

Without Hope Or A Prayer

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Date: 23 March 2025

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[0 : 00] Chuck Swindoll tells a story about a passenger jet that was getting ready to land in New York City, 1968.

! And he tried a number of different times, a number of different ways to get the landing gear into place and it just wouldn't happen.

And so he came on the announcement speakers for the plane and told them of the problem that the plane was going to have to kind of what they call belly land without landing gear.

And kind of skid into the runway. They notified the airport. The airport made them loop around the airport a few times so that they could prepare to get all the fire engines and to get the runway sprayed down with some foam.

That would be a flame retardant. And everything was in place and the plane was approaching for its final landing. The people were panicking.

[1 : 23] The people on the plane were in one of those situations where it's like, I can't believe I'm in this situation here. And final approach.

He comes, the pilot comes on the system and says, In accordance with international aviation codes established at Geneva, it is my obligation to inform you that if you believe in God, you should commence prayer.

Now, the interesting thing about this story is that it's probably more apocryphal than anything. Chuck Swindoll did use it as a sermon illustration a number of years ago, but nobody can find anywhere in the annals of any kind of aviation, whatever, that this actually took place.

If it did, it was the pilot who initiated it. It wasn't any sort of Geneva Convention or aviation code that anyone could find anywhere.

Someone actually called the airport. The plane actually made a successful landing. There were no injuries. That actually did happen. And someone called the airport a couple of days after the incident and asked about that announcement.

[2 : 44] And all the airport had to say was no comment. So it's interesting how we come across some of the stories that we have that sometimes preachers will tell.

But it is, I think, appropriate to consider that sometimes when it seems like we don't have a prayer, that's when people start praying.

That's when people finally recognize, okay, I don't have a prayer, so I better start praying. And the man that we're going to meet here in Luke chapter 5 in our portion for today is kind of that way.

We're not introduced to him by name, only by his disease. That is the only identifier that we have for this poor man in Luke chapter 5, verse 12.

And it starts here. While talking about Jesus, while he was in one of the cities in Galilee in the northern part of Israel, there came a man full of leprosy.

[3 : 54] Now, we have to learn a little bit about leprosy and what that is because there's a lot of myth and a lot of legend having to do with what leprosy is.

How many of you have ever had leprosy? Yeah, none of us. How many of you know of someone who has had leprosy? That's pretty rare, too.

Leprosy is something we're not very familiar with in our world today. Although it does exist, although it's not called leprosy anymore because of the stigma associated with the word leprosy, it's now called Hansen's disease, named after the man, and I forget his first name, but Mr. Hansen or Dr. Hansen from Norway.

He was a Norwegian doctor who discovered the bacteria that caused leprosy. And so the name of the disease was changed to his name, Hansen's disease.

Now, what's interesting is that here in the United States, it's, for the most part, eradicated, but there are about 50 cases per year that are discovered here in the United States.

[5 : 09] But in other parts of the world, particularly in India and surrounding countries of India and Brazil, about 200,000 cases of Hansen's disease, or what we might refer to as leprosy, are discovered.

It is contrary to myth, at least today, it's not very contagious. In order for you to get it, you have to come into consistent contact with someone over a period of time.

So just an initial contact with someone who has it, you probably won't get it. The majority of us probably wouldn't get it because our immunity is built up enough that it just doesn't bother most people, the vast majority of people.

Only a few whose immune system is somehow compromised that would allow them to get this particular disease. It is a disease of the skin.

It starts with the skin. A bacteria that gets into the skin and over time, over years or decades, even before it begins to have an impact on a person's condition, on their body, before they even notice it.

[6 : 31] So someone could have leprosy for 30, 40 years before and back in the time of Christ, back in the time that we're looking at here, it was fatal.

Eventually you would die from it. It would just take a very long time. And back in the day of Jesus, it may have been much more contagious than it is today, but they had a particular way of treating people who got caught with leprosy.

I want to show you some pictures. Now, I initially told Tom, our worship pastor. Where's Tom? He's out. He's hiding. I said, I don't know if I want to show pictures because it's really kind of hard to look at. And he said, oh, go ahead and show them.

We need to understand what we're dealing with, with this man full of leprosy. Now, it's recorded in three other gospels. So it's in Matthew, Mark, and in Luke.

[7 : 37] And Luke is the one who, Matthew and Mark just identify as a man with leprosy. Luke, Dr. Luke, tells us that he was full of it. Full of leprosy.

Meaning, he's had it for a long time. And he's to the point where it's kind of end stages for him. We'll talk more about that as we make our way through.

But someone with leprosy. These pictures pretty much come from India. Oh, before I show you my pictures, let me show you what the Old Testament law says about leprosy.

It's interesting. There are two chapters in the book of Leviticus dedicated to this particular disease. So, long before scientists knew anything about this, the Bible is giving us an indication of how to treat someone with leprosy.

The leprous person, this is verse 45 of Leviticus chapter 13. The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose.

[8 : 47] And he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, unclean, unclean. So, in other words, he would wear some sort of like a mask to cover his mouth.

Because they were concerned about stuff coming from the mouth that would be contagious. Okay? And they had to be isolated. Anyone who was discovered with leprosy basically was not allowed to come into contact with their family.

Or with anyone in the city or in the camp. They just weren't allowed there because they thought, and perhaps they were, very contagious back then with their leprosy.

And so, they had to wear certain kinds of clothing. They couldn't get dressed up. They had to wear torn clothing. They had to keep their hair unkempt. They had to shout that they were unclean.

And this meant ceremonially, religiously, unclean. They couldn't go worship at the temple because they were considered unclean. They were considered, in a sense, judged by God.

[9 : 55] And not just because they didn't want to come into contact with people who would be gathering to worship at the temple. But because they weren't fit to worship because of the disease.

And so, can you imagine this disease, coming into contact with this disease, was so terrible that you would live in an encampment for lepers outside of the city.

The only other people that you would come into contact with were other lepers. So, you wouldn't see your family anymore. You wouldn't see, they might come and bring meals for you, but they would leave them for you outside of the encampment.

It was just a horrific thing. And if you ever were traveling anywhere, you had to travel in such a way that if people were coming, you had to shout to them. You had to give them warning.

Unclean, you would shout unclean so that they would know to avoid you, to go to the other side of the road, to do those kinds of things. Some of the rabbis were famous.

[10:59] Now, get this, famous because of the way that they would treat lepers. Some of them, for instance, one rabbi in particular wouldn't buy eggs if they were sold on the same street where a leper was known to have been.

One rabbi bragged about how whenever he came near a leper, he would throw stones at the leper as a way of demonstrating God's judgment on that leper.

So here, if you got this horrific disease, this is how you were treated. The person with leprosy shall remain unclean, considered, again, ceremonially unclean as he has the disease.

He is unclean. It repeats it over and over again. This is a reminder. Unclean, unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside of the camp.

It would have been a horrible circumstance for anybody to come into contact with this. This is what leprosy would do to people's hands.

[12:13] Oftentimes, hands are the first to bear the... Hands and feet, the extremities. Sometimes earlobes, noses. But it would just kind of eat.

Your fingers would just be kind of eaten from the inside out and basically turn into stubs over periods of time. You can see this happening here.

Here's a poor man. You can see his feet in the flip-flop sandals there, just kind of stumps, almost like when you think of an elephant stump. His hands are just stumps, skin and bone deteriorating.

Here are two men whose eyesight, this man's nose, his feet, his hands. The one on the left, what looks like his foot is actually his hand.

And then his two feet, his left foot is just a stump. His right foot has a couple of toes left. Then his two hands. And you can see what it does to their eye sockets and their eyeballs.

[13:19] And it's pretty devastating. Throughout history, lepers were treated horrifically because of people so afraid of their disease.

And in Europe, they would take lepers and simply burn them. One, because they were considered judged by God.

So they didn't have, they weren't, they didn't feel guilty for putting them to death in this way. Burning them would destroy the people and destroy the disease.

This is the kind of thing that people would deal with when it came to leprosy. And so now back to our text. This man with, who was full of leprosy.

So this man approached Jesus. Now, it doesn't say that he shouted unclean, unclean. It talks about him being, Jesus being approached by this man in the city where he doesn't belong.

[14:24] This is incredible courage for the man to do this because he's approaching Jesus. And notice what he says. When he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.

Now, I want you to notice here, it's not talking, it's, he didn't say, Jesus, if you can do this, will you try? It's, the only question wasn't his ability to heal him in this man's mind.

It was whether or not Jesus would be willing to do it. He believed Jesus could absolutely heal him. Which was remarkable.

But this is the kind of word that had been out and about. And certainly this leprous man had heard the rumors, if you will, about Jesus. Lord, if you will.

And he calls him Lord. This is a reference, we might refer to it as sir. There might be something more to it here from this man.

[15:36] It could mean sir. It could also just be a declaration that he believes that Jesus is the Lord of all. And he, with respect and yet with begging, if you will, you can make me clean.

And Jesus does something unusual here. He stretched out his hand and he touched him. The significance of this shouldn't be unnoticed.

Jesus didn't always touch the people that he healed. Matter of fact, anyone who was demon possessed, there was no touching involved. With some of the people that he healed, whether they were paralytics or blind or for whatever reason, there was the possibility that Jesus would touch them in a certain way.

But Luke points out that Jesus, and so do Matthew and Mark, points out that Jesus reached out his hand and touched him.

He makes a note of that. And it's interesting that Jesus would do this because if anyone would come into contact with someone who was a leper, they too, simply because they were touched, because they touched them, I would become unclean.

[17 : 02] The person who touched the leper would also be considered unclean. And would have to go into kind of like a, what do they call it when they put people away for a while, so make sure they're not sick.

What is it? Quarantine. Almost like a quarantine. They didn't use that word back then, but they would put them aside and wait to make sure that they wouldn't be discovered to be sick. And then they would have to go through the ceremonial cleansing by going to the priest and making sure that they didn't have the disease and make sacrifices. And then they would be declared as clean once again.

They could go to the temple, the synagogue to worship once again. But Jesus purposefully reached out and touched him.

Again, this demonstrates a couple of things. How close the man was to Jesus. He had no business being that close to anyone.

[18 : 06] It would have been against the law for him to do this. Matter of fact, this man, I mean, he's so desperate. Talk about being without a prayer. He's so desperate. Rabbis would teach that for someone to be healed of leprosy would be on the same level as, raising someone from the dead.

The other thing they taught was that only God could heal leprosy. Now, if that was true, then what they were about to experience could be easily explained.

But they didn't want to believe that. But Jesus, now, he's so close to Jesus. And if Jesus isn't the Messiah, if Jesus isn't the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and this man is left unhealed, then it would have been appropriate for the people of that community to drive him out of town again and then stone him to death as punishment for not declaring himself unclean and staying away from other people in the town.

This is how severe, and this is what the man risked. If you could call it a risk, I mean, he's already toward the end of his life, his disease that had so ravished him.

It's full of leprosy. And yet here he is taking that chance with Jesus, believing that Jesus really could do this.

[19 : 43] It was just a matter of would he. So Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, I will. I will.

And be clean. That's it. No intense prayer. No long prayer.

This is just, I'm willing to do this. Be clean. That's it. Simple statement. Jesus says it.

Immediately. I want you to notice again, Luke using this word, immediately. The leprosy left him.

Now, when the leprosy left him, he was a man who had been broken. In ways that we cannot imagine.

[20 : 43] With his hands, with his feet, with his face. All ravaged by the leprosy. And immediately.

Not over time. Not with, in need of therapy. Oh, let's get you to the doctor. And he'll give you some lotions and creams to put on that.

Until you, none of that. Fingers. facial features. Feet.

Everything. Restored. To full order. Matter of fact, this man, and this is the way Jesus healed. That when he healed someone, he healed them immediately and completely.

No need for physical therapy. No need for follow-up treatments. None of this. This man, in that moment, you would have stood up and noticed, wow, he's got incredible skin.

[21 : 50] I mean, look at the tan on that guy. Or, whatever. I mean, you would have noticed how incredible his skin looked in the second after he was healed.

Immediately, the leprosy was gone. And this man was healed. And then Jesus charged him, not money, this is a command.

Jesus commanded him, don't tell anybody. What is that about?

Don't tell anybody. Don't tell no one. But instead, go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded.

So, Jesus is now going back into Leviticus chapter 14. Leviticus chapter 13 and 14 deal with this leprosy and all of that, not only of the skin, but how it can get on the clothing and all kinds of stuff like that.

[23 : 00] Go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded for a proof to them. So, it's an interesting statement that he makes.

I want you to do what's required in the law. I want you to go to the temple now and I want you to go to the priest, the local priest, and show yourself, do the necessary things that you have to do with the priest.

You're going to have to make an offering and a sacrifice and the priest is going to examine you and make sure and then you will be declared clean.

But Jesus had already declared him cleansed and clean. But now I want you to, as a witness, go and show the priest.

But now, even more than report about him went abroad. So, Jesus told the man, don't tell anybody, but the opposite happens.

[24 : 03] And the report about Jesus is spread even further. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.

And so, with the cleansing of this leper, there's a few things that we should take notice of. First of all, and I mentioned this, Jesus touched this leper before he was cleansed. So, in a sense, that would make Jesus ceremonially unclean, but not with Jesus.

Because in the moment that Jesus touched him, he was healed, he was cleansed. Showing that Jesus was not able to be defiled by this man's uncleanness.

Jesus. And there's something, Mark mentions it in his gospel, that with compassion, Jesus touched him.

There's something about Jesus touching him. This man's not allowed to touch anybody else, but Jesus, with emotion attached to it, realizes what this man has been through, and reaches out to touch him.

[25 : 21] Doesn't have to, but this is what he does to demonstrate who Jesus is. Secondly, Jesus, once again, and we see this with his other healings, oh, I think I skipped number two.

Jesus, once again, instantly produced physical healing of a very serious physical disorder. Something that most people would have deemed impossible.

Most people saw leprosy as a death sentence. Everyone did. not for Jesus in an instant.

And not only did he heal the man, but he also pronounced him to be cleansed. Going to the priest at this point for verification was just a formality after Jesus was done with him.

a formality that Jesus endorsed, told him to go and do this, but it was indeed a formality. Now, I want to look at these commands that Jesus gave to this man, man.

[26 : 46] And they're strange commands. I think they are. First, Jesus warned the man not to make his healing public.

And it's interesting how Mark refers to this, and I want to show you this. Mark chapter 1, verse 43, it says that, and Jesus sternly charged him, or sternly warned him.

And actually, if you look up the word for this in the Greek, I've got to read how it defines this word.

Oh, yes, it is a, this sternly charged or sternly warned, it is a snort with anger. What?

Jesus snorted with anger at him. I'm not even sure, you know, sometimes I like to like, show you what that would look like, or sound like, or what, I'm not even sure what that means.

[28 : 02] I mean, he has just lovingly healed this man. He's touched him, he's showed compassion, he's completely healed and restored and Jesus snorts with him or snorts at him with anger.

I'm not, I mean, what would that be like? I mean, a snort, what is a snort, a snort?

I don't know, I'm not even sure what that, what that's like. but this is what he does and so maybe it's like a bark, I don't know, but don't you dare.

Don't tell anybody. Why? What is up with that? Set him away at once and said to him, see to it that you say nothing to anybody.

So the snort with anger wasn't in the way that he said the command, it was something that he did before. I don't know. I mean, it's just, why is Jesus telling this man, don't tell anybody?

[29 : 11] But then I want you to notice, and Mark tells us this, Luke doesn't, but that the man who was healed went out and began to talk freely about it. So it's like he completely ignored Jesus' warning, or snort with anger, and spread the news so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

It didn't work. Jesus telling him, don't tell anybody, because the first thing he did was he told somebody, you know, and imagine if you knew the guy, right?

Because if you were family or friends, or if you just, an acquaintance, you just knew who this guy was, whatever it was, and all of a sudden he looks great, and the leprosy is gone, a year or so ago, I lost a few pounds, and the subject came up over and over again.

I'm like, yeah, yeah, I did lose a few pounds. I was kind of happy about it, too. I was like, yeah, I did, I lost a few pounds. You know, what'd you do? Oh, I did this, I did that. Can you imagine?

This guy's got a whole new complexion. I mean, people are going to ask him, you know, what, what happened, Larry?

[30 : 39] You were all humped over and stubs on your feet and hands and now look at you. You couldn't, but not say something.

You know, is he going to like, nope, can't tell you, got to keep a secret. And he didn't do that. And he told, even though Jesus sternly warned him not to do such a thing.

If you think about it, well, it goes on, but even now, even more the report about him went abroad and great crowds gathered.

So Jesus warned the man to not make his healing public, but this might have been the bigger miracle than his healing for him not to say anything.

I say that tongue in cheek, but this was going to spread. There's no two ways about it. This was going to spread, and it indeed did.

[31 : 48] And so the fame of Jesus grows even more intense, even more of a fever pitch, and he's not able to go anywhere or do anything without a crowd following him.

And then, secondly, the second part of this command, the ex-leper was to go to the priest as the law instructed. Now, if you go back into Leviticus chapter 14 and you look about the commands and the laws surrounding someone who is healed and then having to go back to the priest to verify that their healing was real and was permanent, it's just about going to a priest, singular.

But it's the way that Jesus commands this man, it's a little different. He was to go to the priest, singular, but his going to the priest, singular, was meant to be a witness to the priest's plural.

In other words, there was something going on here. How often do you think priests were consulted about, hey, my leprosy has been healed, can you check this?

It would have been extremely rare. Priests could go their whole lifetimes without having to have a case of this. There are two times in the Old Testament where we know of people who had leprosy.

[33 : 16] Miriam was one and Naaman was another and they were healed from that leprosy. When God was charging Moses to go and to represent the people of Israel in Egypt and Moses was like, no, I can't do it, I can't do it, what am I supposed to say?

And he said, you take that staff, throw it on the ground, it turned into what? A snake, right? And then he was afraid of the snake and he said, no, take it up by the tail, did that, it turned into a snake again, and then he took his hand, he instructed Moses to take his hand and put it into his tunic, kind of like a Napoleon thing, but his hand was covered up by his robe, his tunic, and he pulled it out and his hand was full of leprosy.

It's like, again, in an instant, and then he instructed him, put it back in, and he put it back in and pulled it back out and it was gone, like it never happened.

This is what God can do. This was God showing to Moses that, yes, this is the God that you serve, that I can do these things and I can use you, I can call you to go to the nation of Israel to represent them for me.

And so he's doing this, Jesus is telling this man to go, show yourself to the priest singular. But that priest almost assuredly would have gone and consulted other priests and would have said, hey, I've got somebody here that was a leper for all these years and all of a sudden he's healed and a man named Jesus has done this.

[35 : 07] Is this the one? This is a way for Jesus to go to the priesthood of Israel and to say, I'm here.

Messiah is here. That one priest who was there to confirm the leprosy would then have gone to multiple other priests, plural, and said, yes, could this be the one?

And consulted as a way. So back in Luke chapter five, verse 14, go and show yourself to the priest, singular, and make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded for a proof to them, priests, plural.

Leviticus chapter 14 didn't call for priests, plural. It was just the one priest that you go and confirm that you're healed. But now Jesus understands there's more at stake here.

There's more than what meets the eye. It's Jesus understanding that it was the priests who would have looked at Jesus and declared that this is the Messiah.

[36 : 18] This is the one who was to come. So this is a part of this man's story. And then we come to the end of our portion for today with verse 16 with just this simple statement.

But he withdrew to a desolate places, he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Now this says this a number of times. Luke emphasizes it perhaps a bit more than Matthew and Mark do. But all three talk about Jesus withdrawing and spending time to pray.

And in my mind, my question, okay, Jesus is God. What's he praying about? I know he's not spending any time like I do in confession.

That's not what he does. It's not what he prays about. My guess is, as we'll discover next week, he's not praying about requests for healing and things like that in the same way that you and I do, what's he praying about?

[37 : 40] What is this about? And so, on your notes you have a couple of things here. And this first one, I think, is kind of my idea of this, and I'm not sure how else to say this.

I believe that Jesus would have yearned for fellowship with the Father. And I think that sometimes we miss this in our own times of prayer.

Remember, in eternity past, Jesus is part of the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

Ask me to explain it, I can't, I won't. I'm not even going to try. We just believe that. Three persons, one God. God the Son. And he would have been in perfect fellowship with God the Father and God the Spirit.

But now, submitting himself, Philippians chapter 2, submitting himself to become human, to take on flesh, to become one of us, to be both God and man at the same time.

[38 : 56] certainly, would it be fair to say, and this is more me thinking out loud in terms of how to say this or how to understand this, does Jesus miss that fellowship?

And the only time he can partake in it is when he is intently purposefully seeking time to be with the Father through the Spirit?

Is that what's happening here? Because he is still without sin, so he still can enjoy perfect fellowship, but now he is a being in time and space.

he has become human, and so he can be one place at one time. His experience of fellowship with the Father would not be the same.

And so I think it's a sense of, as much as we can understand it in our humanity, time to fellowship with, to enjoy being with the Father again.

[40 : 26] And my question for us, how often are we fellowshiping in our prayer time with the Father?

Is that what we ought to do in our times of prayer? Is it our times of prayer, is it more than just, well, I've got my list of things that I'm going to pray for.

I'm going to pray for my family, I'm going to pray for my church, I'm going to pray for these people that have requested prayer, I'm going to pray that I grow, and I pray that other people would come to faith in Christ, and is it maybe we're just a part of our prayer time, and maybe the bigger part of our prayer time is just to enjoy time with him, the fellowship, spending time with our creator, who loves us, who sent his son to die for us, who created us to fellowship with him, if you look at him and his relationship originally with Adam and Eve, the fellowship that they had before they committed that first sin, that perfect fellowship that they would have had in those moments, I think that's a part of it. I think another part of it was an expression of his dependence on the father. In his humanity, I wonder how much Jesus was impacted by the crush and the rush of it all.

[42 : 36] I mean, all these people coming for him, looking to him, his popularity, and in coming to the father for regular times of prayer, is he just in a sense getting re-centered?

Again, Jesus never sinned. It's not about that. But we know that Jesus was tempted. And in his humanity, he experienced all the things that we as humans experience.

experience. And it's hard to explain, and there's even a sense where am I treading on shaky ground and trying to understand and express this?

I'm not saying that Jesus was or in any way sinned or did anything wrong or thought anything wrong. He is completely and utterly without sin.

And yet, was he impacted? By the weight of everything that he experienced. Certainly in the garden, he is intensely in prayer, sweating drops of blood, and crying out, Lord, I don't want to do this.

[43 : 55] Nevertheless, your will be done, not mine. Were there moments along the way where his prayers were, Father, I can't do this without you.

I must follow your will, your plan. I am dependent on you. I don't know if there's a better way to say that, but I certainly think that there's at least an expression of this in some way.

And then finally, I'll say this. The demands of life pushed Jesus to rest, to get away, and to pray, and to pray.

The demands of life, when we think about the demands of life that we face, what does that cause for us of our own time with the Lord?

I'll put it in the form of a question. what do the demands of life push me to do? Here we see that the demands of life push Jesus to get away and to spend time in prayer.

[45 : 33] For us, the question, the excuse, the demands of life cause us to skip.

I've got so much to do. I've got so much on my shoulders. I've got such a calendar full of things that I have got to get accomplished.

It's easier for us to say, I don't have time for this. And Jesus demonstrates over and over again in the Gospels the intentionality of saying, no, I've got to create.

I've got to beg out of time with these people so that I can spend time with the Father.

Will I have time to pray? I have time to get away. How should that inform us? When we feel like the world is weighing down on us, maybe we wouldn't feel that way if we created times to pray, if we forced ourselves.

[46 : 58] maybe our prayer time would be different if it wasn't rushed, if it wasn't one hand on the clock or one hand on the phone, trying to figure out what's coming next, trying to figure out what's happening next in my schedule.

So there's a lot to learn from even just a few verses of scripture about someone with leprosy, to understanding what leprosy is and what it's about and what Jesus did to heal it, and then what Jesus did to get away, and to spend time in prayer.

What can we learn from that? Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for these lessons that you teach us, sometimes in ways that we don't expect.

The compassion that you demonstrate to this one who is full of leprosy, full of this disease, and to see you heal immediately, completely, with compassion.

Lord, let us remember who you are. You are the creator God for all that we see. From the smallest, most infinite, most microscopic, most even smaller, aspects of our universe that we could never grasp.

[49 : 02] The billions of stars, the galaxies, galaxies, and you're the creator of all of it.

You've put this into place and you control all of it, right down to the diseases that we get as a result of the fall.

But with just a look, with just a word, with a touch, with a touch, you brought healing. And as a testimony of this healing, you were providing proof once again that you are indeed God.

You are the one who was sent to take our place on the cross, to suffer and die, to pay the penalty for our sin.

What God would do such a thing? You, the one who created us, came to take our place.

[50 : 42] Lord, thank you for that precious gift, the gift of eternal life, life, that no matter what this temporary life might throw at us, eternal life, is a promise, is a gift given to us who have trusted in Jesus Christ as our Savior.

And it is forever, even though we cannot understand forever. There's no way that we could grasp eternity, but that is the gift that you've given us.

And that all that we face in this life is temporary. This life is but the shadow, the reality is with you in heaven for all of eternity.

Remind us of this, Lord. Remind us of the relationship that we have with you through Christ. And this relationship is meant to be so much more than just a fire insurance policy.

it's meant to be a relationship that you've offered to us freely because you love us.

[52 : 20] And you want us to live in relationship with you, to enjoy time spent with you, the fellowship of us in our incompleteness, in our sin-sick life that we have.

And yet we can get these tastes of fellowship with you. And yet we take it for granted way too often. Lord, help us to know that there's coming a day when we will see you face-to-face and it will be so real and it will be so permanent so forever.

I pray for those who do not yet know you as Lord and Savior that even today that they would realize their need of a Savior, realize the helplessness of their sin condition and to recognize that Jesus provided a way, the way, for us to be saved, for us to be forgiven, for us to be restored to a right relationship with you.

Amen. Thank you for the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, the promise of the resurrection.

[54 : 09] Lord, we love you, we praise you, and we ask these things in his name, in Jesus' name, amen.