

Mark 1:35-45 (ESV)

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, ³⁷ and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” ³⁸ And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

⁴⁰ And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, “If you will, you can make me clean.” ⁴¹ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, “I will; be clean.” ⁴² And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.” ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to 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.

1. Review the passage from last week (Mark 1:21-34). Jesus had just experienced a successful day of ministry, yet he chose to wake up early and pray in a solitary place (verse 35). Why is this important?
2. What does this passage reveal about Jesus' prioritization of prayer? How is this apparently different or unexpected to his disciples?
3. How does Jesus' behavior compare to your own approach to prayer, especially when you are busy?

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4. Why was it legally and ritually shocking that Jesus touched the leper (verse 41)? What does this act reveal about Jesus' character?

5. After Jesus heals the leper, why doesn't he want anything to leak out about the healing?

6. How do you reconcile the healed man's disobedience (verse 45) with the fact that his story resulted in more people hearing about Jesus?

7. Who are modern-day "lepers" or outcasts in our community, and how can we show them the same kind of compassion?