

# LGBTQ Are Not Lepers

By: Daniel Orona

I have several friends that are part of this community and when we talk about Christ and the church, they continually tell me how they feel completely ostracized from the church with no one willing to minister to them. Many churches I've been to will preach against them and tell them they are not welcome in the church. There was a group of people in the Old Testament that were treated much the same way. They were those that had leprosy. In Number 5, the Bible says, "And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge and whoever becomes defiled by a corpse. You shall put out both male and female; you shall put them outside the camp, that they may not defile their camps in the midst of which I dwell. And the children of Israel did so and put them outside the camp; as the Lord spoke to Moses, so the children of Israel did."

This was also laid out in the book of Leviticus chapter 13. Any time a white spot with flesh was shown on the skin these people were put out from the camp, from their families and from where they truly belonged. Now the purpose of this was to make sure that the leprosy did not spread to the rest of the people. This kept disease out of the camp. But often, particular during the life of Jesus, those stricken with leprosy would end up dwelling in caves, with just a handful of people willing to go out and feed and minister to them. It was often thought that God was punishing the lepers due to their sin. People passed judgment without having any type of understanding of how it truly occurred.

How these people became leprous really doesn't matter. What matters is that it was Christ who ministered to them. Remember anyone that touched someone who was a leper and declared unclean was unclean themselves. But for Christ, this didn't matter. Matthew 8:1-4 says, "When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him and behold a leper came and worshiped Him saying, 'Lord if you are willing, You can make me clean.' Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying 'I am willing, be cleansed.' Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, 'See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded as a testimony to them.'"

Jesus touched the leper. He reached out His hand and said, "I am willing; be cleansed." Despite what the law would say about avoidance, Jesus was willing to reach out and touch the leper that they may be cleansed. This should be our approach when dealing with anyone in the LGBTQ community. Just as this leper deserved the opportunity to be healed by Christ, those in this community deserve every opportunity to be healed and to make the decision to live for Christ. But how will they ever know the love of Christ if it's not been demonstrated to them by those that believe? Christ showed compassion on the leper. Why do we not show the same compassion to those in the LGBTQ community? The thing is to meet them where they are the same way that we would meet others right where they are and where Christ met us.

We did not die to judge others or their relationship with God. Remember sometimes it takes us time to get the victory over aspects of our lives that Christ as our high priest needs to deal with, but His grace is sufficient. More importantly is how will they hear if there is not a preacher and how will they preach unless they are sent. We are to go out according to the leading of the Spirit and minister to those that God sends us. This includes those in the LGBTQ community. They are not so far gone, and their sin is not so great that Christ could not do a work in them as well. Were we any different before we knew Christ? The answer is no. We were in the same exact place.

Some preachers like to talk about how in Leviticus it talks about how homosexuality is an abomination to the Lord. But they don't like to talk about that God hates even a proud look, as it says in Proverbs. Yet

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in pride and arrogance they show themselves to be better than others when they are just a sinner saved by grace like the rest of us. The message here is that we should not ostracize anyone from the grace of God. It is our responsibility as the church to love them and it is Christ's responsibility as the high priest to clean them up and change them by the Holy Spirit. If we show them the love and not push them out, then Christ can do His work as our High Priest.