



Why Your Circle Matters

MAIN THING

Show me your friends and I'll show you your future

SCRIPTURE

Luke 5:17-26, James 5:16, Acts 28:15, James 5:19-20, Acts 3:19

ICEBREAKER

My favorite teacher from my time in school was/is _____ because

OPENING THOUGHT

There is a saying in youth ministry, "Show me your kid's friends and I'll show you your kid." Who you surround yourself with is who you are and who you become. Recovering addicts who don't change their circle of friends have an almost 100% chance of relapsing. Christians whose closest friends are nonbelievers will soon leave the faith. Married couples whose closest friends are other married couples tend to stay married. In this story, the paralyzed man's circle of friends led to his healing and more importantly his being cleansed of his sins. Never underestimate the importance of your circle. It's who you are.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the one thing that you heard this past Sunday that stuck out to you? Why did it resonate with you like it did?
2. In the sermon, Dave said that there are four instances when your circle should bring you to Jesus: 1) Physically Unable, 2) Emotionally Done, 3) Spiritually Adrift, 4) Have a bad case of Cranial Rectumitis. Have you ever been in one or more of these circumstances and your friends prayed for you, encouraged you, and brought you back to Jesus? Share.
3. It seemed that Jesus was more concerned with forgiving the man's sins than healing him physically. We as humans would think that the physical healing was the bigger deal, but it seemed that the physical healing was an afterthought to Jesus. Why do you think this is? Why would Jesus be far more concerned with his spiritual state than his physical state?

LIFE APPLICATION

Take a close look at who you spend the most time with. Not acquaintances- your circle. Your closest friends. Are you walking with Jesus BECAUSE of them or IN SPITE of them? If your answer is the latter, it's only a matter of time before you walk away from your faith.

If you are a parent, take a good look at your kids' friends. There isn't such a thing as "a good kid who just hangs out with bad people." Nope. Birds of a feather flock together. Your kids' circle is who they are. Talk with them about this. They need friends like the friends of this paralyzed man who would take him to Jesus when he couldn't go himself.

CHALLENGE

Find someone who is in one (or more) of the four states identified in the sermon. Pray for them. Take them to Jesus for healing. Remember that Jesus is more interested in their spiritual state than their physical state- although the physical is important too. Let's follow the example of these friends and bust through the roof if we have to to get our friends to Jesus.