

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Dirty Gospel – Part 2

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**Main Idea** – Jesus never hesitated to interact with people, regardless of their personal circumstances or lifestyles. In the same way, we must be willing to “get dirty” – to personally mix with people - in any environment we find ourselves.

### Interact with people

- Jesus interacted with people in whatever circumstances were present at the moment.
- People in ministry today must likewise interact with people wherever they are.
- Ministry requires us to touch people: to make contact with them.

### Jesus after the Sermon on the Mount

- **Matthew 7: 28-29** – And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.
- **Matthew 8:1-4** – When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”
- This is significant because Jesus was putting into practice some of the things He had just finished preaching.
- By willingly interacting with a diseased leper, Jesus was demonstrating how His followers were to do personal ministry.

### Move toward the mess – get dirty

- Jesus’ example – and the example of all the New Testament apostles – compels us to move toward a mess, not away from it.
- **Matthew 8:1** - When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.
- In Biblical times, lepers were regarded with distain. They had a highly contagious, deadly disease that – many believed – had been caused by sinfulness. Therefore, they were considered both physically and spiritually unclean.

- However, immediately before this incident – during His Sermon on the Mount – Jesus had taught how everyone was spiritually unclean.
- **Matthew 5:20 – For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.**
- **Matthew 5:27-28 – You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**
- **Matthew 5: 29 – If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.**
- **Matthew 5: 43-44 – You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.**
- **Matthew 5: 48 – Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.**
- We have no good reason to avoid people, or circumstances, we may perceive as being beneath us.
- “We spend a lot of time distancing ourselves from messes Jesus spent a lot of time getting close to.

#### **Worship Jesus before you experience a miracle**

- **Matthew 8:2 - And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”**
- The leper worshipped Jesus before he asked for healing.
- “Do not wait for your circumstances to improve before you decide to worship.”

#### **Demonstrate your love**

- **Matthew 8:3 - Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.**
- We need to get involved with people where they are, and demonstrate we are bringing to them more than our faith; we are also bringing our love.
- “Healing illustrates miraculous power. Touch illustrates miraculous love.”

#### **Celebrate the healing miracle**

- In Leviticus 14 in the Old Testament, God ordained an elaborate ceremony for when an individual had been healed of leprosy. This was to acknowledge God through repentance, and to demonstrate both physical and spiritual cleansing.
- After Jesus healed the leper, He told him to go to the priest and follow the Old

Testament requirements. **Matthew 8:4 - And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”**

- Jesus told the leper to do this in order to be obedient to the Law of that time, and also – perhaps – to reveal to the priests the power of God that was before them in the person of Jesus.
- By healing the man, Jesus had restored him physically, spiritually, and socially. He could now resume the life he had prior to becoming sick.

### **Follow Jesus’ example**

- Jesus reached out and touched us when we were “unreachable.”
- Therefore, we should allow Jesus to do the same thing for others through us.
- The victory Jesus accomplished for us should be shared.
- This requires us to be responsible with what we’ve been given, and to freely interact with others we come across in life.

### **Reflective Questions for Dirty Gospel – Part 2**

1. Why, do you suppose, Jesus so often combined His teaching with healing people? What can we learn today from His example?
2. What happens when we worship God even before we receive the effects of a miracle?
3. During this teaching, Ryan Leak wondered how the leper responded to being healed. For example: did he, or did he not, show love and compassion to the old leper community he had just been saved from? (The Bible does not tell us.) Why do you think Ryan asked us to consider this question?
4. What, if anything, causes you to hesitate before interacting with people as a representative of Christ?