

Sermon Guide – Feb. 14, 2021

Mark 1:40-45; 2 Kings 5:1-14

⁴⁰ A leper^[a] came to him begging him, and kneeling^[b] he said to him, “If you choose, you can make me clean.” ⁴¹ Moved with pity,^[c] Jesus^[d] stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, “I do choose. Be made clean!” ⁴² Immediately the leprosy^[e] left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ saying to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus^[f] could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

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5 The king of Aram had great admiration for Naaman, the commander of his army, because through him the LORD had given Aram great victories. But though Naaman was a mighty warrior, he suffered from leprosy.^[a]

2 At this time Aramean raiders had invaded the land of Israel, and among their captives was a young girl who had been given to Naaman’s wife as a maid. **3** One day the girl said to her mistress, “I wish my master would go to see the prophet in Samaria. He would heal him of his leprosy.”

4 So Naaman told the king what the young girl from Israel had said. **5** “Go and visit the prophet,” the king of Aram told him. “I will send a letter of introduction for you to take to the king of Israel.” So Naaman started out, carrying as gifts 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold,^[b] and ten sets of clothing. **6** The letter to the king of Israel said: “With this letter I present my servant Naaman. I want you to heal him of his leprosy.”

7 When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes in dismay and said, “Am I God, that I can give life and take it away? Why is this man asking me to heal someone with leprosy? I can see that he’s just trying to pick a fight with me.”

8 But when Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes in dismay, he sent this message to him: “Why are you so upset? Send Naaman to me, and he will learn that there is a true prophet here in Israel.”

9 So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha’s house. **10** But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: “Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of your leprosy.”

11 But Naaman became angry and stalked away. “I thought he would certainly come out to meet me!” he said. “I expected him to wave his hand over the leprosy and call on the name of the LORD his God and heal me! **12** Aren’t the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than any of the rivers of Israel? Why shouldn’t I wash in them and be healed?” So Naaman turned and went away in a rage.

13 But his officers tried to reason with him and said, “Sir,^[c] if the prophet had told you to do something very difficult, wouldn’t you have done it? So you should certainly obey him when he says simply, ‘Go and wash and be cured!'” **14** So Naaman went down to the

Jordan River and dipped himself seven times, as the man of God had instructed him. And his skin became as healthy as the skin of a young child, and he was healed!

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Just because something is SIMPLE, it doesn't mean it is EASY. What is the difference between the two? What was simple but not easy in today's reading? Why do you think Naaman struggled with what Elisha asked of him?

What example do you have of something that is simple, but definitely not easy?

Choice is key to the gospel reading today. The leper CHOSE to ask Jesus for healing. Jesus CHOSE to heal him. Jesus asked the healed man to keep quiet about his healing, but he CHOSE not to. Because of him sharing the good news of his healing, Jesus was inundated with other requests for healing. Was it possible for the man to remain quiet? Did he have a CHOICE?

How does the idea of CHOICE impact your daily life? What choices do you make in the course of a day?