

WEEK 20



Mark 1:40-45
The Cleansing of a Leper

Mark 1:40-45 | The Cleansing of a Leper
Leprosy, always a pitiful existence

- *In addition to the physical ravages of the disease, there was the cultic impurity (Lev. 13:45).*
- *Like leprosy, sin has physical ravages and it has cultic impurity.*
- *Like leprosy, sin forces you to live “outside the camp.”*
- *A lepper was allowed to visit the synagogue as long as there was a screen to isolate them from the rest of the congregation.*

Mark 1:40-45 | The Cleansing of a Leper “If you will, you can make me clean.”

- *The leper had either seen or heard about the healing works of Christ.*
- *His question implies confidence in Christ’s power or possibly uncertainty in who Christ chooses to heal (Matt 8:2).*
- *He is asking for real healing from the disease, not just a priestly pronouncement of ritual cleanness. He may have shown himself to priests in the past without success.*
- *He needed what was impossible to accomplish through human means.*

The sighs of Jesus in Mark – OR – The deep, genuine responses of Christ

1:41 “Jesus was indignant” OR “Jesus, filled with compassion”

σπλαγχνίζομαι splachnízomai; to have the bowels yearn, be moved with compassion (Mark 6:34, 8:2, 9:22 – only in the gospels)

3:5 “Looked around in anger”

ὀργή orgḗ; desire, violent passion; by implication punishment — indignation, vengeance (Rom 1:18, 2:5, Rev 19:15)

3:5 “And deeply distressed”

συλλυπέω syllypéō; to afflict jointly, sorrow (on account of) someone; to affect with grief together; (only here)

The sighs of Jesus in Mark – OR – The deep, genuine responses of Christ

7:34 “With a deep sigh”

στενάζω stenázō; to be in straits (intransitively), to sigh, murmur, pray inaudibly with grief (Romans 8:23, 2 Cor 5:2-4, Heb 13:17, James 5:9)

8:12 “He sighed deeply”

ἀναστενάζω anastenázō; to draw sighs up from the bottom of the breast, to sigh deeply. (only here)

10:32 “With Jesus leading the way”

Enthusiasm (see Mark 14:48)

The sighs of Jesus in Mark – OR – The deep, genuine responses of Christ

14:33 “Began to be deeply distressed”

ἐκθαμβέω ekthambéō; to astonish utterly — affright, greatly (sore) amaze. (Mark 9:15, 16:5-6)

14:33 “And troubled”

ἀδημονέω adēmonéō; to be overwhelmed to the point of loathing; to be in distress of mind — be full of heaviness, very heavy (Phil 2:26)

14:34 “Overwhelmed with sorrow”

περίλυπος perilypos; grieved all around, intensely sad — exceeding sorrowful (Mark 6:26, Luke 18:23-24)

Have you been . . . ?

- *Indignant at the ravages of sin?*
- *Sharing the sorrow of another so much you experience it yourself?*
- *In a position where you have no good options and felt the crushing?*
- *So sorrowful that from parts of you so deep you did not know existed sighs well up just to yourself, no words, no other people?*
- *On the mountaintop of service that you rejoice at the assignment?*
- *So deeply distressed that your situation is not just sad but frightening?*

Know this, Christ has been there too . . .

- *Heb 2:17 In all things . . . to be made like unto his brethren*
- *Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*

Mark 1:40-45 | The Cleansing of a Leper “I am willing”

- *Both the gesture and the pronouncement indicate the same thing, Jesus was willing.*
- *The touch was significant –*
 - *It was unheard of act of compassion and must have encouraged the leper.*
 - *It indicated Jesus did not hesitate to act in violation of the ritual system when the situation demanded (see 3:1-6). The ceremonial law gives place to the law of love.*
- *Not a priestly pronouncement; a declaration of real healing.*

Mark 1:40-45 | The Cleansing of a Leper “Don’t tell this to anyone.”

- *The language is very strong, more appropriate for a demon.*
- *Jesus did not want people coming to him just to receive physical benefits. He had just dealt with this error earlier in the chapter (v. 38).*
- *But the man did not heed and spoke freely, hindering Jesus’ teaching ministry in Galilee that was anticipated from v. 39.*
- *8This story terminates the preaching tour in Galilee. And provides the pivot point to the five accounts of controversy which follow in 2:1-3:6.*

Mark 1:40-45 | The Cleansing of a Leper “Show yourself to the priest as a testimony against them.”

- *Jesus healed him but only priest could declare him clean (Lev 14:2-31).*
- *“Testimony” as in 13:9 has the idea of incriminating evidence for the prosecution. Testimony which may be recalled at trial and become an accusation.*
- *If the priest accepts that healing has taken place but does not accept the person and power of Christ through whom the healing has come, they will stand condemned by the very evidence they have supplied. The testimony was evidence that this was God’s doing.*