

The Touch of Jesus

“Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.” (Luke 4:40)

Lessons from miracles Jesus did, as they are recorded in the Book of Luke.

LESSON 1: Healing a Leper

“And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.” (Luke 5:12-13)

Some of the most marvelous miracles ever seen were worked by the Lord Jesus Christ when He was on earth. A miracle, according to the dictionary, is “an effect in the physical world which surpasses all known natural powers and is therefore ascribed to supernatural agency.” Many miracles are recorded in the Bible, and many human instruments were used in the performance of those wonders, but nobody worked more miracles than the Lord Jesus. In Sunday School for several months we will be studying the miracles of Jesus that are recorded in the Book of Luke. We won’t study all of them, but we will study carefully a number of miracles that can teach us important lessons about life, God, and faith. We will encourage each other to read the entire Book of Luke in the next three months, giving special attention to the accounts of Christ’s miracles. We will learn *why* Jesus performed miracles and what His most important miracle was. We will also learn how to experience the miraculous in our own lives.

“If Thou Wilt, Thou Canst . . .”

The whole life of Jesus was miraculous, from His virgin birth (described in Luke 1-2) to His resurrection (recorded in Luke 24). We know from the Book of John that the first physical miracle He performed in His ministry was turning water into wine (John 2). In Luke, the account of His filling with the Holy Spirit is given in Chapters 3 and 4, along with the early demonstrations of supernatural power that followed His filling. Then, in Chapter 5, we read about one of the most significant and instructive of His early miracles, the cleansing or healing of “*a man full of leprosy*.” Read it in verses 12 through 15. You can also find this story in Matthew 8 (right after the Sermon on the Mount) and in Mark 1.

One very interesting part about this story is what the leper said to Jesus when he approached Him.

“Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” (v. 12)

Here is a truth we all must learn. God *can* do anything. What He does is determined and limited only by what He *wills*! Jesus Christ, Who is God in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16), was approached with the assertion that if He *wanted* to heal the man, He certainly *could* do it! The leper did not have faith necessarily that Jesus *would* perform a miracle. He just believed that He *could* work a miracle if He *willed* to do so. And that much faith got him healed!

It is not *always* God’s will to heal a sick person. See this clearly in II Corinthians 12:7-9. But if a person we hold up in prayer is not healed, it is *not* because God *could* not heal him. God’s power is unlimited, but it is directed firmly by His will.

See In I Corinthians 12:8-11 that the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit working through us are always only given as God wills! See in Hebrews 2:3-4 that even the miracles of Christ and the apostles happened only according to God’s will.

John the Baptist *“did no miracle”* (John 10:41), but Jesus did many. Why? Because that was God’s will. Paul healed many at Ephesus (Acts 19:11), but left his friend sick at Miletum (II Timothy 4:20). Why couldn’t he heal in both instances? It has to do with God’s will!

“I Will: Be Thou Clean.”

Whenever we know the will of God, we can be *confident* in our prayer! See this in I John 5:14-15. When Jesus said, *“I will,”* the leper knew he was going to be healed. How can we know the will of God? Obviously, on some occasions, we can. See this in Ephesians 5:17.

The main way to know the *revealed* will of God is by His written Word. Read I Corinthians 2:9-13. See in John 15:7 that a knowledge of the Word of God greatly improves our effectiveness in prayer. When we know what God is willing to do, we can ask for it *in Jesus’ name*. See in John 14:13-14 what happens when we can do this.

The other way we may discover the will of God is by the interceding of the Holy Spirit. Read about this in Romans 8:26-27. Sometimes the Spirit within us will guide us in how to pray according to the will of God, and enable us to offer *“the prayer of faith”* (James 5:14-15).

In either case, when we know God’s will in a matter, we can pray with confidence!

“For a Testimony”

When the leper was healed, Jesus told him to go to a priest and to have him offer the sacrifice prescribed to grant him religious *“cleansing.”* This whole matter is explained in Leviticus 13 and 14. If you have time, read these chapters this week. When the priest determined that a leper had indeed been healed, he was to perform a ceremony to allow the poor man to be involved in Israel’s social and religious life again. Lepers, you may

know, were banned from society and could not be readmitted until they were healed. The big problem was that leprosy was incurable. Only a miracle could allow for the rituals of Leviticus 14. When the leper Jesus healed went to the priest, he must have really surprised him! This miracle of healing became a powerful testimony in those days to the power of God in the life of Jesus. As we will learn in a future lesson, the miracles of Jesus *did not prove* that He was the Son of God, and were not worked to furnish this proof! They did, however, provide evidence (*"testimony"*) that God was working through Jesus. See this in John 3:2 and Acts 2:22-24.