

# Daily Discipleship

## Sixth Sunday after Epiphany (B) – Mark 1:40-45

**An Attitude of Discipleship:** *Transformed*

**Focus Question:** *How have you been transformed by Christ?*

### word of life

**“I do choose. Be made clean!”** Mark 1:41 (NRSV)

Read Mark 1:40-45

He was an outsider. Not by choice. Not by anything he had said. He was an outsider due to *leprosy*, an illness on his skin. He was incapable of hiding such a disease. So, by Jewish law, he was instructed to keep away from clean persons, including his family, friends, acquaintances and even strangers. To make his status even clearer, he was to wear torn clothes and cry out, “Unclean! Unclean!” if anyone came near him.

Yet, despite the law, this leper came to Jesus, begging him and kneeling in front of him. He came to Jesus out of his own deep need. He came out of his faith. “If you choose, you can make me clean.” (Mark 1:40 NSRV) With very few words, he placed his future before Jesus.

Jesus was moved by pity. Through simple words and a gentle touch, Jesus healed the leper. Jesus switched places with the unclean man and became unclean himself. When Jesus reached out and touched him, immediately the man was healed. The leper was set free to re-enter life in the community.

1. *After not being touched for years, how might Jesus’ healing touch have felt for the leper?*

Jesus was willing to cross over traditional boundaries, particularly when it meant good news and life for a person. Often times, boundary-crossing put him in direct opposition with those in authority.

2. *Give examples of how Jesus crossed over boundary lines.*

The leper was warned by Jesus not to tell anyone but to show himself to the priest. At this point, Jesus still wanted the man to follow the ritual laws so he might be reinstated back into community. Jesus only asked the cleansed man not to tell anyone about being healed.

But, the transformation was too much. This healed leper became a powerful witness to Jesus. The good news of his changed life and new-found freedom could no longer be bound. He spoke freely about the good news of his transformed life. How could he not? His life had been changed. He had been given a new chance.

3. *Why do you think Jesus tried to keep this miracle a secret?*

4. *Is it realistic to expect someone to keep such good news a secret?*

The popularity of Jesus grew. Yet his growing fame seemed only a hindrance to his mission and ministry. Jesus could no longer travel freely and proclaim good news. So, he stayed out in the country, but the people found him. Jesus kept his priorities straight: bring good news to people and set them free. He responded to people of faith as they approached him.

5. *How did Jesus keep his focus?*

## **word** *among us*

Transformed: *to be changed to a new shape.*

God is constantly at work, shaping, forming, shifting, and stirring us. Our own personal story may not be as dramatic as the leper who was cleansed by Jesus. Yet, our story with Jesus is also about transformation. Make no mistake, God is at work creating something new, setting us free from what shackles us.

1. *How is God at work in your life, re-shaping you?*
2. *What does it feel like when God re-shapes you?*
3. *What if you don't want to be re-shaped by God?*

The leper was very clear about what he wanted from Jesus. He knew his own deep hurt and the impact of healing on his life. He knew not only the loss of illness, but also the loss of relationship and community. The leper knew he needed to be healed, and then other good things would follow.

4. *What do you need from Jesus?*
5. *What places of your life need healing?*

Perhaps these questions are too difficult. Yet, how can we ask Jesus to heal us if we do not acknowledge our own brokenness?

6. *How do we begin to identify our deepest needs?*
7. *How would you respond to someone who cannot admit he or she needs anything from God?*

Jesus sets us free from all that can shackle our lives: illness, sin, fear, death. God's grace transforms our lives. All things do not become perfect, but God helps us deal with what lies ahead. John Newton aptly wrote these words as a hymn, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see."

8. *What does it mean as a disciple of Christ to have a transformed attitude?*

As we experience God's grace, it becomes difficult not to want to share that good news with others. We are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus in all that we do.

9. *In what ways are you like that cleansed leper?*
10. *How does being transformed by Christ change your attitude in daily life?*

### **Prayer**

Creator of the universe, continue to transform my life as I learn the ways to follow Christ. Amen

### **Dig Deeper**

Romans 1:1-12

## *last word*

This week, reflect on the ways Christ has transformed your life.



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