



Small Group Study Guide for January 21, 2024

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: The next Love Language we are looking at is Physical Touch. God created us as human beings with physical bodies to be physically present with each other. God Himself took on a physical body in Jesus and showed His love as He reached out and touched the lepers, opened the eyes of the blind, and made the lame to walk. God shows love through physical touch as He creates and cares for our bodies, ultimately promising a resurrected and imperishable body on the Last Day.

Getting Started: (sharing with each other)

1. When you reflect on the 5 Love Languages (Gift Giving, Physical Touch, Quality Time, Acts of Service, Words of Affirmation), where would you rank physical touch? (this includes hugs, smiles, sitting close together, dancing, etc. and can be appropriately directed towards family, friends, children & grandchildren, even pets!).
2. During the pandemic, we learned how difficult it can be to be physically apart. Connecting digitally online or FaceTime is wonderful, but not the same as being physically present. Why is physical presence and physical connection so important for us in our relationships as human beings?

In the Word: Read Mark 1:40-45

3. Leprosy was a dreaded disease in Jesus' day that was known to be highly contagious. People who contracted it were declared unclean and unable to be touched. They were not permitted into the temple, and were not able to be a part of community events. They would often be excluded from their homes. Anyone who touched a leper was also considered "unclean." In light of this, why is it so significant that Jesus healed him the way He did?
4. The leper came to Jesus in all respect and humility. He made no demands. How do his words convey faith and trust?
5. What does verse 41 say about Jesus' motivation for healing the leper?

6. This is another instance where Jesus tried to keep His miracles 'low profile' so as not to attract too much attention. He told the man not to tell anyone about this. Of course, the opposite happened, as the man could not contain his joy but told everyone what had happened.
 - a. Why do you think Jesus told him to keep quiet, even if Jesus knew that the man would not be able to contain himself and would tell everyone?
 - b. What was the result of this man's testimony in verse 45, and what was the impact it had on Jesus' ministry going forward?

Putting it all Together (what do we believe or do as disciples?)

7. Jesus was filled with compassion for the people that were ostracized, hurting, cut-off, and rejected by the community. To touch a leper was shocking, scandalous, and dangerous. Who might fit that category today that Christians can reach out to with the compassion of Jesus?
8. The leper came to Jesus in deep humility. He knew that Jesus had the power to heal, but He respected Jesus' will to do so. Discuss how we approach God with a blend of confidence (He can do it!) and humility (Thy will be done). Have you had to approach God this way lately?
9. Jesus' miracles demonstrated His concern for our physical wellbeing. His act of physical touch demonstrated God's love for this leper. Jesus cares about our bodies. In what ways do we care for people's physical needs today, in order to convey the love of God to people?

In your home and family life:

At Our Savior Lutheran Church:

10. What are other appropriate ways we can show love through physical touch at church, school, and home?

Prayer: Thank Jesus for His deep compassion that moves Him to reach out and heal us, spiritually and physically. Pray for those in need of healing – physical, emotional, spiritual, and in relationships.

Next Week: The next Love Language is Acts of Service. Jesus is the ultimate servant leader who demonstrated His love for us in this – while we were still sinners, Jesus died for us.