

Alive in Christ - Christian Growth Hour

Matthew 8:1-13 Outsiders

June 30

What do we mean when we say someone is an “outsider”? - Have you ever heard/used the term?

Have you ever felt like or been an outsider? How did it feel?

How are outsiders treated?

Table Time

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

1 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.”

- According to Numbers 5:1-4, what would happen to a leper? Why would a leper be considered an outsider?
- According to Leviticus 13, what would a leper be declared? What would be the consequences of being “unclean”?
- Is there any significance to the leper saying “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean” in verse 2?
- How does Jesus heal the leper (v. 3)? Are there any ramifications of this? How is this different than other lepers being healed (2 Kings 5:1-14 and Luke 17:11-19 are examples).
- What is the “gift Moses commanded” in v.4 (see Lev 14)? What would this cleansing mean for the man (see Lev 14:8-9 and 14:23)?

Group Debrief

Table Time

The Faith of a Centurion

5 When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, 6 “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.” 7 And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” 8 But the centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” 10 When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. 11 I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, 12 while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” 13 And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; let it be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed at that very moment.

- Would the centurion be considered an outsider or insider to the Jewish people? Why?
- What does Jesus offer to do? How might this have been seen Jewish leaders (see Acts 10:28)?
- What is the centurion's response? How is this a demonstration of faith?
- What does Jesus' statement mean in verse 11? Does it reveal anything about “insiders” and “Outsiders”? If so, what? How does this relate to Matthew 7:21-23?

Group Debrief:

- How does God see those we may consider “outsiders”? What is His response? How should this direct our response?
- What things prevent us from reaching out to those who may be considered outsiders?