

18:20

Where 2 or 3 are gathered... there am I

- ♦ *If you had three wishes... standard Genie rules apply... what would you wish for?*

Psalms 37:4 "Enjoy serving the Lord and God will give you what you want."

Ephesians 3:20 "God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above what we ask or think."

- ♦ *In the light of these Scriptures, do your three wishes change? If so how?*

I can only speak from my experience, but, it seems to me that my wishes get significantly less grandiose when asking God as opposed to asking the genie. It is difficult to think of the sky as the limit when the requests are no longer proverbial.

In Mark 1:40 a man with leprosy came to Jesus and said, "You have the power to make me well, only if you wanted to."

- ♦ *Why do you think he asked with the qualifier, "If you wanted to"?*

Lepers were the untouchables of their day. They were not even allowed to exist in the general populous. They were colonized, ostracized, and demonized. The fact that this man had the courage - or as some might construe it, the nerve - to approach Jesus was quite amazing.

- ♦ *Have you ever asked God for something that you felt undeserving to even ask (i.e., healing, blessing,*

A God Who Heals – A God Who Cares

forgiveness, etc.)? If so, share.

The question and the hesitancy of the leper is all too familiar. Today it sounds more like, "If it is your will..." but it is the same question. Heal me if you are willing. The familiar turns amazing when we direct our focus from the leper to Jesus.

Mark 1:41 Jesus felt sorry for the man. So he put his hand on him and said, "I want to! Now you are well."

- ♦ *Is it difficult for you to believe that God not only will, but wants to, heal you or meet your needs?*

I read these two verses from the perspective of the leper and wonder if the most significant moment for him was the healing itself, or the moment he realized that Jesus cared – even when he had leprosy.

Many translations of Mark 1:41 read, "Jesus felt sorry for the man." A better interpretation is "Jesus felt compassion for the man." Perhaps this is why before he healed him, he touched him. He not only felt the pain of the disease, but the sting of his loneliness and the ache of the rejection he faced on a daily basis.

Before we comprehend a healing God we need to first understand a compassionate, empathetic and loving God. The message of the church is, so often, God wants you to know God. It would seem, just as significant that God wants to know you too.

- ♦ *Discuss if there is time*