

**Harmony of the Gospels**  
Part 22  
**“I Am Willing To Touch You”**

A Children’s ministry teacher was very proud of the accomplishments that her class of toddlers had made in understanding What Easter was truly about...

An opportunity arose on a Sunday morning where she could show the congregation how all of her hard work and dedication was paying off.

Her class was allowed to come before the whole church congregation and give their answers on the meaning of the Easter season and what Jesus had done for all of us...

The teacher began to quiz her class before the congregation:

**“Class, who knows what today is?”** A little four year old girl held up her hand and said **“Teacher today is Palm Sunday.”**

The teacher beaming with pride said **“That is fantastic!, that is Wonderful!, “Now does anyone know what next Sunday is?”**

A little boy answered **“Teacher Next Sunday is Easter Sunday...”**

**“Awesome, that is great”**, exclaimed the teacher...

**“Now does anyone know what makes Easter Sunday so special to all of us”.**

Another little girl lifted her hand to offer an answer... **“Yes teacher next Sunday is Easter Sunday because that is the day that Jesus rose from the dead...”**

But before the teacher could congratulate her, the little girl continued...**“But if He sees his shadow, He has to go back in for seven more weeks...”**

**Sometimes despite how good the teacher is, the students are not really paying attention!**

**Ephesians 4:11-12**

11 And Jesus Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some **pastors and teachers,**

12 **for the equipping of the saints** for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

**Jesus established His church to be a place of teaching, Learning, fellowship and Prayer.**

*“For the equipping of Believers in Jesus Christ so that the whole body can be built up and encouraged”.*

One day when they were interviewing Billy Graham they asked him if he could live his life over again, what he would do differently?

*“One of my regrets is that I have not studied enough, I wish that I had studied more and preached less....”*

The great Bible teacher Donald Barnhouse said that if he knew that Jesus was coming in three years, he would spend two of them studying and one preaching...

**Each of these great men of God realized after most of their life had passed, that what was most important to them was knowing and understanding the Word of God better.**

This morning we are going to begin to see *“Jesus the Teacher”*, as he teaches preaches and heals people.

**Matthew 4:23-25**

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, **preaching** the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

24 Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

25 Great multitudes followed Him-- from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

Notice in verse 23 that there are 3 primary aspects of Jesus ministry: teaching, preaching and healing.

**I have had people ask me many times what the difference is between “Teaching and Preaching”.**

1. **Teaching** is for the Believer the one that is already saved, from the Bible, so that they can grow in their knowledge of Jesus and how to serve Him, what His Will is for their life, and to be equipped to share Jesus with others who don't know Him yet.
2. **Preaching** is for the unsaved, those who do not know or understand yet what Jesus has done for them. That they might hear the Word of God concerning what God requires for Salvation and Eternal Life.

**It is not an accident that the Holy Spirit lists “Teaching” first in verse 23.**

- ☞ **Teaching the people the Word of God**, was always the first priority when Jesus began His church.
- ☞ **This is supposed to be the primary purpose** of the Church, to teach the Word of God.
- ☞ **This is the primary purpose of** Calvary Chapel, we are “A teaching Ministry”.
- ☞ **We take people through the entire Bible**, verse by verse, so that they know what God has to say to them.

The Bible says that this is the primary responsibility of the Pastor, to Teach the people the Word of God.

Ephesians 4

12 **1.** for the equipping of the saints **2.** for the work of ministry, **3.** for the edifying of the body of Christ,

1. **To equip:** to provide you with the tools you need to be able to go out and teach others and minister to them.
2. **To instruct how to do the work of ministry** to see by example in the Bible how we are to submit ourselves and serve each other.
3. **To edify**, to build up, to encourage the whole body of Christ.

Then in verses 13 and 14 of Ephesians 4, the reasons why:

**Ephesians 4**

13 **1.** till we all come **to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge** of the Son of God, **to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;**

14 **2.** that **we should no longer be children**, tossed to and fro and carried about **with every wind of doctrine**, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

1. **For unity in the faith in knowledge about who Jesus is**, so that we all believe the same truth of who Jesus really is—i.e.—we are on the same page. There is only one way this can be accomplished, not by what people opinions are about how ministry should be done, but by how the Bible shows that ministry should be done.
2. **So that we are no longer children.** If we never get past the elementary principles of salvation, if we don't get into the “**Meat of the word of God**”, which is how to deal with our own flesh and bring it under submission to our Spirit, then we will remain like children.

Tossed back and forth **when any new doctrine comes along**, and fooled by the trickery of men who teach false things that are not in the Word of God.

- ☞ **Over the years**, I have had many people come to me with lots of ideas as to how **THEY** thought ministry should be done.
- ☞ **The problem was**, those ideas were not found in the Bible, they were the traditions of churches, or the wisdom of men.

We live our lives, and we do ministry in Jesus Church, **the way that He says we should do it**, not the way that men say that we should do it.

- ⊖ **But the church** has stopped teaching people the Bible, so not only do pastors not know what the Bible says any more, the people in the congregation don't know what it says.
- ⊖ **The results are** that the church has become a club for religious people that is organized by the ideas of men and women.

**The format is really very simple: Love the people, and teach them the Word of God, that is all that the church is supposed to be.**

Next in Mark's account of the same story, we see some additional details; Jesus often gets up before the sun rises to pray, and to have fellowship with the Father.

### Mark 1:35-39

35 Now in the morning, **having risen a long while before daylight**, Jesus went out and departed to **a solitary place**; and there He prayed.

If you carefully examine the life of Jesus, you will see that His strength and power to do what He did came from Prayer.

- ⊖ **It was by** his close, intimate time with the father.
- ⊖ **Remember** that although Jesus is God, He has humbled Himself and taken on the body of a man, as such, He is subject to all of the same trials and temptations that all of us experience.

**Jesus overcame the world by close fellowship with the Father, by staying close to His heart, and communication through prayer.**

- ⊖ **Everything that Jesus accomplished for us**, was a result of where he spent his time in fellowship.
- ⊖ **When Jesus went to pray**, He always sought out a place where he could be totally alone with the father, so there were no distractions, no one but himself and the father.

### Mark 1

36 And Simon and those who were with Him **searched for Him**.

37 When they found Him, they said to Him, "**Everyone is looking for You**."

38 But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth."

39 And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

### The Same Account In Luke 4:42-44

42 Now when it was day, **He departed and went into a deserted place**. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them;

43 but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."

44 And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

**Time alone with the Lord in prayer is the most important fundamental thing we can do as Christians.**

- ☞ **It is the single most** important thing that will change us.
- ☞ **Prayer is never about** changing God's will, it is always about changing our will, our heart, putting it into synchronization with the Lord's heart.
- ☞ **Without this special time alone** with the Lord, we immediately begin to slide back into the world and our own flesh.

If you find that you are not really growing in your relationship with Jesus and you are **constantly feeling dry and empty**...examine your prayer life.

- ☞ **Do you start and end your day** with prayer and fellowship, just you and the Lord all alone? **No?, there is the problem!**
- ☞ **Do you take time everyday to read** and MEDITATE on the Word of God.. **No?, there is the problem!**

**Every Christian needs at least a half an hour of prayer each day, except when they are very busy, then they need at least an hour...**

As I prepared for this study this Sunday morning, I was struck by the amazing things that men of God have written about the need for prayer in the life of the believer:

**The following are just a few of those that have been written:**

*There is a story of a man who prayed and prayed because he thought that prayer was about talking. Then he realized that he should become more and more quiet because prayer is really about listening...*

**Why is it not taught more of the need to talk to the Lord less and listen to Him more?**

**Lilly Tomlin asked the Question:**

"Why is that when we talk to God we are said to be praying, but when God talks to us we are called Schizophrenic?"

**Phillip Brooks said**

*"Do not pray for easy lives, Pray to be stronger men."*

*"Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers, Pray for power equal to your task..."*

**Robert Murray said:**

"God will either give you what you ask, or something far better..."

## **Abraham Lincoln**

*“I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go, My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day...”*

## **A.W. Tozer said the best:**

*In our private prayers and in our public services we are forever asking God to do things that He either has already done or cannot do because of our unbelief.*

*We plead for Him to speak when He has already spoken and is at that very moment speaking...*

*We ask Him to come when He is already present and waiting for us to recognize Him,*

*WE beg the Holy Spirit to fill us while all the time we are preventing Him by our doubts...”*

**In the Morning prayer is the key that opens to us the treasure of Gods mercies and blessings, in the evening, it is the key that shuts us up under His protection and safeguard...”**

So, one of the purposes of this study this morning is to inspire you to begin to pray more, and in that praying more often, to get you to listen more and talk less.

**After I read the following story, I realized just how important it is for me as a pastor to inspire you to pray more:**

A bus driver and a pastor both arrived at the entrance to heaven on the same day.

The bus driver approached the gate and was told *“Welcome, I understand that you were a bus driver in your life on earth. Since I am in charge of housing, I believe that I have found the perfect place for you...”*

*See that mansion over there on the top of the hill, that is yours.*

The Pastor had been listening to this exchange and was very encouraged by what he had heard.

*“If a bus driver got a house like that, imagine what the Lord is going to give me...”*

The pastor was asked to step forward and was greeted by the gatekeeper of heaven, *“Welcome, I understand that you were a pastor while you were on earth”, yes sir I was, a pastor for 30 years.”*

Well, said the gatekeeper, *see that shack over thee in the valley, that is your new home>”*

The pastor was shocked, *“You mean a bus driver gets a mansion on the hill but I a pastor and minister of the Gospel only gets a shack in the valley?”*

The gate keeper then said: *“Well it seems that when you preached, people slept. When the bus driver drove, **people prayed...**”*

So maybe if I can encourage you to pray more, I can get a Mansion like the bus driver...I don't know, its worth a shot!!!!

Next we see further proof in the 4 gospels that Jesus is God, He heals a man that had a disease that was incurable:

### Matthew 8

1 When **Jesus had come down from the mountain**, great multitudes followed Him.

2 And behold, **a leper came and worshiped Him**, saying, "Lord, NOTICE: **if You are willing**, You can make me clean."

### He Is Asking Jesus To Do Something That Is Impossible...

- ☞ **Is there something** that you would like Jesus to do in your life right now that seems to you like it is impossible?
- ☞ **Jesus is going** to show you here that you should never consider anything "Impossible", only ask Jesus and then see what He might do...
- ☞ **At the time** that this man with Leprosy comes to Jesus and asks Him for healing, this was not even in the realm of possibility that He could be healed.
- ☞ **Leprosy was a horrible disease** that once it was confirmed that you had it, your life was over for all practical purposes.

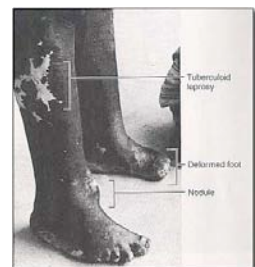
Leprosy is a contagious disease, but not easily contracted by casual contact.

- ☞ **The first outward sign** of leprosy is loss of feeling in a patch on the skin.
- ☞ **Leprosy begins** as white "nodules" or scales or crusts just below the surface of the skin.
- ☞ **The hairs** in the affected area turn white then the area progresses into a growth of raw flesh.
- ☞ **Eventually in the later stages** parts of the body begin to drop off.



Leprosy is capable of causing disability and even blindness if untreated by attacking nerves under the skin, leading to loss of feeling, paralysis and unfelt injury of the hands, feet and face

- ☞ **It is difficult to catch** leprosy and it cannot be caught by a handshake or even casual contact.
- ☞ **During this time in history** leprosy was painful slow growing and an **incurable disease**.



Today Leprosy is curable with a combination of 3 different drugs administered at the same time.

- ☞ **The most painful** part of leprosy was the total isolation of the one carrying the disease.
- ☞ **“Lepers” were totally isolated** from family friends church and all of society even while traveling a leper had to proclaim himself as “unclean” upon approaching another person.

**The interesting thing about Leprosy, is that in the Bible it represents sin and what sin does to us and what we were like before Jesus cleansed us and saved us.**

- ☞ **Like Leprosy**, flirting with sin causes us to begin to lose out sensitivity to sin.
- ☞ **We start of with one lie**, and that wasn't so bad, then another bigger lie...
- ☞ **The to cover up the lies** we take the next step, if someone finds out I might be ruined so I will get rid of them.
- ☞ **In case you doubt** that starting with just a small lie can lead to murder...

**This is what David did:**

1. He saw Bathsheba bathing on the roof top, he should have gone back inside his house and not looked again.
2. He continued to look at her, then he sent for her to be brought to him.
3. Then He committed adultery with her.
4. She became pregnant, so to cover up the fact that he was the father, he tried to get Uriah her husband to go home and leave the war that he was fighting to be with his wife.
5. Uriah was a righteous man and he would not leave the other men who were laying their lives on the line, so he refused to go home to Bathsheba.
6. David panicked and had Uriah sent to the front lines where he would be killed.
7. David brought Bathsheba into his house and made her his wife.
8. The child of this adulterous affair died at childbirth.

**A little sin now, like leprosy begins to dull the senses of that member of your body.**

- ☞ **Eventually all feeling is gone** in that member, a finger or toe, and then the part of the body infected with leprosy can no longer feel at all, it gets bumped and injured and eventually just falls off.
- ☞ **Allowing sin to begin**, starts to de-sensitize us to more sin, and eventually we can sin without it even bothering us anymore.

Then like leprosy, sin begins to cause us to isolate ourselves from other believers, and the members of our family.

**There are some here today that have already taken those first few steps with sin.**

- ☞ **Maybe you are looking at some things** you shouldn't be looking at, men what are you looking at on the internet, if you have began to look at pornography, stop it today, that leprosy will spread and take over your life.

- ⊕ **Maybe you are talking to a person** who is not your husband or wife and you think that it is just innocent flirting, ITS NOT, STOP IT TODAY!
- ⊕ **Innocent flirting** is the beginning of many affairs, don't allow the leprosy to continue, stop today.

Maybe you have began to really, really want that thing that you have had your eye on lately, and you know that you cant really afford it, but maybe I can borrow the money, or charge my card for it...don't go down that road...

- ⊕ **Maybe you have been allowing hurt or anger** to simmer in your heart towards someone you know, a family member or a friend.
- ⊕ **Everyday you find that you are thinking about it** and you are beginning to become bitter and resentful towards this person...Let it go right now.
- ⊕ **You have caught yourself** speaking about other people lately in a way that is not flattering but has become "Gossip".
- ⊕ **Stop that Leprosy today** before it spreads to the whole body of Christ.

**And you know something? Without Jesus sacrifice on the Cross, like leprosy, our sin has no cure.**

- ⊕ **Without the blood of Jesus Christ**, we would die eternally from our sin.
- ⊕ **Without a cure for leprosy**, it killed those that it infects.

So when Jesus come to heal the man with Leprosy, we should see in this story, the reality of what Jesus has done for us when He gave His life on the Cross and cleansed us of our Leprosy.

### **Matthew 8**

- 1 When **He had come down from the mountain**, great multitudes followed Him.
- 2 And behold, **a leper came and worshiped Him**, saying, "Lord, NOTICE: **if You are willing**, You can make me clean."

- ⊕ **This man** is completely reliant upon the mercy of Jesus interesting this is exactly where the lord desires that we come to, the end of ourselves.
- ⊕ **The place where we realize** there is no one but Jesus who can make us whole, no one who can satisfy the longing of our heart.
- ⊕ **Very often the Lord** will bring us to the place of desperation so that He can show us our need for Him.

Have you ever reached that place in your own life where you realize that you are totally dependant upon Jesus for everything, everyday?

- ⊕ **If you have not**, then you can expect that He will bring you to the place of totally being desperate and emptied of yourself...

## Matthew 8

3 **Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him**, saying, "**I am willing**; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

- ⊕ **One thing that was never done**—was **to touch a leper**—Jesus does not care how ugly—disfigured—or untouchable you think your life is—he wants to touch you.

You might think that your leprosy is ugly and untouchable and no one, especially the Lord of Heaven would ever want to touch you for what you have done...**WRONG...JESUS WANTS TO TOUCH YOU TODAY AND HEAL YOUR HEART!**

- ⊕ **Here the Greek word used** is To describe how Jesus touched this man with Leprosy is "**Haptomai**" (hap'-tom-ah-ee), literally to attach yourself to someone, to cling to a person.
- ⊕ **This was not a casual touching by Jesus**, from the literal Greek language Jesus embraces this person who the world thinks is so useless dirty and unwanted.
- ⊕ **Jesus doesn't just talk to the man**, He demonstrates God's sacrificial "Agape" love, He puts his words into actions.

People might suspect that you are a Christian by your language, **but are they convinced by your actions?**

## Matthew 8

4 And Jesus said to him, "**See that you tell no one**; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

*"See that you tell no one..."*

## Mark 1

42 As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.

43 And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once,

44 and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

45 **But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places**; and they came to Him from every quarter.

- ⊕ **Why didn't Jesus** want everyone to know that He had the power to heal?
- ⊕ **Wouldn't they believe** that He is God and the Messiah if they had heard and seen that He could heal a man with Leprosy?

**Here is the problem:** If people do not have an understanding of what the Cross of Jesus was all about, then Jesus is just another religious teacher.

- ⊕ **Until a person** understands their sin, and their need for a Savior, and that Jesus died to pay for their sins, then they won't understand who Jesus truly is.

- ☞ **Jesus had not gone to the Cross yet**, so if people began to hear that He had healed a man with leprosy, they might be drawn to Him for the wrong reasons.

**Jesus doesn't want people to come to Him unless they have an understanding of what their sin had done to their life and that Jesus death paid for that sin.**

- ☞ **In verse 4** Jesus tells the man healed of leprosy to “*go and show himself to the priest*”.
- ☞ **The law required** that anyone healed of leprosy be examined by the priest, Jesus is seeking to keep this law because it came from the mouth of God, His mouth.
- ☞ **What you will discover** is that Jesus has high regard for the law of God, but no regard at all for the added laws of man.

This man cured of Leprosy had a problem keeping a secret...

**Now, I don't personally have any problem keeping a secret when it is told to me, It is all those other people that I told that spread it around...**

Bottom Line...Jesus wants to touch your life with His power this morning.

- ☞ What area of your life do you need a touch in.
- ☞ Finances.
- ☞ Health
- ☞ Family
- ☞ Loneliness
- ☞ Struggling with sin
- ☞ Depression
- ☞ Anger
- ☞ Unforgiveness.

**The question is “Will you be like the man with leprosy and reach out your hand toward Jesus right now so that He can reach out to you and touch you and heal that need you have?”**