

We learned last week that Jesus is willing:

- willing to go wherever there is a need
- willing to speak directly to those that are sick with sin
- willing to touch the untouchable and love the unlovable

The question I would ask you this morning, which happens to be the title of the message, is...

'Jesus is willing ... are you?'

Our text this morning as we continue walking through the Gospel of St. Luke is **Luke 5:17-26**. Let's read...

17 Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them. 18 Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. 19 And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus. 20 When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? 23 Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? 24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 25 Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. 26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"

This plan of God's called the church requires a few very basic and extremely necessary ingredients:

- a Chief Shepherd and the sheep, or
- a Savior and the saints

I think we know our place don't you? So if we are in agreement that Jesus is willing to do what He does then we ought to have an

understanding that as the church, His called out ones, we should be willing to do what we do, correct?

Does this make sense? I know it might seem easier if we just sat back on automatic pilot and let this thing cruise on into glory but that is not the plan as I see it in the scriptures.

And so I ask the question again: **Jesus is willing ... are you?**

Are you willing to...

1. Gather around His word? [verse 17]

' Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem'

I spoke at Northeastern this past Friday to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes group about the current 'Bizarro World' in which we live where right is wrong, evil is good, and an Illinois shaped Kellogg's Corn Flake sold on e-bay for \$1,350!

God's Word gives us a proper perspective and wisdom to navigate through the treacherous waters of life!

2 Timothy 3:14-17 NLT

14 But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. 15 You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Personal time in the Word [Deep study] as well as small group and corporate gatherings such as Sunday morning and mid-week services.

2. Grasp a sense of His presence? [verse 17]

' And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.'

God is omnipresent meaning His presence is everywhere. There is no limiting His reach as we read last week from **Psalm 139:12** *'Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit? to be out of your sight?*

We are discussing praise and prayer in our Wednesday night study and prayer meetings.

Psalm 22:3 *'But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.'*

God's presence actually dwells or abides or lives or inhabits the praises of His people when we praise Him. That is why there are times in a corporate gathering where you seem to 'feel' the presence of God, when you grasp a sense that something larger than you is present.

Here, Jesus was teaching and they were gathered and so was the healing power of the Lord according to verse 17. Notice Luke doesn't mention that that Pharisees or the teachers of the law had a clue. In fact we are going to see by their action, or lack of action, they probably didn't have any idea what was about to happen.

Personally I don't believe our God is so much interested in chapter and verse memorization as He is in heart and soul habitation!

The first chapter of the book of James instructs us to not only be hearers of the Word but doers as well. I am not certain of what Jesus was teaching on at that moment; however, I do know that He had previously stood in the synagogue and declared in **Luke 4:18-19**

*"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

Maybe these guys who were trying to bring their friend to Jesus had heard this is what Jesus had said He had come to do and had a sense of His presence enough to go get their friend and bring him in. I don't know but it wouldn't surprise me. Nonetheless, they acted, which brings me to the third point. Are you willing to ...

3. Go and bring others to Jesus? [verse 18]

'Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him.'

This was no 'I'll pick you up for church if you want to go' kind of thing!

This required effort. Think about this: how far did this guy live from where Jesus was? Was he a man of small stature or large? How heavy was the bed or the mat they carried him on? How scary was it for the paralyzed man as they carried him along the path? How many times were they ridiculed for their effort? Were they to be considered to be 'unclean' by the religious people for touching an infirmed man?

This is more than a simple '*do you want to go to church with me*' kind of thing here, wouldn't you agree?

Matthew 28:18-20

*18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 **Go therefore** and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

This is our Great Commission from our Great Commander! It is not simply a great suggestion!

- Inviting to church is not a horrible idea
- Personal evangelism: workplace discipleship training
- Social events: Easter egg hunt, valentines party, Bunko [?]
- YWAM Impact World Tour events in the fall
- _____ [you fill in the blank]

The question remains, are you willing to go and bring others to Jesus? And if so, are you willing to ...

4. Give yourself completely in the effort? [verse 19]

'And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.'

Religious radicals, right? What were they thinking? I joked with our group on Wednesday that I was going to have somebody crawl up in the corner and begin chopping a hole in the roof while I was preaching just to watch what our response would be.

Church, desperate times call for desperate measures. We are living in desperate times! I know we would all like the 'pie in the sky' kind of mindset to prevail; however, that's not reality!

I seriously wonder if I am willing to give myself completely. I can say that I am if you want to hear me say it, but do my actions reveal something else? What about yours?

Remember, get out of the shallow waters and launch out into the deep!

James Baldwin from Youth With A Mission said recently **'Jesus doesn't simply want to fit into our life; He is our life!'**

Is that how we are living? I don't think so church. God forgive us!

*One more thing: I want to invest my life and stand beside a people who are willing to 'make a hole' when the doorway is blocked when it comes to bringing others to Jesus!

I know God opens doors and closes them. Fine. But I also know that sometimes a blocked entryway isn't God at all and we need to find a way through the maze of clutter to get to what is of extreme importance, regardless of whether that means our mindset, our tradition, our selfishness, our past, our religious heritage... whatever!

Are you willing to...

5. Get out of the way? [verse 19]

*'And when they could not find how they might bring him in, **because of the crowd ...**'*

I am not speaking simply of logistics. We did a good job of parking off-site last week so the visitors could park close; sitting up front so that folks who were not regulars could sit towards the back, etc.

Thank you for all of your hard work everybody.

Listen again to what happened in this story: there were so many religious leaders and teachers of the law crowded around Jesus [their motivation was questionable at best] that a poor paraplegic couldn't get in the front door.

Somebody once referenced many Christians as being 'spiritual pigs' at the trough, filling ourselves to overflowing, spiritual gluttony, while others can't even approach the trough to get a kernel of truth, and we don't seem to care that much at all that they are starving as long as we are full! [Working with JLH of a southern Indiana pig farm].

Are you willing to ...

6. Grant God liberty? [verse 21] -to do whatever He wants to do, however He want to do it?

'And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Oh boy, here we go again. Jesus didn't do it their way!

Have you noticed when you read the New Testament that Jesus doesn't ever rip into the lost sinner but often plunges head first into the supposed saint?

Mark 7:6-13 The Message

6-8 Jesus answered, "Isaiah was right about frauds like you, hit the bull's-eye in fact:

These people make a big show of saying the right thing,
but their heart isn't in it.
*They act like they are worshiping me,
but they don't mean it.
They just use me as a cover
for teaching whatever suits their fancy,
Ditching God's command
and taking up the latest fads."*

9-13 He went on, "Well, good for you. You get rid of God's command so you won't be inconvenienced in following the religious fashions! Moses said, 'Respect your father and mother,' and, 'Anyone denouncing father or mother should be killed.' But you weasel out of that by saying that it's perfectly acceptable to say to father or mother, 'Gift! What I owed you I've given as a gift to God,' thus relieving yourselves of obligation to father or mother. You scratch out God's Word and scrawl a whim in its place. You do a lot of things like this."

Jesus is willing, are you? Are you willing to:

1. Gather around His word? [vs. 17]
2. Grasp a sense of His presence? [vs. 17]
3. Go and bring others to Jesus? [vs. 18]
4. Give yourself completely in the effort? [vs. 19]
5. Get out of the way? [vs. 19]
6. Grant God liberty to do what He wants however He wants [vs. 21]

And if so, then surely you will be willing to give Him the glory!

Because when we are not only willing to but we act upon our willingness God is glorified! [verse 25-26]

'Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"

When we as followers of Jesus who are committed to be about the Father's business...

1. Gather around His word? [vs. 17]
2. Grasp a sense of His presence? [vs. 17]
3. Go and bring others to Jesus? [vs. 18]
4. Give yourself completely in the effort? [vs. 19]
5. Get out of the way? [vs. 19]
6. Grant God liberty to do what He wants however He wants [vs. 21]

We will be amazed at what God does, we will give Him all the glory, we will walk in the fear of the Lord, and say 'Wow, isn't God great?