

Matt. 8:1-4, "Be Clean!" by Rev. Paul Hudson

The Miracles of Jesus in Matthew Summary, Sermon Notes Handout, Daily Devotional, Study Questions, & Crossword, 9/6/26

Summary

Big Idea

Jesus, the willing and greater High Priest, touches the unclean, makes them clean, restores them to fellowship, and reveals the kingdom's present and future cleansing restoration.

Matthew places Jesus' cleansing of the leper after the Sermon on the Mount, where his authoritative words about the kingdom are followed by authoritative works. The man bears ceremonial uncleanness and painful exclusion, yet comes openly, kneeling with honest humility: Jesus can make him clean if he desires. Jesus' answer, "I am willing," announces both mercy and kingdom power.

By touching the man, Jesus reverses the expected order: impurity does not spread to him; his purity spreads to the leper. He fulfills the cleansing law and acts as the greater High Priest, making clean by touch and word. Sending the man to the priest restores worship, family, work, and fellowship. This sign gathers broken people, welcomes outcasts, and promises final incorruptible cleansing.

Keys and Themes

1. Uncleanness Teaches Holiness

Ceremonial laws taught that invasive impurity does not belong with God's perfect holiness. Uncleanness was not always personal sin, but contamination required cleansing and sacrifice.

2. The Excluded Come Near

Though publicly marked, interrupted, and kept away, the leper comes exposed in faith. He does not clean himself first; he appeals humbly to Jesus' desire.

3. Purity Spreads From Jesus

The crowd expects Jesus to become unclean when he touches the leper. Instead, Jesus reverses that order: his holiness invades and cleanses the whole being.

4. Cleansing Restores Fellowship

Jesus sends the man to the priest so he can legally return to family, work, worship, and community. Christ's restoration is never merely private benefit.

5. The Miracle Announces Kingdom Mission

This one cleansing reveals Jesus' wider mission: broken people are gathered, unclean people cleansed, and outcasts welcomed. It also promises cleansing from sin, decay, and death forever.

Sermon Notes Handout

Sermon Title: Be Clean! | **Scripture:** Matt. 8:1-4

Point 1: Impurity Sticks

Fill in the blank: “The longer we’re around it, the more its _____ sticks to us.”

Question: What spiritual filth has stuck to you?

Notes:

Point 2: Come Near in Faith

Fill in the blank: “He came to Christ with honesty, humility, and _____.”

Question: Will you come honestly to Jesus?

Notes:

Point 3: Jesus Reverses the Order

Fill in the blank: “Jesus reversed that expected _____.”

Question: Where do you need Christ’s cleansing touch?

Notes:

Point 4: Restored to Community

Fill in the blank: “Jesus gave the man more than healing; he gave him his _____ back.”

Question: How does cleansing restore fellowship?

Notes:

Point 5: Kingdom Cleansing Arrives

Fill in the blank: “The broken are being gathered back _____.”

Question: Who needs to hear this welcome?

Notes:

Reflection Question: What would it mean for you to believe Jesus is willing to make you clean?

Next Step: Come to Christ honestly today, bringing the impurity or burden you have tried to hide.

Family Discussion Question: How does Jesus’ touch change the way we see people others avoid?

Daily Devotional

Sunday — Impurity and God's Holiness

Scripture: Matthew 8:1-4; Leviticus 13

The laws about ceremonial uncleanness made a sharp distinction between God's perfect holiness and a world corrupted by sin, evil, and death. Becoming unclean was not necessarily the same as committing sin, but it pictured contamination that could not be treated casually in God's presence.

The sermon calls us to see spiritual contamination honestly. Habits, wounds, and sins can build up like filth that sticks to us and invades the soul. We need more than pretending everything is clean; we need the cleansing power of Jesus.

Reflect Questions:

1. *What spiritual contamination have you treated casually?*
 2. *Where has filth begun to stick to your soul?*
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Monday — Coming Exposed to Christ

Scripture: Matthew 8:1-2; Psalm 34:18; Matthew 11:28

The leper should have stayed away from the crowd, yet he boldly comes to Jesus. He does not hide his condition, try to clean himself first, or claim he deserves help. He kneels and says, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

This is faith marked by honesty, humility, hope, and desperation. The question is not whether Jesus has power; the leper knows he does. He appeals to Jesus' desire. The church must be a place where broken, weary, and ashamed people can approach Christ freely and without shame.

Reflect Questions:

1. *What are you tempted to hide from Christ?*
2. *How can you approach Jesus with the leper's honesty?*

Tuesday — Holiness That Cleanses

Scripture: Matthew 8:3; Hebrews 9:13-14

When Jesus reaches out and touches the leper, the crowd would expect uncleanness to spread to Jesus. That had always been the order they understood: touch what is unclean, and you become unclean. But Jesus reverses the expected order.

Human impurity does not repel him. His holiness invades with a touch, and his purity spreads to the leper. This healing is a picture of the gospel: Jesus draws near to the contaminated and bears burdens we cannot bear. His blood cleanses our consciences from acts that lead to death so we may serve the living God.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Where do you doubt Jesus will draw near?*
 2. *How does Christ's purity change your shame?*
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Wednesday — Given Back a Life

Scripture: Matthew 8:4

Jesus tells the cleansed man to show himself to the priest and offer what Moses commanded. This is not an unnecessary detail. The priest's confirmation gave the man legal power to re-engage in community, family, work, worship, and ordinary life.

Jesus gave him more than healing; he gave him his life back. The leper's suffering included separation, not only physical pain. Christ's cleansing restoration is not merely private benefit. He purifies and restores people for community, relationship, and fellowship with God and his people.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Where has separation wounded your life?*
 2. *How might Christ restore you toward fellowship?*
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Thursday — The Kingdom Gathers the Outcast

Scripture: Matthew 8:1-4; Philippians 1:6

Matthew wants us to see more than one remarkable healing. The cleansed leper reveals the mission and nature of the kingdom of heaven: broken people are gathered back together, unclean people are cleansed, and outcasts are welcomed in. Jesus receives those others avoid and restores those who have been discarded.

The leper pictures the human condition. Sin contaminates, separates, and leaves people unable to restore themselves. Yet Jesus cleanses by grace because he is willing to make clean. What he begins in his people, he will carry on to completion.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Who do you assume is beyond restoration?*
2. *How does Christ's completion promise give you hope?*

Friday — Jesus Is Willing

Scripture: Matthew 8:2-3

The leper does not question Jesus' ability: "You can make me clean." His uncertainty concerns Jesus' will, his desire. The reply is wonderfully direct. Jesus says, "I am willing," using the same language of desire that the leper used.

This passage speaks into the fear that we are too dirty, too damaged, or too unworthy for God to care. Jesus does not invite us to bargain, perform, or appear well put together. He invites the weary and burdened to come. His willingness is not distant sympathy; it is shown as he moves toward the man and speaks cleansing.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Do you believe Jesus is willing to receive you?*
 2. *What makes you question his desire to cleanse?*
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Saturday — A Testimony to the Priests

Scripture: Matthew 8:4; Hebrews 4:14-16

Jesus tells the man not to tell others immediately, but to go to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded as a testimony to them. The temple establishment would have understood the significance: Scripture taught that only God could cleanse a leper. Jesus has done what points to the Messiah and his kingdom arriving with divine authority.

Jesus is the greater High Priest. He does not merely pronounce people clean after a ritual; by his touch and word, he makes them clean. Because he empathizes with our weakness without sin, we can approach God's throne of grace with confidence for mercy and help.

Reflect Questions:

1. *What does Jesus' authority reveal about his identity?*
2. *How can you approach God's throne with confidence?*

Study Questions

Read Matt. 8:1-4 and listen to the sermon "Be Clean!" (9/6/26)

Observation

- 1) What condition marked the man as ceremonially unclean in Matthew 8?
- 2) How did the leper approach Jesus before making his request?
- 3) What did Jesus do immediately before saying, "Be clean"?
- 4) What instructions did Jesus give the cleansed man afterward?

Interpretation

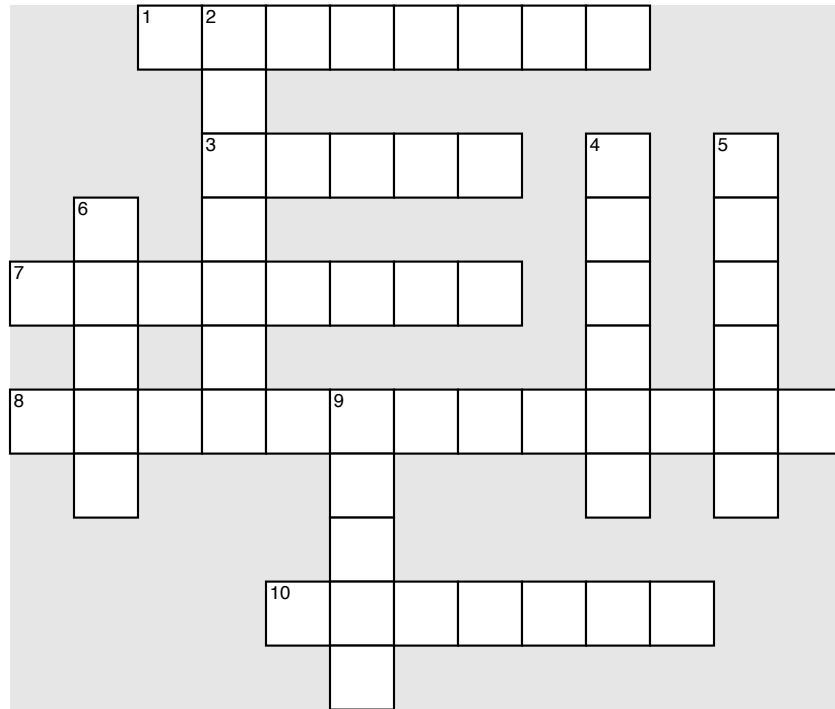
- 1) Why did ceremonial uncleanness sharply distinguish God's holiness from the corrupted world?
- 2) How did the leper know he could come to Jesus and ask to be cleansed? (Hint: Is. 1:18)
- 3) How does Jesus' touch reverse the expected order of uncleanness? Why is that significant?
- 4) Why did Jesus send the cleansed man to the priest?

Application

- 1) Where do you feel tempted to hide impurity rather than approach Christ honestly?
- 2) How can this church become safer for broken and ashamed people?
- 3) What burden do you need Jesus to cleanse rather than trying to fix alone?
- 4) How does Christ's promised final cleansing give hope amid sin, decay, and death?

Crossword Puzzle

Be Clean! | Matt. 8:1-4 | 9/6/26



Across

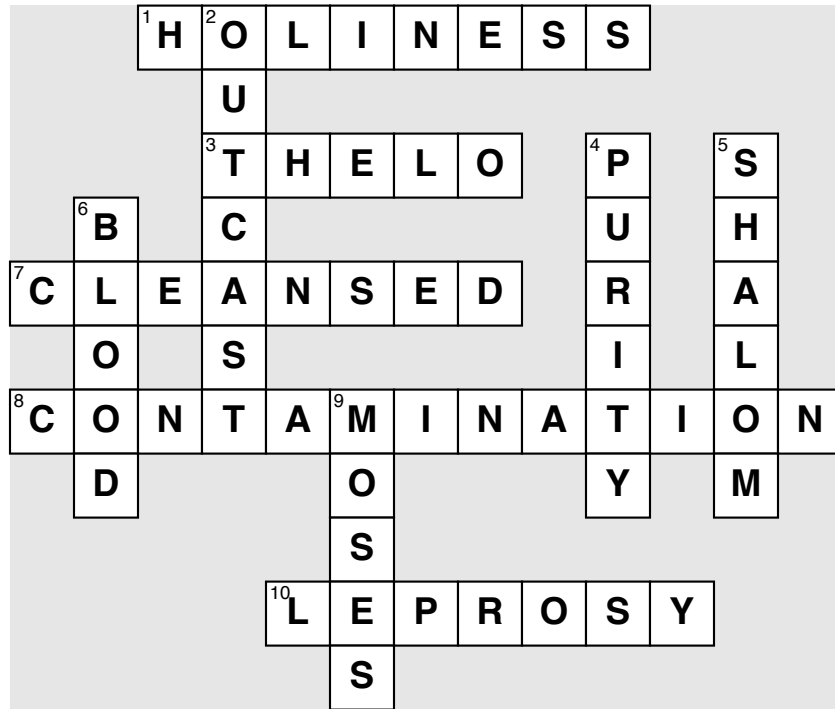
1. God's perfect and incorruptible purity
3. Greek word meaning desire or will
7. The man's condition immediately after Jesus spoke
8. The sermon's image for spiritual impurity
10. The skin condition marking the man unclean

Down

2. A person excluded from normal society
4. What spread from Jesus rather than impurity
5. Messianic hope of peace through wholeness and healing
6. What cleanses consciences through Christ
9. Lawgiver whose commanded offering Jesus mentioned

Crossword Answer Key

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Across Answers

1. HOLINESS
3. THELO
7. CLEANSED
8. CONTAMINATION
10. LEPROSY

Down Answers

2. OUTCAST
4. PURITY
5. SHALOM
6. BLOOD
9. MOSES