# Christ the Fountain of Cleansing

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.!

Thank you for the welcome and a joy for me to meet you all and minister to the flock that he loves so well. When you meet your friends, precious treasured ones, you love them for the sake of your friends.
And so my heart is already knit to you and I pray that God would help and that we would have a profitable, Christ-exalting time in his word this morning. The 17th century Scottish pastor Samuel Rutherford once said that this world is a hard, ill-made bed.
No rest is in it for your soul. He says, awake and make haste to seek that pearl, Christ, that this world seeth not. That's what we've come to do this morning, to seek and to see Christ.
It's why it's such a joy to gather as the people of God, as the assembly of the Lord, as the flock of the good shepherd, to magnify his loveliness, to behold the Lord Jesus, to exalt his name together.
[1:34] The title of our message this morning is Christ, the Fountain of Cleansing. And our text is Luke 5, verses 12 and 13. In this text, Jesus continues showcasing his divine power over disease by cleansing a leper.

Luke says, while he was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored him, saying, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.
And he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, I am willing, be cleansed. And immediately the leprosy left him.
And while in one sense this looks like just another scene of Jesus' divine power to overcome the effects of sin, there is more to it than that. In Scripture, the disease of leprosy stands out among all the ailments and diseases of a fallen creation.
Leprosy was singled out by God to be a picture or a parable of human sin. John MacArthur calls it an irresistible analogy of sin.
[2:44] See, you and I are all spiritual lepers. The leprosy of sin has infected us to the core of our being. All our faculties, our minds, our hearts, our wills, our consciences, have all been diseased by spiritual leprosy.

And so we all stand in need of cleansing from the great fountain of cleansing that is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore, we must come to him for cleansing.
And we must come to him in precisely the way that this leper comes. When we do, this text teaches us we will find Christ to be just as the leper found him, full of compassion and mighty to save.
J.C. Ryle wrote, We have in this wonderful history a lively emblem of Christ's power to heal our souls. Charles Spurgeon said, Now is the Son of Man glorious in his power to save.
And so, as we walk slowly through this miraculous scene, I want you to see yourselves for the spiritual lepers that you are. I want you to see the Lord Jesus Christ for the glorious, compassionate, mighty Savior that he is.
[4:00] The fountain of cleansing for the leprosy of your soul. If you are an unbeliever, if you have not yet come to a saving knowledge of Christ, I want you to come to him for cleansing.

And if you have already washed away your stains in the fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins, I want you to see and celebrate his glory with me.
And to rejoice over how one so lovely and so holy comes so eagerly and willingly and graciously to cleanse and to heal ones so vile, so repulsive and undeserving as we are.
So let's look first at the sinner's contamination. Number one, the sinner's contamination. Verse 12, While he was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy.

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What was this leprosy? Well, in the original language, the term has the basic meaning of scaly. It was actually a general term for any number of skin conditions, including what we might identify today as psoriasis, ringworm, and cutaneous lupus.
[5:13] But the most severe disease denoted by the term leprosy is what's now known as Hansen's disease, what we normally think of as leprosy, where bacteria damage the nervous system to the point that people can't feel any pain.

It was long supposed that leprosy was some sort of flesh-eating bacteria that caused a person's extremities to fall off. It was common to see lepers with missing toes or nubs for fingers and assume that the disease just ate away at the flesh.
But it's been discovered that those extremities don't fall off. They rub off. Due to the loss of feeling from the nerve damage, victims of leprosy wear their body parts away.
A stubbed toe becomes a broken toe that you continue to walk on until the bone is exposed and the wound is infected. You accidentally place your hand on a hot surface. It causes no pain and severe burns result.
Noses and ears wear away just from being rubbed and scratched over and over again. It's common to see lepers with sores open and oozing ulcers and raw flesh.
[6:20] It was not pretty. And it was an issue known to the ancient world. Luke says in chapter 4 verse 27, there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet.

It was common enough that there were prescriptions in the ceremonial law for how to deal with leprosy. Leviticus 13 and 14. Why is it such a big deal?
Well, because Yahweh was dwelling in the camp of Israel. Right? In Exodus 40, the Shekinah glory of God fills the tabernacle. God signifies, I am dwelling with my people and holiness is now in their midst.
And yet leprosy was defiling. It was ceremonial uncleanness. And uncleanness cannot dwell alongside perfect purity.
And so in Numbers 5, 2, and 3, God says, Command the sons of Israel that they send away from the camp everyone with leprosy, everyone having a discharge, everyone who is unclean because of contact with a dead person.
[7:23] You shall send away both male and female. You shall send them outside the camp so that they do not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst. See, God was in the camp of Israel.

And because leprosy is defiling, because it's unclean, that meant that the leper could not be in the camp. Leviticus 13, 45 and 46 says, For the person who has the leprous infection, his clothes shall be torn, the hair of his head shall be uncovered.
He shall cover his mustache and call out, Unclean! Unclean! He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection.
He is unclean. He shall live alone. He shall live outside the camp. This was a defiling disease. Many described it as a living death.
In fact, in Numbers 12, 12, when God strikes Miriam with leprosy, Moses prays for her and asks that God not let her be like one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away.
[8:31] So Spurgeon said, This disease turns a man into a mass of loathsomeness, a walking pile of pests. He says, Leprosy is nothing better than a horrible and lingering death.

And so because leprosy was this defiling, living death, it was also an isolating disease. So much so that if a leper went anywhere, you heard of it, he had to announce his uncleanness with a loud voice so that nobody would be defiled by his uncleanness.
It's been well said that leprosy was lonely. 2 Chronicles 26, 21 says, The leper had to live in a separate house, for he was cut off from the house of the Lord.
In Luke 17 and verse 12, Luke introduces a group of lepers by saying, Ten men with leprosy who stood at a distance met Jesus. And they would have had to stand at a distance.
The rabbis taught you couldn't come within six feet of a leper. And if the wind was blowing, it was 150 feet. The leper's life was a lonely life. Away from his wife.
[9:40] Away from his children. A stranger to the comforts and pleasures of any sort of companionship. In some cases, struggling to remember what it felt like to touch another human being.

He was an outcast. He was a castaway. And then not only was leprosy defiling and isolating, it was also eminently shameful.

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You heard it in Leviticus 13. He had to tear his clothes, shave his head, cover his mouth, and shout that he was unclean, lest he defile anyone else. His uncleanness became his identity.
Hi, my name is unclean. One rabbi in the Talmud advocated throwing stones at lepers to force them to keep their distance like they were wild dogs.
Their humanity was totally stripped from them. They were themselves a disease. And nothing more. And then beyond the shame, leprosy also brought with it the stigma of the curse of God.
[10:47] Israelites believed that lepers were being punished by God. And the Old Testament does record several instances of God wielding leprosy as a judgment against sin. We mentioned Numbers 12.

God strikes Miriam with leprosy because she and Aaron spoke against Moses, Yahweh's prophet. 2 Chronicles 26 tells us Yahweh had smitten King Uzziah with leprosy because he had usurped the role of the priests.
And so it came to be believed that leprosy was the judgment of God. And so it was permissible and even right to treat lepers with contempt. And still more than that, leprosy was regarded as incurable, a hopeless disease.
In 2 Kings 5, the king of Aram hears that Elisha the prophet can heal lepers. And so he sends his military commander, Naaman, to the king of Israel to be cured of his leprosy. And 2 Kings 5, 7 says, but when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, am I God to kill and make alive that this man is sending word to me to cure a man of his leprosy?
Leprosy was so incurable that one would have to be God himself to cure it. Am I God to kill and to make alive? Cleansing a leper was on the order of raising the dead.
[12:06] And in fact, in all of the prescriptions for the priests in Leviticus 13 and 14, there's nothing about how to treat the disease. If there was leprosy, the man was unclean and cut off.

If it was uncertain, he quarantined for a week to see if it got better or worse, but there is no talk of any remedy. The law provides no cure for leprosy.
You can imagine this man going to the priest to be examined and then they come to him with a grave expression and say, we're so sorry, but there's nothing we can do. You are a condemned man.
You are unclean. And he would have begged them, no, please, is there anything to be done? I'll do anything. You just tell me. And they would have apologized again and said, no, there is nothing to be done.
The law of God provides only for your condemnation. And I hope as we hear of the awful corruption of leprosy that you can see yourself in this leper.
[13:12] I hope you can hear how appropriate a picture leprosy is of the corruption of sin that afflicts each and every one of us by nature. Like leprosy, sin is defiling.

Isaiah 64, 6, all of us have become like one who is unclean. And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment. Like leprosy, sin's defilement is totalizing.
Our entire constitution is infected with sin. Isaiah 1, 5 and 6 speaks of sinners and says, the whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, only bruises, welts, and raw wounds.
Our understanding is darkened. Our hearts are made of stone. Our affections are corrupt. Our conscience is defiled, and our wills are enslaved to sin.
That is the biblical diagnosis of those outside of Christ, those by nature who come into this world dead in trespasses and sins. Life in sin is a living death, dead in trespasses and sins.
[14:23] Like leprosy, sin isolates. It makes us unfit for fellowship with God. If physical uncleanness couldn't dwell alongside the manifestation of God's presence in Israel, how much more does our spiritual uncleanness alienate us from the very presence of God himself?

Isaiah 59, 2, your iniquities have hidden God's face from you. There's a separation between you and God, and we must be forever cast out of his presence so as not to defile his dwelling place.
It also makes us unfit for fellowship with the people of God. 1 Corinthians 5, 13, Paul cites the Old Testament law and commands the church, remove the wicked man from among yourselves.
The spiritual leper is an outcast with God and God's people. We are to be expelled from the fellowship of the righteous. And the shame of our sin, if we could truly see it as God sees it, is unbearable.

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We are a spiritual mass of loathsomeness, as Spurgeon said, a walking pile of pests. Our sin is an abomination. It is abhorrent and repulsive, a stench in the nostrils of holiness.
[15:42] Anyone with any dignity about them would be right to demand that we warn them of the uncleanness of our presence so that we might not contaminate them. If we saw the loathsomeness of our sin rightly, we would acknowledge we deserve to be kept at bay with stones as they did to the lepers.

And like leprosy, those infected with the disease of sin are under a divine curse. It is written, cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of this law to perform them. Galatians 3, 10. And like leprosy, our sin is incurable. Jeremiah 17, 9. The heart is more deceitful than all else and is incurable.
And so, friends, this man's misery is our misery. If only we have eyes to see. We have broken the law of the Holy One of Israel.
We have belittled His glory. We have preferred filth over beauty. We are abominable, unclean, loathsome, full of shame.
[16:55] Nobody should want anything to do with us, least of all the thrice holy God of the universe. We are outcasts, fit only for the depths of hell itself. And if we have any sense of ourselves at all, we cry out, eternal punishment, death in my sins, bearing my own guilt.

No, please. Is there nothing to be done? I'll do anything. You tell me what I have to do to make peace with God. And the answer is no. There is nothing to be done.
The law of God provides only for your condemnation. We can do nothing to rid leprosy from our bodies. Still less can our filthy rags rid sinfulness from our souls.
But then, this leper sees Jesus. The law provides only for your condemnation, but what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did, sending His own Son.
We've seen the sinner's contamination. Let's look now at the sinner's contrition. The sinner's contrition, verse 12. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him.
[18:15] The parallel passage in Mark 1.40 says, a leper came to Jesus beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him. This is total brokenness, total humiliation.

This man knows who he is. He falls on his knees and then on his face. He acknowledges his uncleanness. He knows he's undeserving.
And so, he takes the posture of humility, of reverence, even of worship. This man does not soft sell his condition. He doesn't say, well, you know, yeah, I mean, I've got a little leprosy, but on the whole, I think I'm a pretty healthy person.
We certainly hear much of that sort of thing today as sinners flatter themselves that their sinfulness isn't as foul and vile as the Bible says it is. Well, sure, you know, I'm not perfect.
I'm human. I mean, we all make mistakes, but on the whole, I think I'm a pretty good person. God knows my heart. I think he'll be, he'll see my sincerity and he'll be pleased with me.
[19:19] This man says nothing like that. He knows that's nonsense. He's covered with leprosy, the text says. And so, he comes with the broken spirit and the contrite heart that Psalm 51, 17 says, the Lord does not despise.

He comes in full confession and acknowledgement of his uncleanness, just as the truly repentant sinner must come to Christ, not making excuses for his sin, but openly confessing that he is totally corrupted and that he has no hope for forgiveness apart from the mercy of God and so that he falls down on his face, bowed in abject humility, begging God for undeserved grace.
But notice, the sinner's contrition is not only marked by humility, it's marked by desperation because this is not supposed to happen.
Lepers are not supposed to be anywhere near a crowd of people. This man should be quarantined at home or at least he should be crying out, unclean, unclean, keeping his distance.
He shouldn't be approaching anyone, let alone a rabbi like Jesus. But what drives such holy recklessness?
[20:37] Well, that brings us in the third place to the sinner's confidence. The sinner's confidence. Verse 12, he fell on his face and implored him saying, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

This man knows he's an outcast. He knows he belongs nowhere near Jesus. But he feels the pain of his defilement, his isolation, his shame, so acutely.

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He recognizes the utter hopelessness of his uncleanness so intensely that he is desperate. He has this sense of holy abandon, so much so that he throws caution and custom to the wind and falls on his face and begs Jesus, Lord, if you're willing, you can make me clean.
You can end my shame. You can purify my uncleanness. You can cleanse my filth. And we see this holy desperation often in the Gospels, don't we?
The woman has a hemorrhage of blood for 12 years. She's endured much at the hands of physicians. She's only gotten worse and she thinks to herself, I know I'm not supposed to touch him, but if I can just touch his clothes, he can heal me.
[21:50] The Syrophoenician woman says, Lord, I know that I'm a dog and that I don't deserve to eat the children's bread, but Lord, even the dogs feed on the crumbs that fall from the children's table.

And Bartimaeus, blind, sits begging across the road to Jericho where he hears Jesus is passing by and he cries out, Son of David, have mercy on me. And they say, shut up, Bartimaeus.
Stop bothering him. He's not here for you. And the text says, but he kept crying out all the more.
This is my chance. You see, people who are truly sensible of their need, those whose afflictions have bowed them to the dust, they have this holy desperation, this holy abandon that says, I know I'm not supposed to.
I know I've got no claim upon his mercy, but I've got to go to him. I've got to bring him my uncleanness. And dear sinner, you and I must come this same way.
Perhaps you've been taught to think that the filth of your uncleanness ought to keep you from coming to Jesus. But no, if you come to him in humble contrition, bowed to the dust and moved by a holy desperation, fueled by the confidence that Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior, will then let every custom and every caution be thrown to the wind, come to Christ for cleansing.
[23:22] Lord, if you're willing, you can make me clean. How precious is this confession of the sinner's confident faith in Jesus? Well, how does the Lord respond?

Let's look forth at the Savior's cleanness. The Savior's cleanness. And he stretched out his hand, verse 13, and touched him.
And this is truly astounding. I mean, everybody else in that crowd would have seen that leper coming, maybe even smelled that leper coming, and they would have taken ten steps back.
If not for the sheer repulsiveness of the man's condition, at the very least because the law of God forbade anyone from touching a leper, lest they be defiled. No, not anybody, and certainly no rabbi would have ever gotten within striking distance of a leper.
But Jesus doesn't draw back. Jesus stretches out his hand and touches this man. Everybody else in the crowd would have gasped.
[24:27] He's defiling himself, they would have said. But was he defiling himself? No. Everyone else touches the leper and is defiled by the leper's uncleanness.

But such is Jesus' holiness and purity and cleanness that Jesus touches the leper and the leper becomes clean. The leper's uncleanness does not contaminate Jesus' purity.
Jesus' purity is so boundless and bottomless that his purity contaminates the leper's uncleanness. Jesus infects this man with the contagion of heaven and the touch of the Savior's cleanness overcomes the sinner's defilement.
Jesus is the fulfillment of the law. He has come to touch the unclean. When Jesus manifests his divine glory in the miraculous catch of fish in the previous passage in Luke 5, Peter is gripped with the reality of his own sinfulness before this one whom he's coming to understand is holy God.
And he says in Luke 5, 8, go away from me Lord for I am a sinful man. I don't deserve to be anywhere near you and you don't deserve to have to be anywhere near me.
[25:58] But Jesus is not repelled by uncleanness. Not from one like this leper who is ravaged by the effects of the fall, who's humbled by it, and who begs for mercy because of it.

No, Jesus is more repelled by the arrogant leper who doesn't feel his shame, who doesn't come for cleansing, but who trusts in the power of his own filthy rags to cleanse himself of his filth.
But to the despairing sinner aware of his inability, Jesus draws near to that one. Even in his defilement. Go away from me, Lord. I don't want my sin to defile you.
No, friend, you see, you don't understand. I've come for the unclean. I've come to embrace the outcast. I've come to touch the loathsome.

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I've come to cleanse the unclean. And so, friend, do you feel a keen sense of the pain and shame of your sin?
[27:01] Well, that's good. You ought to feel that shame. But don't let it keep you from Jesus. The pain and the shame of your sin ought to drive you to Jesus because the cleanness of his righteousness overcomes the uncleanness of your sin.

And he accomplishes that by doing so much more than touching you in your defilement, doesn't he? He takes your defilement upon himself and then takes up residence inside of you.
Right? God the Son traverses the infinite chasm from heaven to earth between divine and human by assuming to himself a true and full genuine human nature.
He lives the perfect life of obedience that you were commanded to live but failed to live. And then he goes to the cross to bear your uncleanness in his own body. He bore our sins in his body on the cross.
The Savior does not just zap your spiritual leprosy away from the safe spiritual harbors of heaven. No, he has skin in the game. Literally. Right?
[28:14] He comes up close and embraces you sinner and your sin into his very arms. He lays you as a sheep upon his very shoulders. And he himself suffers the law's awful penalty for your uncleanness in such a way that he and you as well united to him comes out clean on the other side.

What a Savior we have who gave himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed and to purify for himself a people for his own possession.
salvation. And I want you to notice Jesus didn't need to touch this man to heal him. All throughout the Gospels Jesus performs miracles and healings with a word.
Right? Lord I'm not worthy for you to come under my roof. Just say the word and my servant will be healed. Lazarus come forth and the man dead four days rises. When this man begs to be cleansed Jesus could have been all the way over here and said all right be cleansed.
And the voice would have healed him. Why does he touch him? Just briefly number five the Savior's compassion. Luke doesn't mention it here but the parallel account in Mark 141 says moved with compassion Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him.
[29:39] No one would have touched this man for quite some time. Leprosy advanced. It says he's covered with it. Years have passed likely since anybody had touched this man.

And the starvation for human contact would have been palpable. And Jesus whom this man regards as Lord before whom this man falls on his face.
The one whom this man believes can make him clean if he's only willing Jesus the fountain of all cleanness himself initiates the human contact that this man would have ached for.
See the sinner was full of leprosy but the savior was full of compassion. And he expresses that not only with a touch but also with this glorious reply.
He says I am willing be cleansed. And oh what a gold mine of comfort and consolation these precious words are to broken and unclean sinners.
[30:37] I am willing. Lord if you're willing you can make me clean. I am absolutely convinced of your power. You can end my shame. You can purify my uncleanness but I am not entirely sure of your heart toward me.

After all I have no claim upon you. I'm an unclean leper. I don't deserve your mercy. I deserve to be discarded. But oh Lord if you might be willing if you might find it in your heart to have pity upon my misery I know you can make me clean.
And without a moment's hesitation Jesus touches the untouchable and says I am willing. And what tenderness must have been in his face and in his voice how full his heart must have been to bring the blessing of heaven the power of the kingdom of God into this man's miserable condition.
An image bearer ruined by the curse casting himself upon the savior for cleansing. Jesus doesn't say yeah sure pal be cleansed no biggie. No how eager and delightful Jesus must have been to heal this man.
You think of yourselves how you know you hear of somebody with maybe a friend or a family member with some terrible disease and you feel it in the pit of your stomach and you say I wish that I could just wave a hand and have him be free of it.
[32:07] If only I could do what all the charlatans of the charismatic movement claim to be able to do I'd empty the children's hospitals. I'd empty every wheelchair I could find. And friend if that kind of compassion wells up in your own heart as sinful as you are imagine what compassion welled up

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in the savior's heart as he looked upon this miserable creature and smiled and said I am willing.

This is the savior who saw the grief in Mary's eyes filled with tears and was deeply moved in spirit who wept with the sisters at Lazarus' tomb.
This is the savior who sees the widow of Nain weeping for the death of her only son and felt compassion for her and raised the man from the dead and the text says gave that boy back to his mother.
The young girl lies dead in a house of weeping and wailing mourners and Jesus says why are you weeping? She's just asleep. And taking her by the hand he says in a voice that must have been ever so gentle little girl I say to you arise and he gives that sweet girl back to her family.
Friends you have no need to doubt this savior's willingness to rescue you from your uncleanness. He is willing. He is full of compassion for sinners and if you will come to him the way this leper came to him humiliated desperate ashamed of your sin but confident in his power to save he will receive you.
[33:39] You may be full of sin but he is full of compassion for sinners. And that brings us to our final point in verse 13 number six the savior's capacity.

Jesus says I am willing be cleansed and Luke says and immediately the leprosy left him. Right? The leprosy had come upon this man in stages. Right?
Maybe first a rash then an open sore then ulcers until he finally became the massive loathsomeness that he was when he came to Jesus on this day. But Jesus gives the word be cleansed and it left immediately.
Shriveled scaly corroded skin immediately softens. White scabs and red scars turn into healthy flesh. flesh. Maybe fingers grow back.
Maybe ears grow back. This was a divine miracle. And how feeble and ill founded would our faith be if our savior had all the compassion in the world upon poor sinners and wished all the best that could be wished but was powerless to do anything about it.
[34:51] Oh but our Christ he is not just benevolent. He is not just compassionate. He is willing and he is able. A word and the winds and the waves are stilled.

A word and the demons come out. A word and Lazarus comes forth from the grave. I am willing. Be cleansed. And the leper, the one who is regarded as a dead man, the one whom no one could heal but God alone is immediately cleansed.
Friends, Jesus is God. He is Lord of creation. Then he is the Lord of the new creation who is making all things new. And the Savior who can remove leprosy with a word is the same Savior who can remove the leprosy of the soul.
Yes, the leprosy of our sin has infected us to the very core of our being but the Savior's capacity is such that he merely gives the word and your spiritual death is turned to spiritual life.
J.C. Ryle wrote, no heart disease is so deep seated but he is able to cure it. No plague of soul is so virulent but our great physician can heal it.
[36:11] Let us never despair of anyone's salvation so long as he lives. Where does that leave us?

Leaves us with two words of application. First, to the unbeliever, to the spiritual leper, to you who still labor under the burdens of the foulness and filth of sin, I call you to come to this Christ, the fountain of cleansing for your salvation.
Despite what you may think, despite what you may be willing to admit to yourself, you are full of leprosy. Perhaps not on the surface, right? You may be the picture of health and beauty on the outside, but if you could see your heart as God sees it, you would see yourself covered with the most loathsome spiritual leprosy down to the very depths of your soul.
Your heart is corroded with the defiling disease of sin. And you think, okay, I confess that I'm sinful, but I'll reform myself.
I'll do better. Tell me what I can do to effect my cleansing. But no, friend, God's law does not make any provision for cleansing. It makes only provision for your condemnation.
[37:27] All of your efforts will prove fruitless. All of your religious devotion will only make you more unclean because all your righteous deeds are filthy rags. You say, if that's the case, then I've got no hope.

I've got to perish forever in the filth of my sin. No, dear friend, that same law that condemns you was given to point you to the one who has come and fulfilled the law.

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To the one who was never unclean. And what has this Savior done? The leprosy of your sin required your isolation, your banishment from the presence of God and the fellowship of his people. Again, Leviticus 13 46 says, the leper shall live alone, his dwelling shall be outside the camp. But friends, Jesus went to Gethsemane alone.
The one who once heard the Father's voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. That one called upon that same Father in the garden and heard silence.
[38:33] He was abandoned by his disciples during his trial. I do not know the man. In the mystery of mysteries, he was abandoned even by his Father as he cried out those wretched words, my God.

My God, why have you forsaken me? Hebrews 13 12, listen, says that Jesus suffered outside the gate.
The next verse, Hebrews 13 13 says he suffered outside the camp. You see it? You deserved to be banished for your uncleanness, but Jesus endured that banishment in the place of his people that we might be accepted and welcomed and restored.
And because of that perfectly sufficient sacrifice, Jesus still does not shrink back from vile sinners. He is still moved with compassion. He still stretches forth his hand to the unclean.
He is still, as it were, looking sinners in the eye and saying, I am willing. He still speaks and all creation obeys.
[39:42] the winds and waves still know that voice who ruled them while he was here below. He has obeyed, sinner, where you have failed. He has died in the place of sinners.

He has risen to demonstrate his victory and he calls you this day to repent and trust in him alone for righteousness. And everyone who does, he says, be cleansed and immediately the spiritual leprosy leaves them.
Oh, come to Christ. What could stop you? What could keep you from such a kind and compassionate and glorious savior? You bring your sin to the one who is willing and able to cleanse you from sin.
And then just a second word of application to my brothers and sisters who are saved. You who know your leprosy to have been cleansed, but who, like me, so often return to your uncleanness? How often do we who have been freed return to our bondage willingly? And yet here is reason to come to Christ, the fountain of cleansing, again and again and again each day.
[41:00] See, the gospel is not only for unbelievers. as we sin afresh, we must betake ourselves to Christ afresh. And friend, he receives you.

He comes near to you. If he came near to you when you were full of leprosy, how much more now that you only bring the remnants of sin? How much more does he say, I am willing, after the definitive cleansing has already taken place?
You say, no, you see, you don't understand. I've come so many times. I've confessed the same sin over and over. How could he ever take me back? How could he ever have hope that I'm truly repentant this time?
And friend, this is the Savior who welcomes sinners. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners. He came not for the healthy who have no need of a physician.
He came for the sick. You see, the Savior who did the greater for us by taking his leprosy upon himself and bearing the full fury of God's wrath against us will not fail to do the lesser for us and cleanse us of the remnants of sin's presence and purify for himself the people for his own possession.
[42:18] And so, brothers and sisters, go to him every morning in full acknowledgement of your leprosy and tell him, Lord, here I am again.

I have defiled myself again. But Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean. And as you look to the pages of scripture, and as you look up as it were into his smiling face, and see his outstretched arm, and hear him say in triumphant majesty, my dear child, how precious you are to me.
There, I see my blood on the doorposts of your heart. There, I see the robe of my own righteousness draped across your shoulders.
I am not ashamed to call you my brethren. I am willing. Be cleansed. Dear people, could you refuse him?
Could you walk away from a savior so lovely? That kind of boundless compassion rooted not in sentimentalism but in his own blood-stained cross.

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[43:33] I don't know about you, that makes me want to root out every vestige of remaining sin in my life. What a motivation to holiness is a compassionate savior who receives sinners.

Can he be so tender with you day after day, sin after sin, prayer after prayer, and you just give no thought to living in the sin that he cleansed you from?

No, you can't because you have been driven by his own loveliness, his own kindness to make war on your sin. You've been delightfully compelled to put to death the deeds of the body because you cannot wallow in the leprosy that Christ has cleansed you from.

Do you see what I'm saying? The notion that we don't have to clean ourselves up and make ourselves holy before coming to Jesus, but can just cast ourselves on his mercy and he cleanses us, that is glorious motivation now that we are in Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit and given strength by grace to put sin to death.

Not I kill sin in order to get in Christ, but because I'm in Christ I go to war and kill my sin. You see there is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins.

[44:54] And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains. And so like the thief on the cross, there may I, there may you, though vile as he, wash all your sins away.

Let's pray. Father, we give you thanks for Jesus Christ. Lord Jesus, we praise you as our great God and Savior for your grace to us.

I pray that the lost would be granted the gift of saving faith, that you would grant them the gift of repentance to turn away from sin and to trust in this compassionate and almighty Savior who is willing and who is able to save them.

And I pray for the people of God that they would know their Savior, that they would walk with him, that they would do this difficult heart work of mourning and grieving over their sin and mortifying it, putting it to death because you are worthy of it, because you are worthy of a pure bride, because your company, your fellowship is so delightful that whatever sin could offer us, we know it's nothing in comparison to what holiness and integrity and communion with Jesus offers us.

may that truth be written on our hearts, not only known in our heads, but may it be written in our hearts. Give us grace to walk worthy of so great a salvation.

[46:28] We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Lord, let's stand there. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

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