

**Sermon:** The Love of God in Distance and Closeness  
**Series:** N/A

**Scripture:** Matt. 8:1-4  
**Date:** March 22, 2020

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**OBSERVATION** -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, Why* questions together.

**INTERPRETATION** -- Answer these questions together:

**1) What does this passage teach us about God?**

a) How does the leper picture the natural relationship between God and man? Why has God had to distance himself from mankind?

**2) What does this passage teach us about us (mankind)?**

a) In what ways are we all like the leper in the story?

b. How did the leper approach Christ? What lessons can we learn about prayer from this? How do your conversations with Jesus compare to the leper's?

c) Have you struggled with the relationship between faith and healing? Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. What can we learn about healing and faith from Paul's experience?

**3) What does this passage teach us about salvation/grace? How does it point to Christ?**

a) How does Jesus' interaction with the leper reveal the love of God for all of us?

b) Jesus wanted the leper to be healed, but more importantly he wanted him to be holy (think about the man's request to be made "clean"). How did Jesus make him holy (Matt. 8:3)? How does Jesus make us holy?

c) Do you believe that you are distant from God or close to God? Remember to think about what Jesus has done for us.

**APPLICATION**

We must approach God with humble faith and we must approach each other in love. How can you do both of these this week?

**PRAYER**

Praise God for his commitment to your holiness and his closeness through the work of Jesus.

Confess your dependence on Jesus today.

Ask God to help you submit to his will.