



On your marks

When Jesus walked on earth, he said and did some amazing things. Of course, the miracles and the teaching were wonderful but there was in fact another way in which his ministry had a tremendous impact, and one that we sometimes overlook. Again and again, Jesus came close to those people nobody else came close to. By doing this, he showed us what God was really like. God cares for those pushed to the edge, and so we see Jesus reaching out to the outsiders like the Roman centurion, who represented the hated foreign power; to a woman from Tyre and Sidon, who was surely outside any plans for God's kingdom; to the women and children, who were regarded as second-class citizens in those days; and to the sick and the disabled, including people with leprosy. It was his willingness to touch these outsiders that made all the difference, and as such it was a sign of the kingdom of God.

Get set

No special props are needed.

You can find the story in Matthew 8:1-4, Mark 1:40-45 and Luke 5:12-16.

You will need to explain that leprosy is a skin disease that couldn't be cured in Jesus' day and could be caught by others if they stayed too close too long. People with leprosy were therefore usually sent away from their village and forced to live separately, far from even friends and family.

Go!

1. Teach the following actions for key words (in uppercase bold) in the story:

HANDS - *wave*

WALK - *move arms as if walking*

MAN WITH LEPROSY - *jump away from each other and shudder, pull face*

TOUCH - *hold up finger and touch next person*

2. Tell the story:

One day, Jesus came to a busy village.

As he **WALKED** along, crowds came to see.

The crowds **WALKED** with him.

Jesus reached out his **HANDS** and **TOUCHED** many of them.



The crowds reached out their **HANDS** - to wave, to shake and to **TOUCH** him.

At the far edge of the village lived somebody else.

He too started to **WALK**.

He started to **WALK** towards the rest of the people.

He could see all the **HANDS** as they reached out to Jesus.

He saw the **HANDS** of Jesus **TOUCH** the people in the crowd.

But he stayed in the distance.

At the back of the crowd.

He did not **WALK** towards Jesus.

He knew what would happen.

He was a **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.

No one could **WALK** with him.

No one would **TOUCH** him.

It was not allowed.

He was a **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.

Jesus looked up.

Above the **HANDS** of the crowd, he saw the **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.

Through the **HANDS** of the crowd, Jesus began to **WALK**.

He came towards the **MAN WITH LEPROSY**, his **HANDS** outstretched.

The **MAN WITH LEPROSY** turned to move away.

No one could **WALK** with him.

No one would **TOUCH** him.

It was not allowed.

He was a **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.



But then Jesus **WALKED** right up to him.

He **WALKED** with the **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.

Then Jesus reached out and **TOUCHED** him.

He **TOUCHED** the **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.

It was not allowed - he was a **MAN WITH LEPROSY**.

But Jesus did it anyway.

One **TOUCH** was enough.

One **TOUCH** - and the **MAN WITH LEPROSY** was healed.

One **TOUCH** - his skin.

One **TOUCH** - his heart.

One **TOUCH** - he was made well!