

Proof #9 Jesus Restores the Outcast to the Covenant
Mark 1:40-45

I. Series Overview

A. 2/23/2020 We begin to explore 9 proofs

1. Proofs that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ
2. Proofs intended to bolster and nurture faith among persecuted Christians
 - a. Is it real
 - b. Does it matter
 - c. Is there hope in the face of uncertainty and death
3. Proofs intended to connect diverse people in one faith to one Savior

B. The Nine Proofs

1. 1-3 Jesus fulfills the Old Testament Messianic prophecies
2. 4-8 Jesus delivers the promised Spirit
3. 9-11 Jesus receives the certification of two incontrovertible witnesses
4. 12-13 Jesus overcomes temptation through the Holy Spirit
5. 14-15 Jesus proclaims the gospel of God: Any other message from one claiming to be the Christ was a lie, a curse
6. 16-20 Jesus chooses and calls His own disciples: sovereignty
7. 21-34 Jesus' heart is for the purposes of God to be fully realized in the hearts and lives of people
8. 35-39 Jesus' priority of prayer proves His relationship with the Father
9. 40-45 Jesus restores the outcast to the Covenant: reconciles sinful man to God.

II. Proof # 9 Jesus Restores the Outcast to the Covenant

A. Scene Setup

1. The Leper and the Law
 - a. The Law Lev 13-14
 - (1) **Leviticus 13:45-46 (ESV) ⁴⁵ “The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean.’ ⁴⁶ He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.**
 - (2) Social distancing at the extreme
 - (a) Not allowed to present himself as healthy
 - (b) Must publicize his condition
 - (c) No hope of change
 - (d) No hope of fellowship with man or God
 - i) He is unclean
 - ii) He shall live alone
 - iii) His dwelling shall be outside the camp.
 - (3) If you think of hell as being eternally isolated away from God and others, imprisoned forever with just yourself, your sin, and your hopelessness, then leprosy in the ancient world

was a living hell.

- (a) The Law of leprosy separated the inflicted
 - i) From normal life
 - ii) From normal relationships
 - iii) From fellowship with God
- (b) Unclean: more than sick:
 - i) separated
 - ii) in need of reconciliation with God that they cannot possibly experience on their own or from another human being.

- b. The Leper
 - (1) Identified
 - (2) Ostracized
 - (3) Powerless
 - (4) Hopeless

2. The Leper and the Christ

- a. Driven by neither desperation nor Law nor belligerence he comes to Christ in faith
- b. Does not simply ask to be healed; he asks to be made clean
 - (1) More than physical healing
 - (2) He seeks covenant restoration: reconciliation
- c. Does not doubt the possibility; he explores the willingness
 - (1) No man had ever cured leprosy
 - (a) Namaan got a word from Elisha and obeyed
 - (b) But Elisha did not cure Namaan
 - (c) God cured Namaan
 - (2) Any cure of leprosy in the biblical history is always accomplished by God Himself
 - (a) God gave Moses leprosy and took it away
 - (b) God gave Miriam leprosy and took it away
 - (c) God gave Gehazi the servant of Elisha Namaan's leprosy and never took it away
 - (3) He does not doubt that God is present, what he wants to know is, is God willing to reconcile the separated?
 - (a) This man knows God is present, what he does not know is whether God is willing to restore his health, to reconcile him into fellowship
 - i) If you will, you can make me clean.
 - ii) If you WILL, YOU can make me clean!
 - (4) Implied Questions (as we look back on the scene)
 - (a) Are you the Christ?
 - (b) Are you the living proof that God is willing to restore sinful human beings to fellowship with Himself
 - (c) Are you the one who will bring near those who are

- (d) far from God and cannot save themselves
Are you the Deliverer, the Rescuer, the Restorer sent from God who will rescue us from the consequences of sin?
- (e) Are you the embodiment of divine compassion authorized in the divine will to relieve our suffering?
- (f) Will you, Jesus, take on the role of Christ and reconcile me with God, knowing what it will take?
 - i) Cursed is every one under the Law
 - ii) The Christ must fulfill the Law and take on the curse of the Law: death
 - iii) Will you heal me, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and take death on yourself?

B. The Proof of the Christ

1. The answer to the leper's question is yes, but how Jesus answers the question may not be what you think.
 - a. Most immediately recognize mercy and compassion
 - b. Others acknowledge the physical healing
 - c. But this scene is about Law
 - (1) This man came to Jesus, breaking the Law
 - (2) What will Jesus, the Christ, do about the Law?
2. Jesus, as the embodiment of God's Law and the enforcer of God's Law, acts on His authority under the Law (as the Christ) to set aside the application of the Law to reveal the heart of the Law.
 - a. If you stop at the physical healing of this man, and even if you focus in the compassion and mercy of Jesus, both of which are infinitely worth celebrating, you will still miss the eternal impact of what happens here in this scene.
 - b. The proof that Jesus is the Christ is not in the miraculous healing of a leper, but in His handling of the Law now and **STILL RISING FROM THE DEAD LATER!**
 - (1) The implicit question is, "Are you the Christ from God that I think you are, the One who will restore me to covenant fellowship with God?"
 - (2) Jesus appears to break the ceremonial Law by touching the leper
 - (a) The police officer directing traffic under a stoplight
 - i) Red light: stop
 - ii) Officer: God
 - iii) Officer embodies the Law and supercedes the symbol
 - (b) Jesus takes an action that only He could take and that, in fact, if He is the Christ, He must take.
 - (c) He must, as the Christ, act in a manner that reveals

the heart and purpose of God in preparation for a new covenant between God and man mediated by the Son!

- (d) He must take this man, cursed under the Law, and bring Him, by His own authority and action, into grace, if he is in fact, the Christ.
- (e) Jesus, moved by the compassion of God, reaches out in the mercy of God and touches the leper with the authority and the power of God and reconciles this man to fellowship with God, removing the disease that under the Law separated him from God

3. Paul: The Law is the schoolteacher to bring us to Christ

- a. **Galatians 3:19-26 (ESV)** ¹⁹ *Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.* ²⁰ *Now an intermediary implies more than one, but God is one.*
- b. ²¹ *Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.* ²² *But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*
- c. ²³ *Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.* ²⁴ *So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.* ²⁵ *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,* ²⁶ *for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.*
- d. What good is it if the Law demonstrates our need of a Savior and brings us to Christ, if Christ does not then save us?
- e. If Jesus does not accept and act in the role of Christ then those under Law have no hope.
 - (1) They cannot keep the Law
 - (2) The Law cannot in and of itself save them from the wrath of God.
 - (a) Without the Christ, lepers die lepers with no one to save them
 - (b) Without Christ, sinners die sinners with no one to save them.

4. Praise be to God there is a Christ in Israel and there is a Christ for you!

- a. By superceding the Law with grace Jesus proves that He is the Christ who reconciles men to God.
- b. By fulfilling the Law for you, living in perfect fellowship with God and dying on your behalf on the cross, Jesus proves that He is the Christ who restores the outcast to covenant fellowship with God

III. What does the proof mean for us?

A. Any Lawbreaker may come to Christ for what they need

1. Any leprosy of the soul: anything that separates us from true peace and fellowship with God
 - a. Sin, guilt, shame
 - b. Anxiety, fear, sorrow
 - c. Weakness, despair
2. The old Law said stay away and deal with it.
3. The New Covenant, the covenant of grace, says
 - a. come and be restored, be reconciled
 - b. Come and find forgiveness
 - c. Come and find mercy
 - d. Come and find hope
 - e. Come and find rest
 - f. Come and find deliverance from sin and the fear of death
4. You ask the question, "Are you willing?" and Jesus answers with every ounce of His life, with every drop of His blood, "I am. Be clean."
5. Come
 - a. In faith, without doubt
 - b. In prayer
 - c. In the word
 - d. Through the Spirit

B. The response of Christ to the cry of faith is complete

1. No partial reconciliation
2. No temporary or probationary restoration