



### (re)Connecting

- If you have your own late night talk show, who would be your first guest and why?
- What was your least favorite food as a child? Do you still hate it or do you love it now?
- What is your absolute dream job and why?
- Tell a story of the hardest secret you've had to keep (as much is appropriate to share, of course 😊).

Overall leaders' note this week: There are more leaders' notes this week. They are not a checklist you necessarily need to go over. The notes are some suggestions as to answers to guide if the group is struggling with answers. The suggestions are not an exhaustive list.

### Exploring God's Story [Scriptures are printed in ESV on page for Leaders' convenience]

1. Discuss what Jesus was coming down the mountain from and why great crowds were following Him in verse 1.
2. Discuss the several things the leper did in verse 2 and the significance of each.  
[Leaders' notes: The leper (1) came to Jesus, (2) knelt before Jesus, (3) acknowledge Jesus as Lord, (4) asked Jesus for healing, etc.]
3. Discuss the importance of Jesus reaching out and touching the leper in verse 3.  
[Leaders' notes: (1) Jesus was not concerned with the physical fears or social implications of touching a leper in His culture. (2) Jesus touching the leper is a personal act.]
4. Discuss the significance of the instantaneous healing in verse 3.  
[Leaders' notes: (1) Jesus shows an example of (when He said:) "All authority over heaven and earth is given to Me." (2) Jesus did not manipulate a desperate situation and did not make this poor desperate man perform party tricks; Jesus met the man's need where he was because the leper asked, and Jesus had the authority to do so. (3) Jesus can change lives immediately.]
5. Discuss why you believe Jesus says what He says in verse 4.  
[Leaders' notes: (1) Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17) (2) Jesus works in us to testify to others. (3) The cleansed leper was challenged to obey Jesus right off the bat.]

### Examining Our Story within God's Story

6. Share a story of when someone came to where you were to meet your needs and/or a time when God used you to meet someone else's needs (again, where they were).
7. Share a story of a time when God fulfilled your request for something that you believed would only be a "miracle" if He granted it.
8. How has God's responses to your prayers formed you and your spiritual life?

### B.A.S.I.C. Training (Life Application)

9. Discuss the importance of Jesus coming down the mountain in these verses and how we, as Christians, can apply these lessons to our lives.  
[Leaders' notes: (1) Jesus didn't just preach; He put what He preached and believed into action. (2) Jesus didn't just stay where He was; He chose to come to where the people and need were. This is symbolic of Jesus' condescension from heaven to earth. This is also the model for serving God and one another: go to the people, where they are, what they do, etc. (3) Jesus came to the needy, the unpretty, the hurting, when it may have been easier to stay on the mountaintop.]
10. As Christians, what are some lessons we can learn from the leper in this passage?  
[Leaders' notes: (1) The leper was very aware of his condition and was desperate to get to Jesus. (2) It takes humility to come to Jesus. (3) The leper was very aware of his "status." He knew what he needed, so he asked. (4) The Leper knew of and believed in Jesus' authority.]
11. What are specific unspoken ways God can use you and your story as a testimony to others about Him, His power, and His love?



### **Digging Deeper**

12. Have you been too angry, busy, and/or distracted blaming others and Jesus for the hurt you feel, the situation(s) you find yourself in, or the unfairness of life that you have missed the fact that Jesus has been (and is) right there with you?
13. Have you forgotten the love Jesus has for me that brought Him down from His high and exalted place to die for me and my sin?
14. Am I aware of my current situation or am I living in denial, thinking I can somehow get myself back on track?
15. Am I desperate enough to come to Jesus?
16. Am I humble enough to come to Jesus?

### **Studying Further (Optional Additional Self-Study)**

- How is Matthew 4:23 a foundational verse for Matthew's Gospel, especially chapters 5-9?
- How did the leper "worship" (show honor, glory, praise, thanksgiving, etc.) to God in this passage?
- Consider the different stories of Jesus' healing ministry on Matthew 8-9. What is God revealing in each of these stories.

### **Scripture References:**

*When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. 2 And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." 3 And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."*