

Mark 1⁴⁰ A leper^[a] came to him begging him, and kneeling^[p] he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean." ⁴¹ Moved with pity,^[q] Jesus^[r] stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!" ⁴² Immediately the leprosy^[s] left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus^[t] could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

So I have always wondered, did Jesus tell the leper not to tell anyone because it was not the right time or that people would not yet have the understanding to see what Jesus was up to, or because he knew that he would be inundated with people seeking healing?

And the answer is probably, yes to all of the above. Jesus heals out of compassion, but physical healing is not all that Jesus accomplishes with the healing. He demonstrates God's love and care and presence in the world. He points to a kingdom where wholeness is the norm. Jesus wants us not only to receive the blessings of His healing presence but to see the kingdom coming.

Let us pray, Lord help us to see you at work in the world, and more to see the kingdom you are ushering in that we not hinder its coming. Amen.