

Closing Thoughts:

1. Who can make us clean?

We aren't the first to ask this question. Job, at his lowest point, asked this question in:

*“Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble. He comes out like a flower and withers; he flees like a shadow and continues you not. And do you open your eyes on such a one and bring me into judgement with you? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?
There is not one”*

Job 14:1-4

“Come now let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet they shall be white as snow”

Isaiah 1:18

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior”

Titus 3:3-6

Friends, this story and all of scripture clearly tells that there **IS ONE and ONLY ONE** who can make us clean and it's part of the picture and symbolism of baptism.

There is ONE and ONLY ONE who can make us clean!!

“The Way of Jesus”

February 23, 2025

Mark 1:35-45

Introduction

What does the practice of baptism symbolize?

In what way does baptism symbolize unclean vs clean? Who can make that which is unclean.... clean?

1. The Way of Jesus: Quite, Intimate Time with the Father (v35)

“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”.

Mark 1:35

The previous day ended with Jesus ministering to those with demons and others with illnesses. It had been a BUSY day.

CIRCLE all of the words that describe the *intentionality* and *commitment* of Jesus towards his relationship with the Father.

This isn't an isolated incident, rather this was the *way of Jesus*. The passage below describes it as *ongoing, continuous action*.

“But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him, and to be healed of their infirmities. But he would withdraw to desolate places to pray”.

Luke 5:15-16

If Jesus, who is God, needed to daily, withdraw to a quiet place to be with God the Father, how much more do we need this time of communion and connection with God in our lives?

2. The Way of Jesus: Proclamation over Praise

And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you" 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". And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Mark 1:36-39

The disciples were *responding to the physical needs* as most important, much like they had done when they were on the sea of Galilee in the middle of a storm.

Jesus sees with *spiritual sight*, and understands that while physical needs are important, our greatest need is *spiritual* (reconciliation with God vs physical healing).

Spiritual sight, or *sensitivity to spiritual matters*, could be described as the first step in *staying in the step with the Spirit* (Galatians 5:25). See the STEPS below:

1. Sensitivity (to spiritual matters)
2. Seek (the Lord)
3. Surrender (to what he's asking/doing)
4. Step off (in faith to what he's called you to)

In this way of Jesus, **he rejects the praise** and adulation of the crowd in surrender **to the Father and the proclamation of the good news** of the kingdom of God.

Read Mark 2:17. What is the relationship between "sick" and "sinners"?

"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners".

Mark 2:17

Jesus had PERFECT spiritual SIGHT!! **Again, our greatest need is reconciliation, and intimacy, with God.**

However, physical needs are important and are part of what Jesus uses to get peoples attention

3. The Way of Jesus: Courageous Compassion over Prideful Indifference

The Greek word for "leprosy" here refers to a variety of skin conditions, the worst being leprosy.

How was leprosy often viewed prior to, and during, Jesus's time?

In what ways would those with leprosy have experienced rejection, shame and isolation?

The man with leprosy approaches Jesus and declares "If you will, you can make me clean". **What does this tell us about the man?**

How does Jesus respond to this request? In what way does Jesus demonstrate here that He IS the image of the invisible God? (Exodus 34:6, Colossians 1:15 Hebrews 1:3)

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature"

Hebrews 1:3

"He is the image of the invisible God"

Colossians 1:15

How might anger and compassion both represent God's heart in this situation?

The Way of Jesus is that compassion leads to action.

Jesus's action in this situation, was first to *touch* the man. How would this have been significant? What reaction might those in the crowd have had?

Do you ever feel dirty? or unclean?... because of something you did or something that was done to you.