



“SEEKERS + WATCHERS”

SPEAKER: BO STERN BRADY

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Discussion Questions

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. They can help you understand and apply the teaching.

BIBLICAL TEXT(S) + MESSAGE SUMMARY:

Luke 5:17-26

Jesus always responds to desperation. Always. There is not a single instance in the Gospels where someone comes to Jesus in dire circumstance and he does not respond with compassion and kindness. There are occasions where he confronts cynicism and hard-hearted unbelief sharply, seeking to correct the tragic trajectory of errant hearts, but Jesus' first response to those who are hurting is to relieve their suffering. This message features a revealing look at the desperate circumstances of a paralyzed man and the lengths to which his friends go to place him at Jesus' feet before a stunned crowd.

LEAN IN: *These are ice breakers and warm ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. What's the most interesting thing you've ever seen?
2. Describe a time when you were intently seeking something, like an address in an unfamiliar city or a waypoint while geocaching. What did that feel like?
3. Why do you think we humans are natural observers? For example, why do we slow down to observe the scene of an accident on a highway or check out a roadside traffic stop?
4. What's one thing about this message that stood out to you and why?
5. Is there anything you put into practice from last week's teaching, and if so what was your experience? If not, why not?

LOOK DOWN: *These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. What do you notice about how Luke sets the scene for us?
2. How does Luke describe Jesus' power? What do you think about His observation?
3. What do the men carrying the man want to do and how do they accomplish their goal? What's odd about that?
4. What is Jesus' response and does it seem strange to you? If so, how so?
5. How do religious leaders respond to Jesus' words? Does their assessment seem reasonable, and why or why not?
6. How quickly does the healing happen and what does that imply?
7. How do all of the people respond? When Luke writes, "everyone was amazed and gave praise to God," who does that include based on what the text says? What does that imply?

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. Who in our culture might fit into the category of watchers? Who might be seekers?

2. If someone were miraculously healed today in front of a crowd of people — including poor, menial laborers and highly educated religious leaders — and the healing were widely reported in the media, how do you think the story would play out? Would it be reported as believable? Would it be explained away? Mocked?
3. How do skepticism, cynicism, and trust play against or with one another in our culture to undermine faith in the Gospel?
4. What barriers to desperate faith do you see in our world?
5. Where do you see desperate needs in our world that only Jesus can meet? How does that move you?

LOOK IN: *These are questions that help you consider how to engage the teaching personally. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. How did this message impact you, especially the desperate actions of the paralyzed man's friends?
2. Do you have friends like that who will carry you to Jesus?
3. What did you see in Jesus' response that warned your heart towards him?
4. Where does God need to make a hole in your life? Where does He need to break in so you might find yourself in front of Jesus?
5. What kind of healing do you need from Jesus right now? What have you been carrying? What burden has been "paralyzing" you that you need freedom from?

LIVE IT OUT: *These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one prompt and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. Do a simple spiritual exercise where you enter the biblical story. Take some time alone and imagine yourself with Jesus, sitting humbly at his feet. Hear him say to you, "Your sins are forgiven." Receive that with joy. Then hear him say, "Go home." Picture yourself doing that in your imagination, going along your way praising God. Enjoy the feeling of being completely and freely forgiven by your Savior (1 John 1:9). Do this once, or as many times as you need to for as many heavy burdens as you might be carrying.
2. Gather with some good friends, or one friend, and "carry" each other to God in prayer. Spend time in confession and repentance with one another. Make it intentional, and prepare beforehand perhaps by fasting for the day. Simply confess what you want to repent of and allow your friend or friends to confirm to you that God has forgiven you (1 John 1:9). Then, allow them to pray for you that God will strengthen you as you lay aside the sin that seeks to entangle you (Heb. 12:1).