

## Human Leprosy And Its Divine Cure

**Horatius Bonar:**

"When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."—Matthew 8:1-3.

The Lord ends speaking and begins working; He comes down from the pulpit and enters the hospital Such is his whole life: words and deeds intermingled; words of health and deeds of health. His lips breathe fragrance, and in his hand is the balm of Gilead.

Crowds follow him; but it is with one only that we have here to do. Let us mark, (1.) the leper; (2.) his healer.

I. The leper. He is one of the vast multitude; but there is a difference between him and them. They flock to and follow Jesus; but not as men full of wants; only to see and hear some new or curious things. But there is one exception,—the leper; one whose whole head was sick and heart faint; one who not merely needs Christ, but knows that he needs Him.

(1.) He comes. All are needy in some way or other; he only so feels his need as to step out from the crowd and draw more closely to the Lord. It is his need, his disease that prompts and brings him. So is it still. Crowds following Jesus, only a few dealing personally with him. Yet what else will do?

(2.) He worships. He kneels before the Lord. What he has heard has given him high thoughts of Christ. Surely He is the Son of God, the Christ of God. It is with high thoughts of Him that we must come; poor thoughts of ourselves.

(3.) He pleads. He has something to say, and he says it briefly and well. It is with no laboured or set speech that he comes. He tells his need, and utters his thoughts of Christ: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He knows that He can; and he casts himself upon his sovereign will for the exercise of this power in his case. The "if" is not so much an expression of doubt as to his willingness as an appeal to his will. It is not unbelief but faith that speaks the "if." He wants to be made clean, and He casts himself on Christ for this. He is the hyssop, the water, the blood, the ashes, the priest, the physician, all in one. Thus we still come, doubting neither the willingness nor the power, yet casting ourselves on the will of the Lord; not presuming to dictate, yet appealing to his sovereign grace. As the needy, the sick, the unclean, we come; for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

II. The Healer. He is Jesus of Nazareth; the physician of Gilead, with the balm in his hand; He who tells us, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; who asks, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He carries with him all the health and the skill of heaven. He was known as such when here; He is known as such still. The healer of the world!

(1.) He put forth his hand. He does not shrink from nearness to the leper; he is not afraid of infection. He invites approach; and in token of his sympathy and kindness, He puts forth his hand. That hand now wields the golden scepter; it is the nail-pierced hand; and it is still put forth. It contains as much of health, and power, and blessing, as when he was here.

(2.) He touched him. Not nearness merely, but touch; the one might indicate the willingness, the other brings the cure itself. It is contact with the Healer that we need; nothing short of this! We touch him, He touches us! This is all. A touch draws out the heavenly electricity, and pervades us with its divine energy.

(3.) He spoke. Voice and hand go together. "I will, be thou clean." He lets him know that the will in him is no obstacle. The leper suspected that the sovereignty might be a barrier. Jesus removes the fear. No. My will is not the hindrance. Ye will not; not I will not. This was never found an obstacle when Jesus was here; nor is it so now. To each coming one his language is still, "I will, be thou clean." Our will is the hindrance, not his.

(a) It is the voice of love. He pities the leper, and hastens to let him know this. He has compassion on him, and does not keep him in suspense. He has no pleasure in delays.

(b) It is the voice of authority. It reminds us of Genesis 1:2, 3. He speaks as one who knew that he could cure. Not hesitatingly. Nor are the words a prayer, but a command. He speaks, and it is done.

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**(c) It is the voice of power. He has the power to carry his authority into effect. He speaks, and it is done. He said once, "Let there be light, and there was light" He speaks now, "Be whole," and the leprosy is cleansed. Thus love, authority, and power are all conjoined. It is the voice of Omnipotence.**

**He is the same Christ still; with the same love, and authority, and power. He is still the Healer, and the worst of diseases fly from his touch and voice. Let us go to Him with all that afflicts us. He call and He will heal us of all.**

**It is hard to persuade men that this is really tile case; that the Son of God has to do with lepers still; that lie is the physician for the worst of diseases; and that as He asks no reward for the cure, so He asks no preparation nor qualification in the diseased one. With our whole leprosy we come; He takes our case in hand; He touches and heals. There is no case of evil too hard for Him; no human leprosy too incurable for His skill; no human leper so repulsive as to make Him shrink back. Jordan did not flee from the touch of the Syrian leper, but bade him welcome when he came to its waters; so Jesus turns not away from the most loathsome specimen of diseased humanity that ever presented itself to His gaze or touch.**

**He wants to heal! Wilt thou not, O man, give Him the opportunity which He seeks of healing thee? The whole head may be sick, and the whole heart faint. But what of that? Is He not able to heal to the uttermost? Be persuaded to present thyself to Him, just as thou art. Give this divine Healer thy simple confidence. Take Him for what He is, and He will take thee for what thou art. Thus shalt thou meet in love; thou to be healed, and He to heal; thou to have the joy of being healed, and He to have the joy of healing thee, and to announce to heaven, in the presence of the angels of God, that another leper has been healed!**