

Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions

week of 6/7/26

Summary

This sermon explored several encounters from Matthew's Gospel where Jesus crossed social, religious, and cultural boundaries to bring healing, forgiveness, and new life to desperate people. Through the stories of the paralyzed man, Matthew the tax collector, the woman with the bleeding condition, and the ruler's daughter, Dr. Dalton showed how Jesus consistently met people in their most broken and hopeless moments. No barrier, whether illness, sin, social status, or even death, was too great for Jesus to overcome on behalf of those who came to Him in faith.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to receive exactly what You have for us. Just as Jesus met desperate and hurting people right where they were, meet us here in this room. Help us to set aside distractions and be honest with one another and with You. May Your Spirit guide our conversation, and may we leave today encouraged, challenged, and more deeply rooted in Your grace. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could invite anyone, living or from history, to a dinner party, who would you invite and why?

Key Verses

- Matthew 9:2
- Matthew 9:9
- Matthew 9:20-22
- Matthew 9:23-25
- Hebrews 13:8
- Ephesians 3:20

Questions

1. Dr. Dalton described a 'Matthew party,' where Matthew the tax collector invited his friends to meet Jesus. Who in your life might need an introduction to Jesus, and what would it look like for you to create that kind of opportunity?
2. The four friends of the paralyzed man refused to give up, even climbing onto a roof to get their friend to Jesus. Has anyone ever carried you spiritually when you could not carry yourself? How did that impact your faith?
3. Dr. Dalton shared a personal story about praying for his mother for years before she came to faith. Have you ever felt like giving up on a prayer? What kept you going, or what might help you persevere?
4. The woman with the bleeding condition had suffered for 12 years and still reached out to Jesus in faith, even if her understanding was imperfect. What does her story say to you about the kind of faith God honors?

5. Jesus called the outcast woman 'daughter,' restoring not just her health but her belonging and identity. How does knowing that Jesus wants to restore our sense of belonging and identity affect the way you see yourself?
6. Dr. Dalton pointed out that Jesus dismissed the unbelieving mourners before raising the ruler's daughter, so their unbelief would not obstruct the miracle. How can the attitudes and faith levels of those around us affect our own ability to trust God?
7. The sermon emphasized that Jesus identified with our humanity, our sinfulness, and our suffering through His birth, baptism, and crucifixion. How does knowing that Jesus truly understands what you are going through change the way you approach Him in prayer?
8. Dr. Dalton reminded us that Jesus does not allow our past to rob us of the future He can bring into our lives. Is there something from your past that you have allowed to define or limit your future? How might you surrender that to Jesus this week?

Life Application

This week, identify one person in your life who is struggling and may feel like an outsider, whether spiritually, emotionally, or socially. Commit to one intentional act of reaching out to them, whether through a phone call, a meal, or simply letting them know you are praying for them. At the same time, bring one persistent prayer request back to God that you may have quietly set aside, trusting that He hears you and cares deeply about your situation.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus consistently crosses every boundary, whether social, religious, or physical, to reach people in their deepest need, and He does the same for us today.
- Persistent, imperfect faith is still faith. The woman who had suffered for 12 years and the friends who tore through a roof both demonstrate that God honors determined trust even when our understanding is incomplete.
- Jesus does not allow our past to define or limit the future He has for us. His call to Matthew the tax collector is a powerful reminder that no background disqualifies someone from following Jesus.
- Through His birth, baptism, and crucifixion, Jesus fully identified with our humanity and our sinfulness so that by faith we could be raised to new life through His death and resurrection.
- The altar and the presence of Jesus are places of grace and communication, not condemnation. We are invited to bring our burdens, doubts, and needs directly to Him without shame.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for this time together and for the truth that You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. You are not distant or indifferent. You see every tear, You hear every prayer, and You know every name. As we leave this discussion, we ask that You would go with each person here into the challenges and joys of the week ahead. Where there is discouragement, bring hope. Where

there is shame, bring grace. Where there is doubt, bring faith. Help us to carry one another the way those four friends carried their paralyzed companion, and help us to never stop reaching out to You, no matter how long we have been waiting. We trust You with our lives, our families, and our futures. In the name of Jesus, amen.