



Message **Transcript**

The Willingness of Jesus

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It is a joy to be with you this morning. As they said on the screen there, I am planting a church in Colorado Springs. Did you know they're putting in 125,000 homes in the next 20 years on that east side out there off the 24 and all the way wrapping around a monument. That's 125,000 homes that will need to hear the gospel. That's 125,000 families, children, marriages that need the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, I'm not saying that some of them don't know Jesus, but you can imagine the effect and how many churches are needed out in that area. So, that's why I'm a church planner. That's why I targeted that area. It's one of the fastest growing places in the United States.

Now to Jesus. You know what I really love about Jesus? I love about Jesus that it didn't matter how desperate a person was that when they came to Jesus, Jesus always welcomed them. He never turned anybody away. Not once did He turn anybody away. Whether it was Nicodemus, the religious leader who came late at night and snuck in to see Jesus, whether it was the thief on the cross, whether it was the woman caught in adultery or the woman by the well, the Samaritan woman, or whether it was Mary and Martha, Jesus' friend that came to Him pleading with Him for their brother's life, Jesus never turned anyone away.

And I think about those friends that they go up on the rooftop with their buddy who is crippled and they rip off the tiles of the roof. They lower their friend to Jesus because they knew that Jesus had what they needed. So, maybe you're desperate this morning. Maybe you're in a place this morning of hopelessness or despair or

brokenness. I don't know anything about you, but God knows everything about you.

So, with that, I want you to turn with me to one of my favorite stories in the Bible, Mark chapter one. Turn with me in your Bibles to Mark chapter one. We're going to look at the leper this morning, and there's just so much I love about Jesus. But one thing I know about Jesus is the hopeless, the sinful, the broken move Jesus' heart in a powerful way.

So, let's look at this this morning in verse 40. "And a leper came to Him, beseeching Him, and falling on his knees before Him and saying to him, 'If You are willing, You can make me clean.' And moved with compassion, He stretched out His hand and touched him and said to him, 'I am willing.'"

Underline that, circle that, "I am willing. Be cleansed. And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was clean or cleansed. And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away. And He said to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone, but go show yourself to the priests and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded for a testimony to them. But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news about to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city but stayed out in unpopulated areas. And they were coming to Him from everywhere.'"

Let's pray together. Father, thank You so much for Your word. Your word is truth. Thank You for Your love through your word. Thank You for this story, Lord, that just shows Your radical love for the desperate. So, this morning, Lord, I know so many people have come in here expectant. I pray that You would speak to Your people. I

pray that everything that is done here today would be for Your fame and Your glory and Your honor.

But would You send Your power Lord, convicting those that don't know you of sin, judgment, and righteousness, and those that do know You, Lord, encouraging them this morning? In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Now, this man in Luke 5:12, it says that he was full of leprosy. That means the leprosy has absolutely consumed his body. Luke was a doctor, so when he says this guy was full of leprosy, he probably had it for 15 to 20 years. And he was rotting to death. He had been given a death sentence. This was a living death.

I've never seen anybody with leprosy, but I've seen pictures. And it is a nasty, nasty thing. And in Jesus' day, people would ostracize you. People believed that this man probably had leprosy because of his sin. So, you were a religious outcast. You were a social outcast. You were totally put outside of everything. You had nobody. Matter of fact, I think about this guy, and he's just absolutely in a place of total, absolute destitution and brokenness.

Now, I have eight kids, and I like to put myself in these stories. And I think about, "What if it was me in this Jewish culture?" I'd have my two sons out in the back, and we'd be working in our wood shop. We'd come in from after a great day of work, and we'd come into the house. I have six daughters. I don't have a 401k. I have a 401 wedding.

And every time, whether I've been gone 20 minutes, whether I've been gone an

hour, whether I've been gone a week, the girls come running in and screaming; and they latch onto me. So, this man, he comes in from his wood shop with his two sons after a great day of work. And he goes in, and the girls are all in there cooking dinner. He begins to get ready. He takes off his shirt, and his wife sees rashes and white spots on his back. Terror fills her soul.

She mentions it to him. Immediately, they get up in the morning, and they go off to the priests. And the priest examines this person and says, "Yes, you have leprosy." And their fears are realized. Their anxieties are realized. Now, this man is cast out away from his family. He's put aside. He's thrown out. He is no longer able to be with his family anymore. And as he walks off, can you imagine the tears streaming down their family's faces? This was the sentence of the leper in Jesus' day.

Nobody in here can understand this except somebody that's had a terminal diagnosis. You understand. They understand. I can't even imagine. This man now, he receives his death sentence, and he would rot to death, a long, slow, disgusting death in hopeless isolation.

Leviticus 13:45, it'll be on the screen, says this. It said, "That leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose or be unkept. And he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean. As long as he has the disease, he is unclean. He shall," listen to this, "he shall live alone. His dwell shall be outside the camp."

Now, he has the answer to why he's been so exhausted, why his joints have been

aching. And everybody over 50 don't panic. That's just normal, but why he's been sore.

So, this disease would start to take him over. He would get lumps on his face. His skin would start to droop. He would break out in sores that would lacerate. And actually he would stink. They say you could smell a leper 100 feet away. Matter of fact, he would come up to a crowd of people. He would have to put his hand over his mouth and say, "Unclean, unclean," and people would literally walk on the other side of the street. The crowd would disperse when the leper would come anywhere. Matter of fact, if a leper got within 100 feet of you, you could pick up a rock, and you could throw it at him in the Jewish culture.

Alone and outside, an outcast, hopelessly broken, hopelessly, without any hope whatsoever. Nobody cares what his dreams are, what his aspirations are. They could care less. He no longer is seen as a human being. He can't go to a wedding. He can't go to a funeral. He can't go to a party. He is kicked out of the temple. He can't hold his baby in his arms. He can't be intimate with his wife. He can't hug his mother or his father. He is absolutely destitute.

So, when this man comes to Jesus, Jesus is his only hope. There is no other. Soon his hands would turn into claws. It would attack his nervous system. He would lose feelings in his hands and his feet. There's tons of records that lepers would fall asleep in India, and the rats would come in and literally eat their fingers and their toes off. You couldn't feel heat, so you would burn your hand.

His voice would become raspy. Your vocal chords would dry up. Your bones

would shrivel. So, when he comes to Jesus, he probably doesn't sound like me.

"Jesus, if You were willing. Jesus, if You were willing. Jesus." Totally alone, an outsider, an outcast, completely broken, isolated, bankrupt, helpless, and hopeless.

And I believe with a room full of this size of people, there's many of you that feel that way right now, probably crying out the same words that this man did. "Why me, God? Why, God?" And if you didn't come in that way, there's plenty of people in Denver that feel that way right now. They're hurting. They're broken. They're hopeless. They're alone. They're outside. They have no one. And just like this man who would have died alone, there are thousands of people in Colorado, in Denver, in Colorado Springs that are probably going to die alone.

You see, the benefit of what we have... I've lost three very good, three or four really good friends in the last three months in their 30s. But one thing they had is they died of cancer that this person did not have is they were surrounded by loved ones. They were surrounded by friends and family and people that loved them and church people, the people that were madly in love with them and madly in love with God and worshiping and praising God. Yet, he has nobody. And you know and I know that there are people all through this city that are in the exact situation and maybe sitting in the seat right next to you this morning, broken and alone.

So, it would attack your extremities and then your nervous system, and then your hair would turn white. His hands would turn into claws, sucking away his life emotionally, physically, spiritually, absolutely broken. Yet, one day he hears about a man. Could you imagine?

I remember when I heard this name, the name of Jesus. Jesus, Jesus, You make the darkness tremble, and hope floods his soul. I can't even imagine. He's heard of the dead raised. He's heard of the blind seeing. He's heard of the demons cast out of his life. He's heard all these things about Jesus. And could you imagine the hope that floods his soul? And he runs to Jesus. And he runs to Jesus.

And what does Jesus do? He hears of the demons fleeing, the dead raised, other leopards cleanse, the blind seeing. He hears about the lame walking. I mean, I can't even put myself in this kind of position right now. But what does he say? "Is it possible? Could it be? Would this Jesus care about me, or would He walk the other side of the street like everybody else? Would He pick up rocks?"

And I can see him as he walks through the crowd. Can you imagine? I mean, there's crowds always around Jesus. Here Jesus is overwhelmed with people coming to Him, and here comes this leper screaming, "Unclean, unclean." And everybody's getting out of the way. They're picking up rocks, and they're, "Ooh, he's disgusting, and he stinks." Yet, he goes to Jesus, and he falls down at Jesus' feet.

Sorry. I felt like that guy once where I had everything, house, two houses off the beach in Newport Beach, cars, boats, Harleys, the whole deal, and lost everything, ended up in the back of my car alone and outside. And I broke every single relationship in my life because of my lifestyle, completely broken, completely separated. My mom said, "I don't want to see you again until you get your life together. I just can't take it anymore."

I've been there, but I ran to Jesus. So, here he comes to Jesus, and this is one of the most amazing things on the planet. The first touch that this man had in over 15 or 20 years was from the King of kings and the Lord of glory. Jesus reaches out and immediately, it says there in Mark, immediately he is cleansed. Jesus touches him, and in a nanosecond he is washed perfectly clean. Jesus makes all things new, period, the end. That is our King.

And you know, if you look in the text there it says, "I am willing. I am willing." I love that. Every time it says "I am" in the Bible, I circle it because Jesus is that same person that is in the burning bush that says, "Tell them," to Moses, speaking to Moses, and what does he say? He says, "You tell them the great I Am, the I Am that I Am sent you, Moses." And Jesus Himself even says, He says, "Before Abraham was," what?

I am.

I am. I am. So, when you look at this text, you think, "I am." The great I Am, the preexistent one, the one that was before all things, the one that through Him and by Him and for Him and to Him created all things, reaches out and touches this man. And the first touch he had was from almighty God, Jesus. I love that. I love that about him, and he's immediately healed. He's immediately cleansed.

Maybe there's somebody in here this morning that needs a touch from Jesus, from the great I Am. I like to take my trials and my tribulations and my fears and my anxieties and anything that comes in, and I like to put, "I Am," and then draw just a blank line after it. "I am hope. I am peace. I am love. I am compassion. I am mercy. I

am healing. I am God. I am Jesus. I am the door. I am the vine. I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am. I am that I am."

Maybe you've come in here this morning and you're desperate and you're hopeless and you're hurting and you're broken. Or maybe your neighbor that you live next to is broken or hurting or hopeless this morning or desolate or destitute or in isolation. Church, we are plan A for God. There is no plan B. There is no other way. You're it. You're Jesus with skin. And He's inviting you in to a supernatural, radical relationship with Him so that you can be used by Him to touch people just like the leper.

Maybe you need to touch yourself this morning. Maybe you need God to come in because Jesus' touch cleanses. Let's read verse 42 again. "And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. And he sternly warned them and immediately sent them away. And he said to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone, but go show yourselves to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded for proof or for a testimony to him.'"

Why is this important? I think it's extremely important because there's a reason why Jesus... And I always ask when I'm studying the Bible, I always ask, "Okay, why did You put that Lord? Why did You put that there? Why did this leper, why was he supposed to go and go to the priest? What was God doing there? What was Jesus doing there? Why was that important?" Well, we have the answer in Leviticus chapter 14. Okay? And bear with me.

So, think of it this way. God was trying to get the priests, the religious leaders,

onto His agenda. They were rejecting the Messiah, and God was trying to use Jesus as the Messiah to show them that Jesus is the Savior of the world. Yet they rejected him. We all know the story. Right?

But check this out, and I want you to pay close attention to this. It'll be on the screen. In Leviticus 14:1, this is always the fun book to go through in your devotions. Right? You know? Boy, you know? What if I told you, "Hey, we're going to teach Leviticus on Sunday morning." Right? How many of you would stop showing up? Let me tell you, Jesus is on every page of Leviticus. That's one of the most amazing books in the Bible when you open your spiritual eyes and see Jesus on every page, and let me show you what I'm talking about here.

So, he sends this guy... Well, the guy doesn't go, but he tells the guy to go as a testimony to them. And read with me. "This shall be the law of the leprous person for the day of his cleansing." By the way, leprosy is never spoken of as a healing. It's always a cleansing. Leprosy is a picture of sin, okay? And especially in our lives. So, sin has to be dealt with in a certain way. Sin has to be washed by the blood of Jesus Christ. There's no other way. There's no way to cleanse yourself without the blood.

That's right.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses you. It washes you. It purifies you. There is no salvation without the blood of Christ, so keep that in your mind as we read through this. "He shall be brought to the priest, and the priest shall go out of the camp. And the priest shall look. And then if the case of the leprous disease is healed in the leprous

person, the priest shall command them to take for him who is to be cleansed," listen to this, "two live, clean birds and cedarwood and scarlet yarn and hyssop.

"And the priest shall command them to kill one of the birds in the earthen vessel over fresh water. He shall take the live bird with the cedarwood and the scarlet yarn and the hyssop and dip them and the live bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over fresh water. And he shall sprinkle it seven times," seven times, the number of completion, "on him who is to be cleansed of the leprous disease. Then he shall pronounce him clean and shall let the living bird go into the open field."

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe this is without a doubt a picture of Jesus Christ right here that He was trying to communicate to the priests. And I stand on the shoulders of giants on this one. Ask Lewis Johnson, who is a renowned New Testament scholar and a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, where your pastor got his master's degree, writes extensively on this. Charles Spurgeon, anybody ever heard of him? David Guzik and many, many others.

Let me break it down for you. The earthen vessel, Jesus came as what? An earthen vessel, right? He came as a man from heaven, from glory to earth in an earthen vessel. The running water is living water. The scarlet thread, that, that represents... Remember Rahab? How was Rahab saved from destruction when the Israelites came up against Jericho? She put a scarlet thread, a scarlet piece of yarn, out her window. Her house was on the wall, and everything else collapsed. But there's her house standing. Right?

Amen.

Okay. I mean, this is fascinating. You know that the Bible ties in from Genesis to Revelation. It is God's word. He wants us to grab ahold and see how wondrous He is. With all the different authors, everything still ties together.

The hyssop, Jesus is on the cross. They take the hyssop, vinegar, and water, and they offer it up to Jesus when he says what, "I thirst," right? And Jesus takes it. Also with David, David says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." He was admitting also that he was as bad as the leper.

Blood and water mixed together, when the spear entered Jesus' side, right, what poured out? Blood and water. And then of course, the cedarwood, well, that's a no-brainer, right? I shouldn't have to explain that one to you, right? The cross of Jesus Christ. And then the two birds, he takes one of the birds. He pulls his head off. He sacrifices it, drips the blood into the water. Then they take the other bird, and they dip the bird into the water and let the bird go in the field. The resurrection and the victorious thing that Jesus has done for us.

So, when Jesus said, "Go to the priests," this is the ceremony that they would do. And there's more. They would shave his body. They would wash him and wait seven days. And then on the eighth day, new beginnings if you're into numbers at all, a lamb without blemish was offered. That lamb without blemish was offered for the leper, for his cleansing. And the priest would take the blood from that lamb, and they would

put the blood on his right ear lobe, his right thumb, and his right toe.

Then they would take a vessel of oil or a lob of oil. They would break that open. They would put it on his right ear, his right thumb, and his right toe. And then they would pour the rest of it. They would sprinkle him seven times with the blood, sprinkle him seven times with the oil. Then they would pour the vessel over his head, the Holy Spirit.

So, now this person was to hear the word of God, and the hearing, the doing, the going, and the doing and the going, and go out cleansed and filled with the Holy Spirit as a witness to the people.

Amen.

Look what God has done. God has cleansed me. He has washed me. He has bought me with a price. My life is not my own. He has bought me with the precious blood of Christ, and now I am to walk. I'm to hear it. I'm to do it. I'm to go for the King of kings and the Lord of lords, for the great I Am, if you will.

And what has Jesus done for you? My friends, God is madly in love with you through your simple faith in Jesus Christ in Jesus. Jesus is willing this morning. I don't know where you're at. Maybe you're still able to hide your rash with your shirt. Maybe your sin hasn't blown into full-blown leprosy if you will. But here's what I know. Sin only brings death.

Amen.

You will rot to death. Sin will kill you. If you don't know Jesus Christ this morning,

you need to get right with Him. There is no other way to the Father. It is a bloody religion. It is the blood of Christ.

And maybe you're a Christian this morning. You've wandered back in to a life of sin. Maybe you feel like God is waiting there just to clobber you with a big stick. He's mad at you. He hates you. He's disgusted with you. Listen, my Bible says something completely different. My Bible says, "If you confess your sins, if you come back to Him, if you repent of your sin, if you confess, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Come to him for cleansing this morning. Come to Him for cleansing this morning.

A lot of people think God is mad at them and is not there for them and all this thing. But, listen, what it says in Ephesians chapter one is this. It said, "He has blessed you. He has chosen you. He has adopted you. He has redeemed you. He has forgiven you. He has given you an inheritance. He has saved you. He's given you salvation. He has sealed you with the Holy spirit of promise, and that you are in Him."

Do you know if you believe in Jesus Christ this morning, when God sees you, He sees His Son? Stop living a bankrupt life. He is willing to touch you wherever you are with your depression and your anxiety and your addiction and whatever's in your life right now. He is willing. All we have to do is come to Him just like this man did and say... Look, I come to him all the time. I fall on my face. I fall before the cross, and I say, "God, I am worthless. I am unworthy." And He picks me up, and He says, "But you are. You are known and loved by me."

Preach it, brother. Yes.

Don't let Satan rip you off this morning. There is hope for the hopeless. There is life for the bankrupt. Don't believe the lies.

"And a leper came to Him, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him and saying to him, 'If You are willing.'" There's no ifs with God. "You can make me clean. And moved with compassion, He stretched out His hand and touched him and said, 'I am willing. Be cleansed.'"

Guys, I think what moved Jesus with compassion right there more than anything else that this guy would doubt God's love for him. I think what moved Jesus with compassion more than anything else is he's like, "I am so willing. I am so willing." Just like Mary and Martha that said, "Jesus, if you would've been here." And what does Jesus say, "Martha, I am the resurrection and the life."

And then what does he do? He raises Lazarus. Lazarus comes out of the tomb, and He says, "Remove his grave clothes." Right? You guys remember the story, right? So, they go, and they take his grave clothes off. Yet, some of you this morning are still walking around in your grave clothes. You have been risen with Christ. You've been seated in the heavenly with Christ. Yet, you're walking around as a dead man in your grave clothes.

That's right. Come on.

And He wants to release you this morning. He wants to touch you. He wants to cleanse you. He wants to give you a future and a hope, and He wants to fill you with

His resurrection power. Do you realize according to Romans 8:11 that you have the same power living inside of you that raised Christ from the dead?

Amen.

Let that sink in. Let it sink in. The exact same power that raised Christ from the dead living inside of you, Christ in you, the hope of glory. And he's madly in love with you. He's your friend. He's your God. He's your brother. He's your Savior. He's your great, I Am. Amen?

We're going to take communion together. We're going to receive communion together. I want you to hold the cup and the juice till we all have it, and we'll take it together. But here's what I want you to do. I want you to do business with God this morning. I want you to come before Him, and I want you to kneel before Him. And I don't want you to say, "If You are willing." I want you to say, "Lord, I know that You're willing to deal with this addiction in my life. Lord, I know that You're willing to deal with this depression, this anxiety, this hopefulness, this despair, this desolation, this isolation, this aloneness, this outsidersness."

I want you to confess your sin to Him. I want you to examine yourself. Jesus is upstairs. He's with His friends, His disciples. And He says, "This is My body broken for you." And I love that verse, "For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Think about this for a minute. What was that joy? You. When Jesus hung on that cross, He had every blood-bought saint on His mind. For the joy that was set before

Him. You, you, you, you, you, you, you, you, you. That's the God you serve. He is more than willing to touch whatever is going on in your life. A hard marriage, wayward kids, suicidal thoughts.

Don't listen to the crowds. Don't listen to the world. "You're disgusting. You're ugly. You stink. You're fat. You're worthless. You're this. You're that. You're this." I mean, that leper had heard it all, but he did not give a rip. And he ran to Jesus, and he missed it because God was more than willing. "I am willing. Be cleansed." But don't be like that leper and then disobey God and not get onto God's agenda and go out and do your own thing.

God's saying, "Come on My adventure. Come with Me on My journey. Walk with Me, because in My presence is fullness of joy. And the closer you are to Me, the more you're going to experience My presence, My glory, My goodness, My love, My compassion, My healing, My restoration."

I don't know about you, but I want to be like John in that upper room when He was doing the first communion and rest my head on his bosom and hear the heartbeat of my Savior. So, as the ushers come full, please examine yourself this morning.