Brief discussion of key concept: Exclusion

**Intro**: Personal Story about exclusion. Ideas:

-From childhood of being excluded at school

-Not being allowed to join a group

-Being forbidden from entering somewhere

**Biblical Framing of Exclusion and Leprosy:**

*Leviticus 13:45-46*

Lepers experienced the epitome of exclusion:

-Had to wear clothes identifying themselves as dangerous (like a prison outfit)

-Weren’t even allowed to do their hair (imagine not touching your hair for years)

-Were not allowed to live with other people (imagine having to live alone, far from family and friends)

For people in modern times, leprosy was usually quite theoretical. We have almost eradicated leprosy.

**COVID as Modern Day Leprosy**

Lepers were the original mask wearers! “Cover the lower part of this face.” (Leviticus 13:46)

COVID makes us all experience exclusion, especially those who catch it.

(Share personal experience of exclusion during Corona)

(Share experience of someone who had COVID and experienced Exclusion)

**Identifying with Refugees**

Take time to think about the pain of exclusion during COVID.

-Separation from Family

-Separation from friends

-Separation from our lifestyle (i.e. shopping, going to gym, small group, etc.)

Refugees experience that same separation and exclusion, but often with no end in sight

-Share one or two stories of refugees feeling excluded

**Jesus’s Embrace of the Excluded**

**Luke 7:20-23**

(Can share other stories of Jesus healing lepers as well)

Jesus restored lepers, the ultimate outcasts, to community:

It’s part of the theme of Jesus embracing people society has rejected (prodigal son, bleeding woman, Mary Magdalene)

This Sunday, as we can more profoundly recognize refugees’s feelings of exclusions, let’s find ways to embrace refugees, just like Jesus did.