

**Sermon Notes:**

**Passage: Luke 5:18-25**

**the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law standing outside the home were physically facing inward and had their backs facing those who needed Jesus.**

That picture - what some might call a holy huddle - seems to best represent to me what is causing our churches to struggle so much today. We've become so inward-focused that we have unknowingly and unintentionally turned our backs on the people who truly need Jesus.

Consider this: the bible tells us for sure - that there were Pharisees & Teachers of the Law - basically - the religious people of the day.

And they were ONLY there for ONE purpose - *they wanted to see what Jesus was doing so that they could punish him, rebuke him, critique him.*

They were soooo concerned about this, that *they literally refused to move aside and let someone who needed Jesus to come in.*

They were soooo concerned about 'trapping Jesus' that *they forced people who needed Him to have to go to ridiculous lengths to be able to meet Him.*

What our community has experienced is that church is for us and not for them.

And without realizing it, we've not only unknowingly JUST excluded those outside the church, we've ALSO made it difficult for them to COME to Jesus.

I believe that it's happened by accident *because we lost focus of our mission.* We've been so caught up with watching and learning about Jesus, that we've lost sight of bringing people to Jesus.

As indicting as that judgement is, I believe that we can still turn our churches around. As harsh as that observation is, I am confident that the church can still offer life, and salvation, and healing and hope and reconciliation to a world that is still very much broken, hurting and lonely and in need of help.

**So what should we do?**

**It begins with confession.** It means admitting we've strayed and been disobedient to the Great Commission.

**It begins with the commitment** to ACTIVELY stop making church exclusively about us, and putting "*the needs of the lost ahead of the preferences of the found*".

**It begins with changing** and re-shaping how we do ministry through the lens of "doing church in a way that reaches lost people".

## **Life Group Discussion**

(feel free to use any or all of these questions)

### **Warm Up:**

1. If you had an opportunity to change one thing from your past what would that be? You can go as surface or deep with this question as you like.
2. What stood out to you about Sunday's Sermon? What was interesting? Confusing? Weird? Thought provoking?

### **Study & Discussion:**

Read together: Luke 5:17-26

What are some things that stick out to you about this story?

In your opinion why would Jesus tell the man his sins are forgiven when it is obvious why his friends brought him there?

What is something from this story that you can apply to your life?

The men in this story went above and beyond to bring their friend to Jesus. Is there something you could do differently to go above and beyond for people around you to meet Jesus?

Read together Luke 5:29-32

Who was Jesus target audience?

Knowing who Jesus target audience was, how should this change how we think and even live?

### **Application:**

Looking at both of these stories how could this change how we view or operate as a church?

### **Prayer:**

1. Ask for individual prayer requests
2. Is there someone outside the group that does not know Jesus we could prayer for?
3. Pray for the church that God would cause us to look outward.