

## **SERMON SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JESUS**

**SUBJECT: The Amazing Gospel**

**SCRIPTURE: Mark 1:40-2:12**

**SERMON: No. 4**

The events of the leper being healed, the paralytic being healed and having His sins forgiven amazed the people who saw and heard these things. What do such miracles evoke from you? It should be amazement, as well.

### **Introduction**

Jack Wurm had an amazing thing happen to him. In 1949, Mr. Wurm was broke and out of a job. One day he was walking along a San Francisco beach when he came across a bottle with a piece of paper in it. As he read the note, he discovered that it was the last will and testament of Daisy Singer Alexander, heir to the Singer sewing machine fortune. The note read, "To avoid confusion, I leave my entire estate to the lucky person who finds this bottle and to my attorney, Barry Cohen, share and share alike." When the matter was taken to court, the courts accepted the theory that the heiress had written the note 12 years earlier, and had thrown the bottle into the Thames River in London. From there it had drifted across the oceans to the feet of a penniless and jobless Jack Wurm. His chance discovery netted him over 6 million dollars in cash and Singer stock.

When you think of this man's need, the provision to meet that need, and the timing of that whole incident, we'd have to say that this whole story is truly amazing.

In understanding what happened in these two miracles, you will be amazed at the good news, relating to the Person of Jesus.

**I. THE MAN WITH LEPROSY. MARK (1:40).** *There came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.*

Leprosy was the most dreaded disease that a person could contract. The facial features changes to an inhuman appearance. Ulcerations discharge a foul odor. The eyebrows fall out; the voice becomes hoarse, and the breath wheezes because of the ulceration of the vocal chords. The hands and feet become ulcerated. The average course of the disease is nine years, and it ends in mental decay, coma, and ultimately death. The sufferer becomes utterly repulsive, both to himself and to others.

Jesus had finished a preaching tour in the towns in the Galilean region. Just after He finishes His last sermon, a man in this ugly state of disease, comes up to Him and says, *"If you are willing, you can make me clean."* *There are four things about this incident.*

**1. The Attitude of the Leper was Humility.** This is the attitude everyone of us should have when we come to Jesus. Jesus isn't a genie in a bottle. We're talking about God, here. When we approach Jesus, we need to recognize His authority, we must treat Him with respect.

**2. The Attitude of Jesus was Compassion. Mark 1:41.** *Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.* Jesus felt the pain of this man, right down to His very core. He reached out and touched him. This was not pity or sympathy, This was love! Jesus loved this ugly, repulsive, and unclean man so much that He touched him. There is no telling how long it had been since this leper had been touched by another human being. But Jesus, out of true compassion, reached out his hand and touched him, because He loved him and wanted to make him whole.

**That compassion of Jesus is still present today.** He wants to touch you today, no matter what you have done in your past, no matter who you have hurt, no matter what the condition of your finances, or the condition of your personal life. He wants to touch you with His love, and heal you of your hurts and the disease of sin. Just like He did with the leper. *The result of Jesus' touch is found in the next verse...*

**Mark 1:42** As soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

**3. The Attitude of the Leper was Obedience. Mark 1:43-44.**

And he straightly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See that ye say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. Jesus had a reason for asking this leper to obey Him. Jesus asked the man to do what was required by Jewish law, he had to show himself to the local priest, and get his approval that he was cured. *Jesus had a much bigger purpose in mind.*

**This miracle was going to be a testimony to the local priest.**

Jesus was intending for this miracle to be a sign of the long awaited Messiah. Jesus knew that every priest knew the signs of the Messiah's coming.....

**Isaiah, the prophet, was very specific about what they were:**

The eyes of the blind would be opened; the lame would leap like a deer; the tongue of the dumb would sing; and the lepers would be cleansed. This miracle was one of those signs being fulfilled. And by obeying Jesus, the priest would have been introduced to the Messiah in terms that a religious leader would understand.

This leper's obedience would be a testimony to that area of the Messiah.

*There is an important lesson here for us.*

**Our obedience to God's Word becomes a testimony** to those who need to know the truth about Jesus. The Bible is very specific on how we are to behave in our marriages, in our relationships with one another, how we raise our children, how we are to live in our neighborhoods and treat our neighbors, and what we are to do for our elected officials. When we follow these commands, we become a testimony to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. *Since the man has been cured his attitude has changed...*

**4. The Attitude of Disobedience. Mark 1:45.** *But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could do no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.* Disobedience to Jesus resulted in a hindrance of the gospel, in losing the opportunity with the local priest to see that the man had been cured of leprosy. His attitude was now .... "Forget it God, I know more than you, and I'll handle things my way."

In my experience, I've seen a lot of arrogance in God's people toward God's Word.

- 1) When conflicts come up in the church, I've seen people act as if they are the focus of the church, rather than God.
- 2) When disagreements crop up in marriages, I've seen couples choose to rely on instinct, and selfishness rather than God's Word.
3. When Christians have problems with their children, I've seen so many go to secular psychology, rather than the Bible.
4. When God is ignored, a chance for God to show His relevance and power to the people around us is lost.

5. We need to wake up to the fact that God's Word works to accomplish God's plans. Don't mess with it! Just know it and obey it.

**II. Healing the Paralyzed Man. Mark 2:1-2.** And again he entered into Capernaum, after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. *The fame of Jesus is spreading.*. Scripture states.. it was noised that he was in the house.

Apparently this was a house that Jesus had visited many times, and everyone knew the house. It was a typical home in that region of the world. It was constructed of clay brick. It had a single room for sleeping and living. And connected to it was a stable that housed the domestic animals. The roof of the house was flat, supported by beams and covered with straw and packed mud. On the outside of the house were a set of stairs, leading up to the roof.

**1. To this crowded house came five men. (Mark 2:3-5).** They came unto him bringing one sick of the palsy, which was born of four. 4 When they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

One of them was paralyzed and laying on a stretcher, while his four friends carried the stretcher from the four corners. But when they tried to get in, they couldn't because the crowd was so big. So, they came up with an alternative plan. They climbed the steps on the outside of the house, ripped open a hole in the straw roof that was large enough for this bed to fit through, and they carefully lowered their friend through the hole in front of Jesus.

**2. Jesus saw the faith of these five men and cured the man. (5).** *When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy , Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. Jesus saw three facts in their faith.*

**i. They dared to do the difficult.** This is the point where faith always shows itself. It was no easy thing trying to carry the dead weight of a paralyzed man, on a bed, up a set of narrow stairs. This was a difficult thing. When our faith attempts to do the difficult, it becomes a shining example of real life to the people around us.

**ii. They dared to do the unorthodox.** I can guarantee you that tearing up a neighbor's roof was not an accepted social custom. There were going to be repercussions for what they did. But they counted the cost and decided that getting their friend to Jesus was more important than following normal practices and procedures.

**iii. The dared to be costly.** Someone was going to have to pay for that roof. I almost laugh when I think of what the face of that homeowner looked like as daylight become visible, then a hole big enough for a bed to go through, appeared in his roof. But these men dared to take on the cost in order to get their friend to Jesus. *Not only did Jesus see the faith of these four men he also saw...*

**2. The lack of faith of the religious leaders. (6-7).** *There were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doeth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?* In the Jewish mind sickness equaled sin. They believed that a sick man was sick because he had sinned. Sin and suffering were connected quite closely.

**a) Jesus knowing their thoughts said (8-9).** And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason these things in your heart? 9 Whether it is easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

Real proof in the Jewish mind would be that when the man's sins truly were forgiven, he would also be healed of his paralysis. So Jesus says...

**Mark 2:10-12a** But that ye may know that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, too up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that thy were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion. Jesus did it! The very thing that would prove to the Jewish leaders that this man's sins had indeed been forgiven, happened! He was healed. So by the Jewish leaders' own reasoning, they had to admit what they didn't want to admit, Jesus, the baby born in Bethlehem's manger 30 years before, was the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God!

## **Conclusion**

**Illustration:** General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was once asked by a newspaper reporter, "What is the secret of your amazing life? Booth answered, "I told the Lord that he could have all that there is of William Booth."

And that's one of the results of knowing Jesus better. If you are amazed enough by Him to let Him be the leader of your life, your life will take on amazing proportions, as well.