

Intro: Did not grow up going to church. Maybe 2 or 3 times I can remember before Sr in HS
 Walked into my home room class, 4 girls, 1 guy...I went and sat in the middle!
 I didn't know them...they knew me by reputation. Into drugs, rough crowd, walked in high every day
 What I didn't know until later was, I sat down in the middle of a church youth group
 They began to pray for me by name every single Tuesday night! God began to work
 Over the years I have come to think of them as "The Fellowship of The Mat!" in my life. The people God used to win me

3 Truths About Reaching People For Jesus

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1. God Has A Heart For ALL People, Even Those On The Margins Of Our Culture.

Vs 12-16

The Man:

- **Plagued by Leprosy:** Lit = Full of leprosy: Fully covered, advanced stage of the disease
 ~A sinner judged by God
 ~Unclean and Unwelcome among "decent" people
 ~hopeless and ostracized (Unclean, not allowed in worship, announce himself, not able live in town, no touch!)
- **Had hope in Jesus** (greater than many of those following Jesus!)
 ~If you are willing (no equivocation, no doubt, no question)
 Willing: Lit = *if you choose to, you have the power to do so!*

Jesus:

- **Touched Him:** Lit = *to take hold of, to hold onto: Not just to have a passing touch...but to hold*
 ~*(not necessary for the healing...often did this from a distance...with a word)*
 ~Was making a point! Everyone else said he was unclean! Jesus wanted him to know: Accepted by God
 ~Jesus wanted him to know...He was accepted by Jesus! Did what no one probably had done for years! Touched
Illus: Power of Physical touch (20 seconds releases a hormone promotes trust, intimacy, reduces stress!)
- **I am willing:** I desire to make you clean!
 ~That message is the message we can offer to anyone and everyone we meet.
 ~God is WILLING to love, accept, forgive and heal.
 You never have to question that...it is a GIVEN in life!

2Pe 3:9 *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

2. We Need To Develop The Same Heart For People God Has For Them.

Vs 17-26

- They KNEW Jesus had what he needed: **POWER OF LORD PRESENT**
- They were willing to do whatever it takes to get their friend before Jesus!
 ~ **HARD WORK** Carrying him: (every carry an adult..even on a mat or gurney?)
 ~ **PERSEVERENCE** Not willing to give up: Lit = *They kept on seeking a way to get him to Jesus*
 ~ **SACRIFICE** Tearing up roof: Costly; Owner feelings; Did they leave the hole? Fix it?
 ~ **WHATEVER** Whatever it takes! They refused to take no for an answer...they found a way!
 Illus: Wed night: No lights...Go to CCF and get theirs!!!
- **THEIR FAITH** was the key! When Jesus saw **THEIR** faith! **NOT** the mans!
 Jesus responded to **THEIR** faith on behalf of the man they loved!
 Who are **YOU** working for spiritually that way?
 Who are **YOU** believing for?
 What price are you willing to pay, what sacrifice willing to make, how determined are you to see God work in life of people you know and love?

3. There Are Different Ways People Will Come To Jesus.

Vs 27-32

- **On their own:** Sometimes hurting so badly they find a way to Him
- **Others help:** Sometimes friends move heaven and Earth to get them there. Do whatever it takes
- **Opportunity to Invite:** Matthew threw a party! He put Jesus and his friends together in same room!
 We do that with Trunk, Egg Hunt, Sunday Services, Special events
 Notice: Matthew invited his friends:

CONCL:

1. Open your eyes to those who are hurting...Even if they aren't religious people! Invited them to Jesus He is willing!
2. We Need a heart for people: Trunk R Treat 422 children registered: They will come! Do it right
 The empty seats in here today break my heart...should break yours too
3. Let's throw a party for people to encounter Jesus: Every single Sunday...And, you invite them to come Whatever it takes!