

The Focus of Jesus (Live Like Jesus #4)

Sermon by Todd Lester

January 31, 2016

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.

To be lost means to be:

D_____ (from God)

D_____ (by satan)

D_____ (from God's plan)

D_____ (by my own impulses)

Throughout history Jesus followers were the first to build churches, schools and hospitals because they want to follow His example of p_____, t_____ and h_____.

JESUS CAME...

1. TO _____ THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR _____

Matthew 4:23-24, Mark 1:40-42, Luke 6:32-34, James 5:15

Lepers lived a life of h_____, i_____ and e_____.

2. TO _____ THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR _____

Luke 4:18-19, Luke 5:20, 23-25

People can become paralyzed by f_____, g_____, r_____, b_____, l_____ and g_____.

3. TO _____ THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR _____

John 8:3-11, Romans 8:1, Matthew 9:9, 1 Samuel 2:8 (MSG)

We are robbed of our dignity by g_____, r_____ and s_____.

Lost

Think of a time when you lost something of great value to you. Share about this with the group. If you're uncomfortable with blank space you can draw a picture of what you lost.

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Icebreaker/Introduction

Todd pointed out during this week's message that while some people may be offended when we use the word 'lost' to refer to unbelievers, it is actually a term of endearment and implies great value. (ie. you 'misplace' things of little value, but 'lose' important things). This simple sharing exercise helps us to think about this idea. (if it doesn't come up before the activity make this point as part of wrapping up this warmup)

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made which really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

Consider Luke 19:10 – Todd asked the question “Why did Jesus come?” and used this scripture to answer. What are some other answers to that question? If an unbelieving friend asked you that question how would you respond? (would 'to seek and save the lost' be satisfactory). If it's important that 'if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it' (1 Peter 3:15) then take some time to discuss how we talk about our faith with those that don't share it. (Bruxy Cavey broke down his answer to this question as 'Jesus came to show us God's love, save us from sin, set up His kingdom, and shut down religion' – consider discussing that answer)

To be lost means to be:

Disconnected (from God) Deceived (by satan) Detoured (from God's plan) Defeated (by my own impulses)

What do you think of this list? How else are we deceived (by the world, by ourselves – see Jer. 17:9)?

Throughout history Jesus followers were the first to build churches, schools and hospitals because they want to follow His example of preaching, teaching and healing.

This doesn't seem to be happening as much anymore. What factors have affected that?

JESUS CAME...

1. TO HEAL THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR STRENGTH

Focuses on Matthew 4:23-24, Mark 1:40-42, Luke 6:32-34, James 5:15

Lepers lived a life of humiliation, isolation and exclusion. Who lives like this today? Who are the 'untouchables'? (examples: homeless, homosexual) How can we bring real healing into their lives?

What about others who are hurting? (isn't everyone?) How can you be a person who brings healing to others. That is, what gifts do you have that can help others (eg. touch, humour, baking, presence) Discuss a time when you feel you were able to make a difference to someone who was in pain (emotional or physical).

Who is one specific person you can think of who you can reach out to this week? Do you want to be accountable and have us ask you about it next time we meet?

2. TO LIBERATE THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR FREEDOM

Focuses on Luke 4:18-19, Luke 5:20, 23-25

People can become paralyzed by fear, guilt, resentment, boredom, loneliness and grief.

The above list seems like a lot of negative emotions. Are any of them okay to feel at times?

Think of someone you know (or even yourself) who is paralyzed by one of these feelings. Is there a way for you/us to bring freedom? Is counseling an option (is it the only option?)

People today lose their freedom through addictions? What is an addiction (define)? What are some examples? Can TV be an addiction?

How can we get or bring freedom from addictions?

What about those who are 'bound' by, or focused on, following religious rules (do this, don't do that) – do they need to experience freedom as well?

Consider the story in Luke 5. What obstacles can we face today in trying to bring our friends to Jesus?

3. TO FORGIVE THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR DIGNITY

Focuses on John 8:3-11, Romans 8:1, Matthew 9:9, 1 Samuel 2:8 (MSG)

We are robbed of our dignity by guilt, regret, and shame.

Can you recall what Todd said robs us of our God-given dignity? (above)

Who are those who have lost dignity in our society? (eg. unemployed, divorced, disabled) Who else can suffer from low self-esteem?

How can forgiveness make a difference in their lives?

How common do you think it is for people to give forgiveness today? How often do you verbalize it or do you tend to forgive others without saying anything to them?

Todd encouraged us to always err on the side of grace. What does this mean to you?

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JESUS CAME...

1. TO HEAL THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR STRENGTH

Lepers lived a life of humiliation, isolation and exclusion.

Matthew 4:23-24 Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon possessed or epileptic or paralyzed—he healed them all.

Mark 1:40-42 A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean," he said. Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!" Instantly the leprosy disappeared, and the man was healed.

Luke 6:32-34 (MSG) Here is a simple rule of thumb for behaviour: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that.

James 5:15 Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven.

2. TO LIBERATE THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR FREEDOM

People can become paralyzed by fear, guilt, resentment, boredom, loneliness and grief.

Luke 4:18-19 He has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favour has come.

Luke 5:20, 23-25 Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven" ... "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!" And immediately, as everyone watched, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God.

3. TO FORGIVE THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR DIGNITY

We are robbed of our dignity by guilt, regret, and shame.

John 8:3-11 As He was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?" They were trying to trap Him into saying something they could use against Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with His finger. "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" Then He stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman. "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

Romans 8:1 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

Matthew 9:9 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

1 Samuel 2:8 (MSG) He puts poor people on their feet again; he rekindles burned-out lives with fresh hope, restoring dignity and respect to their lives.