

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Sermon Series: Stories of Jesus

Title: More Than Healing

Speaker: Matt Ewert

Text: Mark 1:40-45

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Discussion

1. Imagine if, similar to the leper in this story, you were “banished” from the life you know today. You had to leave your house and family, withdraw from your social circles and places of recreation, quit your job, remove yourself from the places you volunteer, and exit your community of faith.
 - What impact would that have on you?
 - In what way would that experience “damage” and/or “wound” you as a human being?
2. Being mindful of God’s intention for our lives, think about what the experience of human wholeness looks like. To stimulate your thinking, consider the thoughts expressed in the following passages: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Isaiah 40:29-31; Isaiah 58:11; Matthew 11:28-29; John 10:10
 - How might you define the experience of human wholeness?
3. Matt talked about God’s desire that we love Him as whole people (Matthew 22:37-40).
 - In what ways do we sometimes love God as “divided” human beings instead of whole human beings?
4. A word closely connected to the idea of wholeness is the Hebrew word “shalom.” The Koren Siddur (Jewish Prayer Book) defines shalom as “completeness, perfection, harmonious interaction.” It goes on to describe shalom as “the ultimate hope of monotheism, with its belief that the world is the product of a single will, not the blind clash of conflicting elements.”
 - In considering your own life, where does your experience fall short of being defined by shalom?
 - What would you consider to be the greatest enemy of your own sense of wholeness?
 - Are there tangible changes you could make in your life that might contribute to walking in shalom — a fuller experience of wholeness?