

Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

Encounters with Jesus: Outrageous Mercy (Luke 5:12–16)

Open

Select one of these “ice breakers” to get the conversation going toward the study.

- Remember the TV show *Dirty Jobs*? What’s the dirtiest job you’ve ever had?
- What has been your least favorite part of pandemic life?
- Is there a task that you hate to ask for help with? What is it?

Dig

After reading Luke 5:12–16 together, discuss these questions.

1. In the Bible “leprosy” referred to various chronic skin diseases that we would classify differently today. Read Leviticus 13:45–46. Besides the physical ailment, what else did a person with leprosy experience in biblical times?
2. Look at the way Luke describes the man with leprosy and the way he approaches Jesus in Luke 5:12. What do you notice in this description? What do you think the man’s state of heart and mind was? If you’d been an observer, what would have surprised you?
3. Look at Jesus’ reply to the leper, Jesus’ actions, and the result in Luke 5:13. What do you notice here? What does this suggest to about Jesus? His character? His mission? His power?
4. The law of Moses tasked Israel’s priests with determining whether people had leprosy and whether they had been cleansed from leprosy. The law instructed cleansed lepers to make a sacrifice (Leviticus 14:10–12). Why do you think Jesus said that being seen by a priest and making the sacrifice would be a “proof” or “testimony”?
5. This mighty act couldn’t remain secret. Jesus was soon followed by large crowds. How do you evaluate that? A blessing? A hindrance? A threat? An opportunity?

Reflect

Use any of these prompts to encourage group members to apply the text to their own experiences.

- What in your life makes you feel separated from other people? How can you give that to Jesus to deal with?
- What have you seen or experienced, in yourself or others, that for you was a testimony to the power of Jesus?
- Pastor Bryan remarked that we all have parts of us that we hide and bear alone, that make us feel we are on the outside looking in. If you feel comfortable sharing, name something that is like that for you. How is the Lord showing you that he is cleansing that thing?

Pray

Invite the group to pray together using any of these suggestions.

- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?
- What big, hard issue can you give to the Lord in prayer today?
- How has God shown you his “gift love”? Give thanks for that.