

Oft as the leper's case I read
The Leper
John Newton, 1779,
from Olney Hymns, vol. 1, hymn 82

Oft as the leper's case I read,
My own described I feel;
Sin is a leprosy indeed,
Which none but Christ can heal.

2. Awhile I would have passed for well,
And strove my spots to hide;
Till it broke out incurable,
Too plain to be denied.

3. Then from the saints I sought to flee,
And dreaded to be seen;
I thought they all would point at me,
And cry, Unclean, unclean!

4. What anguish did my soul endure,
Till hope and patience ceased?
The more I strove myself to cure,
The more the plague increased.

5. While thus I lay distressed, I saw
The Savior passing by;
To him, though filled with shame and awe,
I raised my mournful cry.

6. Lord, thou canst heal me if thou wilt,
For thou canst all things do;
O cleanse my leprous soul from guilt,
My filthy heart renew!

7. He heard, and with a gracious look,
Pronounced the healing word;
I will, be clean - and while he spoke
I felt my health restored.

8. Come lepers, seize the present hour,
The Saviour's grace to prove;
He can relieve, for he is pow'r,
He will, for he is love.