

AIDS/ HIV AND THE BIBLE

INTRODUCTION

The client at the HIV/AIDS clinic startled the visiting students. "In society, people treat us like lepers," he said, "particularly people from the Church." He went on to explain his deep disappointment with the Church. "We listen to the beliefs and preaching, and so we hope to find acceptance, care and love. And that's just what we need—a community to belong to, a spirituality to help us keep going. But instead we are rejected."

From "Outside the Camp? Leprosy, AIDS and the Bible" by Dr. Kenneth R. Overberg, and used with permission.

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

BIBLE LESSON

We as saints have to move past rejecting people into loving them. Sometimes that seems difficult to move past certain conditions because of the way they are perceived in the world and more specifically in the church. Yet God has taught us to show love and compassion to all men, that through our love we may win them to Christ, and help them through their suffering. This lesson teaches us that by love and compassion we draw men to Yahweh.

Leprosy was looked upon in ancient times as AIDS is today. Jesus gave us an example to follow. Mark 1:40-42, Luke 17:11-19, Mark 14:1-3.

All sickness is not a punishment due to a particular sin. Stay away from judgment and allow your love to show. Job 16:1-5, John 9:1-7

Love works even when someone is sick through their own actions. John 5:1- 14, I Peter 3:8-15

APPLICATION

How would you visit a person in the hospital that has been just diagnosed with AIDS/ HIV? What would you say to them?

Are there people in your life that you have 'distanced' yourself from because of their illness? What does God expect of you?