

Devoted to Bringing People to Jesus

Lesson 03 in the series: "Devoted"

"When Jesus returned to Capernaum several days later, the news spread quickly that he was back home. Soon the house where he was staying was so packed with visitors that there was no more room, even outside the door. While he was preaching God's word to them, four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. They couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus." Mark 2:1-4 (NLT)

A. The paralyzed man's friends were moved to action by his need.

"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."

Mark 1:40-42 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to putting our faith into action by caring for the needs of others.

"What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, 'Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well'—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless." James 2:14-17 (NLT)

- I can show I care.

B. The paralyzed man's friends were so devoted they didn't let obstacles/difficulties stop them.

"Suppose you went to a friend's house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You say to him, 'A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit, and I have nothing for him to eat.' And suppose he calls out from his bedroom, 'Don't bother me. The door is locked for the night, and my family and I are all in bed. I can't help you.' But I tell you this—though he won't do it for friendship's sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence. 'And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.'" Luke 11:5-9 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to the mission of our church even when it's difficult.

"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith." Galatians 6:9-10 (NLT)

"Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching." 2 Timothy 4:2 (NLT)

- I can get creative.
- I can commit to prayer.

C. The paralyzed man's friends were convinced that he needed Jesus.

"Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, 'My child, your sins are forgiven.' But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there thought to themselves, 'What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!' Jesus knew immediately what they were thinking, so he asked them, 'Why do you question this in your hearts? Is it easier to say to the paralyzed man "Your sins are forgiven," or "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk"? So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.' Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, 'Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!' And the man jumped up, grabbed his mat, and walked out through the stunned onlookers. They were all amazed and praised God, exclaiming, 'We've never seen anything like this before!'" Mark 2:5-12 (NLT)

Note: We are convinced that everyone needs Jesus.

"For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins." Romans 3:23-24 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to bringing lost sinners to Jesus.

- I can become aware.

“...wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.” John 4:35 (NLT)

- I can be ready to share.

“For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile.” Romans 1:16 (NLT)

“I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.” 1 Corinthians 9:22 (NLT)

Note: Jesus was devoted to saving lost sinners first.

“Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way. When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. ‘Zacchaeus!’ he said. ‘Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today.’ Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. ‘He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner,’ they grumbled. Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!’ Jesus responded, ‘Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.’” Luke 19:1-10 (NLT)

JOHN SCHMIDT • 10-13-19 • john@centeringlives.com

“This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.” Colossians 1:6 (NLT)

Connect Group Questions:

1. Read Mark 2:1-4. Consider the commitment level of the paralyzed man’s four friends. What obstacles did these men need to overcome to bring their friend to Jesus?
2. What would Centerpoint look like if we were fully devoted to bringing people to Jesus?
3. Discuss the following four steps to bringing people to Jesus:
 - Become aware of people around you.
 - Commit to praying for them.
 - Show you care for them.
 - Be ready to share your faith.

Which of these steps is easiest for you? Which is the most difficult? Why?

4. Read Luke 19:1-10. How do you think Zacchaeus felt when he realized that Jesus was seeking a relationship with a notorious sinner like him? Why did Jesus do it?
5. Do you worry about what others might think of you if you befriend a notorious sinner?
6. Share with your group the name of one person you would like to bring to Jesus. Then spend some time as a group praying for the people you have named. Pray for each other also. Ask God to give you opportunities and boldness while sharing your faith.
7. Read Galatians 6:9-10. Why is it important to be persistent in our outreach to others?