



Lesson 9: The God Who Gives Life

1. Many times in life, we face situations where we feel like no one understands us. We may be going through depression, illness, loss of any kind, or even financial troubles, and we feel alone, rejected, or misunderstood. **Have you ever felt this way?**
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
2. In Episode 9 of *Story Encounters: The Chosen*, we meet a man who must have truly felt alone. Leprosy was a disfiguring, humiliating disease, and being highly contagious, lepers were outcasts from family and society. Perhaps worst of all, they also felt they were ostracized by God Himself.

“Of all diseases known in the East the leprosy was most dreaded. Its incurable and contagious character, and its horrible effect upon its victims, filled the bravest with fear. Among the Jews it was regarded as a judgment on account of sin, and hence was called “the stroke,” “the finger of God.” Deep-rooted, ineradicable, deadly, it was looked upon as a symbol of sin. By the ritual law, the leper was pronounced unclean. Like one already dead, he was shut out from the habitations of men... he was isolated from his family, cut off from the congregation of Israel, and was doomed to associate with those only who were similarly afflicted.”

— ELLEN WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, P. 262

Someone who had leprosy was:

- ☐ Shunned from society
- ☐ Kept away from their family
- ☐ Seen as being cursed by God
- ☐ All of the above

3. Can you imagine the utter loneliness and despair this man must have felt, feeling that the whole world and even God had abandoned him?

No one (except for Miriam in Numbers 12 and Namaan in 2 Kings 5) had ever been cured of leprosy. Yet when this leper heard about Jesus, hope sprung up in his heart and he acted in faith.

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*A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, ‘If you are willing, you **can** make me clean.’ Jesus was indignant. He reached out and **touched** the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.”*

MARK 1:40-42, NIV.

4. It’s interesting that the leper says, “You CAN make me clean.” He was confident Jesus could heal him. He didn’t doubt Jesus’ power, but he doubted Jesus’ willingness to help him.

After all, how likely would you go to God for healing if you felt that God was the One who had cursed you to begin with?

Answer:

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The question he asks is, “Are you willing to do it? Or am I too far gone, too ugly, too grotesque, too sinful, too unlovable? I know you could heal me but maybe I don’t deserve it...” He had reasons to think that Jesus might not be willing, but Jesus replies and says, “I am willing!”

We often believe that God's promises are for other people, but as soon as it turns to us, it's very easy to think, that's probably not for me, that was for them, they're probably a cut above me, they're probably a little better up, they're probably not as sinful, as rotten, as fill-in-the-blank as I am. It's sometimes much easier for me to say God's promises are for that person, but to say God's promises are for me, it almost feels presumptuous. But they are for me, and they are for you personally."

— ADAPTED FROM DAVID ASSCHERICK, "THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN"
(DA WITH DA VIDEO SERIES).

5. How would you have reacted if a leper approached you?

- ☐ Run away from him in fear
- ☐ Run towards him with open arms

When the leper approached Jesus, Jesus did not react as everyone else did.

Scan the code on the right to watch a video.



“*Rather than stepping away [from him], Jesus stepped IN to the situation... He TOUCHED him, which was unthinkable.*

— DAVID ASSCHERICK

6. When the leper encountered Jesus and asked for healing, the power of that life-giving touch from the Creator was no match for the disease or despair of leprosy.

No longer held back by the weight of his disease, he would be able to hug his family, visit his friends, have a career, go to synagogue. No longer would he be regarded as shunned and rejected by people and God. Jesus had truly given him a new life!

Jesus didn't simply make Him well on the outside, **He touched a deeper chord and healed the very heart and soul of the leper.**

“The work of Christ in cleansing the leper from his terrible disease is an illustration of His work in cleansing the soul from sin. The man who came to Jesus was “full of leprosy.” Its deadly poison permeated his whole body.” The disciples sought to prevent their Master from touching him; for he who touched a leper became himself unclean. But in laying His hand upon the leper, Jesus received no defilement. **His touch imparted life-giving power. The leprosy was cleansed. Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,—deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power... But Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution. His presence has healing virtue for the sinner...**

It required nothing less than creative power to restore health to that decaying body. The same voice that spoke life to man created from the dust of the earth had spoken life to the dying... And the same power that gave life to the body had renewed the heart. He who at the creation “spake, and it was,” who “commanded, and it stood fast,” (Psalm 33:9), had spoken life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The healing of the body was an evidence of the power that had renewed the heart...

“In Him was life,” and He says, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 1:4; 10:10... And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick, and spoke forgiveness to the sinner.

— ELLEN WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, P. 266, 269, 270.

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He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.”

PSALM 103:3, NLT.

7. Have you ever felt overwhelmed by guilt or something you did wrong?

Answer:

Sin has the power to cripple us—mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. However, Jesus is not afraid to come near to us, to touch our very hearts, and bring new life to us. **His presence in us has the power to heal us and give us a new life!**

Anyone who comes to Him and says, as the leper did, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean,” will immediately hear the answer, “I am willing... Be clean” (Matthew 8:2,3, NKJV).

8. Scan the code on the right to watch a video.



What change do you notice in the disciples from when they first met the leper to after they witnessed Jesus’ compassion and healing toward him?

Answer:

9. Have you ever watched a little child and realized they do many of the same things their parents do? Maybe you’ve seen a little boy walk with his hands in his pockets in the same way his father does. Or maybe you’ve watched a little girl get dressed up in a similar fashion as her mother. The old adage, “By beholding, you become changed,” is true in many aspects of life, including our own walk and journey with God.

When Jesus taught the disciples, He did more than just tell them how they should live or what God is like. He **SHOWED** them. He walked with them. He did life together with His disciples. They walked through the towns and cities with Him. They ate with Him. They saw His every move. And they learned. They were transformed by beholding their Teacher and God.

Scan the code on the right to watch a video.



The more time we spend with Jesus, the more we become like Him and can experience the new abundant life He desires to give us.

10. What are some ways you can spend more time with God and 'observe' Him?

Answer:

“*It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones.*”

— ELLEN WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, P.83.

Sometimes it's easy just to rush through reading the Bible, but it's important to pause and really take in what He is saying to each of us with each line. Everything Jesus did has meaning for us today. The Word of God is powerful enough to have an amazing impact in our life. It has the power to transform us, heal us, and give us a more abundant life in Christ!

The incredible thing is that, just as the disciples were led to compassion after witnessing Jesus' compassion, **we too can become conduits of God's life-giving power to others!**

How would you like to respond?

- ☐ I understand that God's promises are for me today, and He is more than willing to help me through every difficult situation.
- ☐ I desire Jesus to forgive and cleanse me from the leprosy of sin.
- ☐ I desire to spend more time with Jesus.
- ☐ I want to become a conduit of God's life-giving power to those around me.
- ☐ I want to treat others how Jesus would.
- ☐ I would like to study the Bible more and experience its transformational power.

“...You were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world... gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, **God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions**—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

EPHESIANS 2:1-10, NIV.