

# Restoration of the Wounded and Social Assistance Mark 1: 40 - 45

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## Abstract

This article aims to propose a model of social assistance to Christians who experience suffering throughout their lives. This article, furthermore, finds a new model in assisting in the perspective of socio – biblical for the people who undergo the social struggles. This research is driven by the fact that Christians neglect against the social problems around them. Therefore, it needs a church – response towards the social complexity for the community. As a result, there will be a new paradigm for the church involvement in various social activities. This study is conducted with the qualitative methodology by assessing the various data to form a theme of restoration. This research is carried out through 3 processes: Firstly, researching on the Biblical data; Secondly, interpreting text data; and Finally, finding its relevance in the pattern of social assistance.

**Keywords:** *restoring, the wounded, social assistance*

## Introduction

Christianity will always be attached to the surrounding social environment. In this, the church or Christianity has a special role. He is the medium of God's love for the world. On the other hand, the social environment around the church is not always in a good and comfortable condition. It is not uncommon for the church to be in the midst of a society that is having social problems, and believers have a mandate to take part in solving it. Believers cannot be indifferent to the social problems around them. The faith of Christianity will manifest in the social problems that occur around it. It can even become a medium for its recovery.

## Method

This writing uses qualitative methods. This is a method that analyzes and interprets texts to find the meaning of a phenomenon. The qualitative method is an inquiry strategy that emphasizes the search for meaning, understanding, concepts, characteristics, symbols, descriptions of a phenomenon, which is holistic and natural. This method is used to explore and understand the meaning that comes from social or humanitarian problems. About the Bible data, this qualitative method will use the exegetical approach. This is used to get in-depth data, that contains meaning.

## Discussion

When Jesus came down from the hills of Galilee, after preaching to many people (Matt.8: 1), and in the city (Luke 5: 12), also in Capernaum, or some other city in Galilee, a leper came to His. This person suffered greatly because of his illness. As a person affected by leprosy, he not only suffers physically but also spiritually / mentally and socially. His only hope is recovery or healing, and coming to Jesus to be healed. The Lord Jesus was moved by His heart and was pleased to restore it. When observing the text, three things can be seen in the recovery:

### Recovery Time (Mark 1: 40)

This leper came to Jesus to ask for restoration (Mark 1: 40). At that time leprosy was very unclean for Judaism, even considered dead, even though it was still alive. Leprosy in the Jewish tradition is considered as a curse affected person. He must walk with torn clothing, bald head, upper lip covered, when walking he

must give a warning about his unclean condition by shouting, unclean, unclean!<sup>1</sup> This is done so that if he bumps into someone, then that person will neglect. When, perhaps he forgets to shout that he is leprosy, and at that time passes someone, then the person affected by leprosy can be punished.<sup>2</sup> He was banished from the community alliance and lived alone outside the village. He may not enter into worship while worship is taking place. He may peek through the hole in the wall of worship which is specifically made for lepers. So that the Jewish religion makes strict regulations against people affected by leprosy. The Torah commands that if a person affected by leprosy walks, part of his face is covered and his clothes must be torn (Lev.13: 45). A person affected by leprosy is not allowed into the temple. More than that this disease is incurable disease (Lev.13,14).

A leper does not only suffer from his illness, but he must also endure mental torture and heartbreak because he is banished from his community. Leprosy is a very frightening disease and invites much compassion in the New Testament. This is a chronic disease. William Barclay said that there is no other disease that damages humans and becomes so scary besides a chronic disease. This is the existence of people affected by leprosy. Under these conditions, he heard about the Lord Jesus and the various miracles he had done. He came to Jesus to ask for healing, on the other hand, he was also aware of his illness. With sincerity, he begged God to deign to heal him. He knelt by putting his face to the ground (Luke 5: 12). This shows humility and also the pressure of the soul. It can be noted that when this leper made the decision to meet the Lord Jesus, he must have gone through a long struggle. This is a life and death decision. If accepted, he will be saved, but if not accepted then surely he will receive punishment. Mark 1:40 states, "A leper came to Jesus, and on his knees before Him he asked for His help, saying:" If You want, You can cleanse me. "

There is an interesting process of what this leper did when he begged Christ. He came, knelt and begged the Lord Jesus for help. He begged the Lord Jesus, "if You will" which in Greek is written, "Εάν θέλης - ean theles." Conjunction; if, if at any time, whenever; a combination of the conditional ει and particle ν to indicate uncertainty or uncertainty. When this word is related to the subjunctive form, it is used for; 1. introduce a hypothetical state if; 2. to show the possible future that can be realized if, at any time. 3. to indicate the uncertainty of the time at any time and at any time. This means that the leper has the belief "if" Christ would surely heal.<sup>3</sup> This is a very big belief or faith for the leper. The main point of this belief is the willingness of God's heart, and not on one's greatness.

From the description above, it can be noted that the attitude of lepers when they expect help. 1. Be humble. The leper came on his knees before Jesus, asking for help. This is a divine reverence for Christ as God, and gives all glory only to Him, and comes with humble and holy respect. 2. With a strong belief in His power. The leper said, "You can cleanse me." Even though Christ, perhaps of simple appearance, this person believed in the power of Christ. It implies that Christ is the Son of God. That person believes in Jesus by asking for something, and not just asking in general. But he asked with confidence and humility. 3. Submitting to the will of Christ, "Lord if you will." This submission does not indicate that this person seems to doubt the power of Christ to help him. But he only wants special attention for his problems with a simple attitude as a petitioner who hopes for Christ's help.<sup>4</sup>

Social problems can come in unexpected times. In this condition also believers must be ready to take part in handling social problems. The church is ready to attend every social problem, whatever its form, and walk together to accompany everyone who has a problem until they find a solution. This is the first stage in the recovery process, that social problems are often unexpected and sudden. In these conditions, the Church must be able to be a medium of God's love to take part in the recovery of the wounded and accompany it to find holistic recovery.

#### **Method of Recovery (Mark 1:41)**

When he saw the sufferings of lepers, Christ had a different attitude from the habits of the Jews. He does not drive away those who break the law. Lepers do not have the right to talk to them. He understands the tradition for lepers. Judaism states lepers that if they meet lepers, they deserve to avoid them or even punish them. In this condition, the leper suffers. He not only suffered physically, but also spiritually, mentally, and even socially. But with his compassion, God found people with needs. He was moved by mercy. The Lord

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<sup>1</sup>William L. Lane. *The Gospel according to Mark*. (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 85.

<sup>2</sup>Software Alkitab. E-sword, Adam Clarke Commentary.

<sup>3</sup>Software Alkitab. Biblework Friberg Analytical Greek Lexicon.

<sup>4</sup>Matthew Henry. *Injil Markus*. (Jakarta: Momentum, 2007), 25.

Jesus was sad to see the suffering of this poor leper and wanted to help him. This is the main source of all forms of human safety. In this regard there are many things to note:

First, he was moved by compassion. This heartfelt word in Greek is "σπλαγγισθεις - aplagxnistheis," which means "moved by impulse, or moved by compassion. This word means from the innermost part of the body (Acts.1: 18), and figuratively the deepest, the deepest part to awaken emotions in all personality, heart, deepest emotions, love, affection, feelings depth. In Mark's Gospel, this is added to show that the power of Christ is moved by compassion. Christ was moved to free the poor. All actions are based on His will, not on what is in a person, or the applicant. It is someone's suffering that gives rise to His mercy.

Second, He reached out and touched Him. The word used to "reach out" is "ἐκτείνας - ekteinas," The meaning of this word is to stretch out. It means the hand stretched forward. He stretched out his hand to this leper. This shows Christ's willingness to give help to the leper. But not just reaching out, He immediately touched the person. The word "touch" is taken from the Greek "ἥψατο -ephato." In the active form means like a burning fire, in the form of literally means touching, holding. In the process of healing the leper, the Lord Jesus touched him. This gives the understanding that Christ, when healed was not merely material, but also spiritual.

Third, He said, "I will be cleansed." The phrase "to say" in Greek is "λέγει - legei." The word used in logical terms has a meaning; 1. Saying, saying, talking and narrating, 2. Telling, reporting, retelling. 3. According to context means, in the discourse, immediately ask, say. This shows that the power of Christ works and through words.<sup>5</sup> This is used to show how Christ usually heals souls. On the other hand, the leper uses the word "if you want." This saying seems to imply doubt about the intervention of Christ. But that was immediately broken with the words of Christ, "I want to."

The word "I want, be cleansed," is interesting to note. The word "I want to be taken from the Greek" Θέλω - thelo. "This has a meaning as a form of carrying out the will; 1. From a motive of desire, longing, volition. 2. From readiness or inclination, followed by an infinitive means ready to, happy, want, 3. Determination, decision, with intent and purpose. While the word, "be cleansed," is taken from the Greek, "καθαρίσθητι - katharistheti." Figuratively speaking, a. in the context of ritual means to make clean, clean, purify, declare clean. b. in the context of healing means making a ceremony of healing unclean diseases, or making a sanctification ceremony. c. in the context of religion means cleansing from sin, making it holy, making it acceptable to God.

The words, "I will be cleansed," show that Christ's power works in and through words. This is used to show how Christ healed injured souls, "revealed His word, and healed them (band. John 15: 3; 17:17)." He reached out and touched it, even though leprosy had spread throughout his body, it seems like there are no more parts that are not affected by leprosy, the whole body is dirty and smelly. He touched it even though it was forbidden by law. For Jesus, this person is not unclean but someone who is in need of help. He touched it, even though it was forbidden by law, it showed his concern for people suffering. He proved that the power of love is unlimited, with his words and actions, "I want to (cf. Matt. 8: 2).

Christ gladly offers help to those who are willing to give themselves to Him. This person believes in the power of Christ, "You can cleanse me." Christ is willing to show the extent to which His power will act because of the faith of His people. Therefore Christ uttered the words of authority, "Be cleansed." This is the second stage in the healing process. Christ was moved by mercy. There are obstacles to tradition and even religion, but helping injured people must be a priority. This is a spiritual and human task at the same time. In this position the church also needs to emulate the attitude of Christ, dare to reach out and touch the wounded to obtain healing.

### **Recovery Result (Mark 1:42-45)**

Christ's recovery of lepers was perfect. As the leper suffered physically, spiritually and socially, the restoration made by Christ also included everything. The leper experienced a complete recovery, both physical, spiritual and also social:

#### ***Physical Recovery (42)***

The first recovery is physical. This is related to the disease suffered by the leper. Because of this disease, he experiences various problems of life, so that material recovery is the main thing that needs to be done

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<sup>5</sup>Software Alkitab. Biblework Friberg, *Analytical Greek Lexicon*.

first. When the Lord Jesus said, "I want to," and touched him, then immediately leprosy disappeared from him, he became clean, "Immediately the leprosy of the person was eliminated, and he became clean." This was done not only by touching him but also by words, there is a word that comes out of the Lord Jesus, so that leprosy can soon be healed (cf. Matt. 8: 3). Christ is happy to give mercy to those who are willing to surrender themselves to His will. This is a declaration that complete healing will follow immediately and comprehensively. The text illustrates an "instantaneous" expression which confirms that healing is seen by many people.<sup>6</sup>

There is no interval between the command and the work of Christ, "He said," and it happens immediately. By this action, Christ showed that He came into the world as a great physician who was ready to cure all ills and cleanse the uncleanness of the heart. This also shows that when Christ healed this leper, not by ordinary means, He used divine power. He uses the power of word and action. The leprosy was healed physically.<sup>7</sup> The body which is full of disease is now clean, recovering as before.

#### ***Spiritual Restoration (43-44)***

The second recovery is spiritual. After the leper was healed, Jesus sent him away, and by giving two messages to him, show yourself to the priests and do not preach anything about this to anyone. This is an example of Christ's humility and self-denial. He does not seek self-glory. This command of Christ contains two messages; First given to him to be a testimony to many people. Second, it was given to him so that he would not confess his healing to others, because Jesus did not want to seek praise for himself, moreover it might cause many people to come to urge him so that his journey would be hindered.<sup>8</sup>

In Leviticus 14 it is explained about the existence of lepers when healed. That person must undergo complicated cleansing. He must be examined by the priest and must prepare two birds. One bird is cut in running water, cedarwood, scarlet and, hyssop is also provided. All this with a living bird is put into the nest of a dead bird, then the living bird is allowed to fly into space freely. The person who had leprosy was told to wash his body, clothes and shave. Seven days later he was examined again. Then he had to cut his hair, beard, and eyebrows. Certain sacrifices were provided, namely two flawless rams and one female sheep, three -tenths of an epha of fine flour mixed with oil and one log of oil. For poor people, this amount is reduced. Patients who have recovered will be smeared with oil and blood at the tip of the right ear, right thumb, and right toe. If he is completely clean of his illness, he is allowed to go with a certificate that shows he is clean.<sup>9</sup>

This was also done by Christ to the leper. After cleansing it, Jesus told the man to go to the required ceremony. Jesus obeys human rules and truth. He does not oppose habits, and if necessary, he obeys. Mark's unusual concern about the inner state of Christ, reflected in Jesus' way and speech, is enough to remind believers of the price of discipleship and true service. It depends on the extent to which the believer understands God's will for the world and is committed to it. Of course there will be a great spiritual upheaval when what believers do is different from God's will.<sup>10</sup>

This is a ceremony of self-purification. When suffering from leprosy, the person is declared to be unclean and unclean, so when healed he must declare himself to be a clean person. After all this has been done, the person will be declared to have recovered, and will be allowed to participate in any religious ritual. He did not need to peek through the hole in the door, but was allowed to attend worship. So spiritually the leper was healed.

#### ***Social Recovery (45)***

Third is social recovery. This was done to show that he was cleansed. After being healed, the person preached and spread the event everywhere. This is an expression of gratitude and joy because he has been restored. He was restored not only in material and spiritual matters, but he also experienced his social recovery. People who had been excommunicated from a community have now been accepted again. There is

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<sup>6</sup>William I. Lane. *The Gospel according to Mark*. (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, tt), 87.

<sup>7</sup>Software Alkitab, e-Sword. Pulpit Commentary

<sup>8</sup>Matthew Henry. *Tafsiran Injil Markus*. (Jakarta: Momentum, 2007), 23.

<sup>9</sup>William Barclay. *Tafsiran Injil Markus*. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 66 -70), 2005.

<sup>10</sup>Donald English. *The Message of Mark, the Mystery of Faith*. (Illionis: Inter-Varsity Press, 2015), 64.

no reason for the Jewish community to refuse his presence. Because he has been cleansed and restored socially.<sup>11</sup>

The person who has been healed has become an agent of proclaiming miracles. He has not only been restored socially, but he has now also become an agent of social change for the surrounding community. He has published the fact that there are basic forms of service that can restore. Now he is free to go anywhere without fear, and also does not need to shout unclean-unclean words again at any time on the go, because he has been healed socially.

### **Social Assistance**

Social assistance is a process of providing facilities or facilities provided by a companion in identifying needs and solving problems and encouraging the growth of initiatives in the decision making process, so that client independence can be realized on an ongoing basis.<sup>12</sup> This is a process of social relations between companion and client that aims to solve problems, strengthen support, utilize various sources, and potential in meeting the needs of life, and improve client access to basic social services, employment, and other public service facilities.<sup>13</sup>

The church must be relevant to humans who cause pain and hope, to curse and hope, to starve for the meaning of life and thirst for meaningful relationships. Social assistance is a valuable tool through which the church remains relevant to human needs. Effective accompaniment can transform between individuals and make the church a place to care for human integrity throughout its life cycle. Social accompaniment offers a broad channel of healing and growth in the period of the church today. The restoration offered by the church must be holistic, which includes material, spiritual and social.

### **Conclusion**

Restoring the wounded and social assistance is God's mandate for the church. The church must not be indifferent to the social problems that occur around it, regardless of their background and social status. Believers or churches are obliged to imitate Christ against social problems that occur in society. It exists and becomes an integral part of other communities in seeking recovery against social problems, and more than that it becomes a companion for the injured to find a way to recovery. In the process of social assistance, the church needs to pay attention to three basic things, firstly that social problems often occur suddenly, so the church needs to prepare itself anytime and anywhere to become a recovery medium. Second, the church must be present directly to reach out and touch the injured person. This is life participation. Third, it should be noted that the recovery is holistic, which includes material, spiritual and social.

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<sup>11</sup>Software Alkitab, e-sword. Commentary the Gospel of Mark- Albert Barnes.

<sup>12</sup>Direktorat bantuan sosial, 2007:4.

<sup>13</sup>Departemen sosial RI, 2009:122.