look more like a party... or a fast?