

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

Luke 5:12-39 is all built around the one question asked by the Pharisees in verse 21: "Who is this fellow?" Luke gives us 4 bite-sized pictures into how differently Jesus acted around sin compared to the religious leaders, and all of it points to the fact that – as God – Jesus deals with sin in a way that heals the heart (instead of hardening the heart the way the Pharisees often did). Here's what we see Jesus do:

1. **He touches the unclean:** Lepers were lonely because they had to be outcasts, yelling "Unclean! Unclean!" everywhere they went. They weren't even supposed to be touched, but Jesus touched the leper BEFORE he made him clean. It was such a different approach from the leaders of that day.
2. **He rewards the undaunted:** Jesus didn't turn a cold shoulder or a blind eye to those who were desperate for him, and when 4 friends refused to be stopped until they got their friend to Jesus, Jesus rewarded them by forgiving the man's sin and healing his body. He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6).
3. **He challenges the unwilling:** Of course, the reward for the undaunted became the same thing that challenged the unwilling. The Pharisees did nothing to help the paralytic, and criticized Jesus for claiming to forgive his sin. But when Jesus healed him and proved his authority was from God, they still remained unmoved. The same freedom others experience will challenge us if we're unwilling.
4. **He calls the unexpected:** Finally, Jesus calls a tax collector to follow him. Not a Pharisee, or a scribe, or anyone else who would have deemed himself qualified. He called the most unexpected person to walk with him. He still does (and that's great news for us!!).

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- What takeaway – if any – did you have from the message this week?
- Luke is spending a lot of time making the case that Jesus is Lord, and as such, has authority. We see him with the authority to heal, to forgive, to challenge religious systems, and to call others to follow him. What does the authority of Jesus look like in your life?
- It's easy to throw the Pharisees under the bus, but there's some Pharisee in all of us! The authority of Jesus really challenged them, and my guess is that it challenges each of us at times, too. What parts of his authority do you struggle with? Why do you think it's easier to stay "unwilling" to change?
- Have you ever felt unclean or unworthy? How powerful is touch in those times? From others? From God?
- Take the time to read the following verses: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Isaiah 42:9; Isaiah 43:18-19. Since God is a God of new things, discuss how we can embrace that and not become people who "hold to the old and lose out on the new" as described in Luke 5:39. Close the time by asking God to give you a soft and receptive heart to the new approach that Jesus brought (and still brings) to the issue of sin. Pray the "breath mint" prayer found in Psalm 139:23-24 and thank God for the "breath mint" promise found in 1 John 1:9.