

Text: Matthew 8

Subject: THE MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

1. Instruction of the Disciples

- a) This was the Focus of Matthew 5-7
- b) The Disciples needed to be as fully instructed as possible

2. Illustrating Ministry

- a) This was the next Focus of Matthew's Gospel
- b) The Lord Jesus would need to show the Disciples how to serve

THE TEXT FOR TODAY

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

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

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

⁴And 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."

Matthew 8:1-4

1. The historical context

- a) The Lord Jesus had completed speaking to His Disciples
- b) He came down from the mountain
- c) Great multitudes followed Him

2. Challenges that the Disciples had to face

- a) How would they be able to minister to the great multitudes?
- b) Where would they start?

c) What could they do to effectively reach out to them?

A COMPLEX PROBLEM

1. Leprosy in the days of the Lord Jesus

a) Many were afraid of leprosy

b) Lepers were cast out of:

i) Families

ii) School

iii) Synagogue/ Temple

iv) Any public place

2. Protocol in those days

a) Lepers were put in a colony, outside towns

b) They were not allowed to be seen in society

c) If they have to move around, they have to shout "Unclean, Unclean"

d) Or face stoning from the crowds

e) No physical touch is permitted

f) The person who touches them would be considered "unclean" too

THE COURAGE AND FAITH OF THE LEPER

1. Courage

He risked being stoned to death

2. Faith

He pleaded with the Lord Jesus to be made clean

a) It was not just the disease that bothered him

b) It was that he was "unclean" and he was ostracised by society

THE COMPASSION OF THE LORD JESUS

1. This was obvious and visible

2. He did what was “unthinkable”
He touched the leper!

CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LEPER

1. He must not tell anyone what he had experienced
2. He must go and see the priest who has the authority to:
 - a) Examine him
 - b) Declare him clean and fit to re-enter society
 - c) Offer the usual offerings at the temple

CONCLUSION

1. What lessons was the Lord Jesus teaching?
2. What lessons were the Disciples learning?
3. Lessons:
 - a) Ministry lessons
 - b) Personal lessons
 - c) Poignant and powerful lessons
4. The Ministry of the Lord Jesus
 - a) More than great teaching
 - b) Great power was evidenced