**I Love My Church – Community**

**Transcript**

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I Love My Church - Community
8/18/24

New sermon series
• I love my church

Our vision
Our values

Why do we come here each week?
• Growing closer to Jesus – 1 step
• Growing stronger as a body – impacting our communities
o Not meant to do it alone

Prayer

Going to talk about why we love Joy Church
• Serving
• Giving
• Our vision, values
• First thing I love about my church
• Community
o Raising up a body of believers committed in relationship with Jesus and with each other
• The church is the only organization that is formed solely for the people who aren’t part of it
o We want to reach others for Jesus
♣ The truth is that it’s not about us
♣ It’s about those yet to come

Jesus was for community; he was part of a community while he was here on earth
• Not to mention that he is part of the Trinity – the 3 persons of God – “God in 3 persons, blessed Trinity”
• He chose 12 disciples to be his community
o Could have done it alone
• He taught them, showed them how to follow him, making disciples
• Through that – he showed us how to make disciples as well
o So much so that the last thing he tells us before ascending to heaven – after resurrection – to go and make disciples
♣ Not converts
♣ Not church goers
♣ Not religious people
♣ Not do-gooders
• Disciples – growing to be more like Jesus every day

A story of Jesus and community
• Mark 2:2-11

4 people/groups represented in this story

• 1st – The lame man
o Paralyzed
♣ Maybe from birth, maybe from a traumatic accident, maybe even a victim of violence
♣ We don’t know
o What we do know is that he was paralyzed
♣ Unable to move
• Helpless, possibly hopeless
♣ Couldn’t even find his way to Jesus on his own

Like us
• Maybe not paralyzed physically
o But paralyzed with emotional trauma
♣ Paralyzed by fear in a world gone mad
♣ Paralyzed by hurts from our past – possibly even church hurt
♣ Paralyzed by hopelessness – seemingly from birth

And, like most of us, he couldn’t find Jesus without the help of his community of friends
• 1st person in the story – the paralyzed man

Secondly, his friends
• Love him, hated seeing him in this paralyzed state day after day, year after year
o Knowing there was more for this friend than even the friend can imagine
♣ And committed to getting help for this friend
• So committed that they put him on a mat, picked him up by the corners, carried him to where Jesus was, cut a hole in the roof, and lowered him down
o That’s a lot of work, a lot of commitment
o Don’t we wish we had friends who are so committed to helping us find the best for ourselves?
o Don’t we wish we could be a friend so committed to helping those in our community?
♣ I love Joy Church because we want to get people to Jesus
• Maybe using some unconventional methods
• Maybe doing some hokey things
• Maybe being extraordinarily generous with our community
• Helping bring them to Jesus when they are too paralyzed in their own ways to find him themselves

We have the paralyzed man & the friends

Third, Scribes
• Religious ones
o Today’s version – those who sit in their churches, following their own religious traditions,
♣ Expecting people to clean up their lives and then come to church
♣ Get out of that sin you’re living with and then you can be a part of us
• And wondering why nobody new has come to their church in years

The Scribes – judging others, making sure they keep all the rules, keeping their eyes on those who are sick, paralyzed, in need of Jesus and making themselves the gatekeepers of who can come and who can’t

See how they accused Jesus – v6
• Seeing a miracle like this – and the only thing they can see is breaking a religious rule

4th group –
• The crowd
o V2 – the room was crowded to the point there was no room to bring this man through the door – had to drop him through the ceiling
♣ Imagine – sitting there and seeing others cutting a hole in the roof
♣ You’re just there to listen to this guy teach and suddenly the roof starts falling in
♣ What’s going on?
• And then you get to experience Jesus performing his miracle for this man
o Amazed – leaving the room glorifying God
• We believe in miracles here at Joy Church
o We see them
o A board full of them
o Do we go out praising God? Glorifying him?
o Or do we go out in a humdrum way – because we checked the box and made it to church today
♣ “God might have done something for somebody else there today – but I’m more interested in getting to lunch”
• To getting to the beach
• To getting to the birthday party
o I don’t have time for that community stuff at church – but I’ll check the box

This group got to witness a great miracle
• They were there and it changed their lives – and they had to go tell their family/friends about it
• Let me tell you, when you’re not here, you’re missing the miracle
o You’re missing changed lives
o You’re missing the blessing of serving others
♣ Praying for others

The paralyzed man
• His friends
• The scribes
• The crowd

I suggest we are all represented in this story
• Some are here and are part of the crowd
o Seeing what God does
♣ Maybe just checking the box
• But here and part of the crowd and wanting to learn from Jesus

Some are here and are represented by the religious crowd – the Scribes
• Possibly from childhood / upbringing
o Wondering why people are so far from Jesus in the world, but not willing to accept them as they are
o Not willing to walk alongside those who are paralyzed by their distance from Jesus
♣ “As soon as they clean up, they can come be a part of us”
• That’s why I love Joy Church – it’s a place you can come and belong before you believe
o A place where you can come from where you’re at and meet Jesus
♣ No judgement from us
o I like to say, “Jesus accepts us just as we are, but loves us too much to leave us that way”
♣ He loves you so much – so much that he accepts you right where you’re at, but too much to leave you there

Some are represented by the friends
• Who do you know who needs to find Jesus?
• Who do you know who is paralyzed in life?
o Unable to move forward, unable to find their own way to him
• Who do you know who you can commit to bringing them to Jesus and helping them find a better way
o Might look like you being Jesus in their lives – maybe they refuse to come to church
♣ But you can bring them to Jesus by serving them, loving them without judgement, without condemnation, without an agenda even – just bringing Jesus to them by your way of life
• My guess is we all have someone in our lives who is paralyzed and unable to get to Jesus

Maybe you’re here and you relate to the paralyzed man
• Unable to move forward
o Thinking that life has dealt you a bad hand and you’re paralyzed and unable to move forward
• Stuck on your mat
o Needing to be healed but paralyzed and unable to make it to the healer on your own
• You have a body here who wants to walk beside you as you find him
o Wants to point you to him
• A body of imperfect people, making our own mistakes, but walking one step closer to Jesus every day
o Knowing the hope he brings
o Knowing the better life he brings
o Knowing the peace he brings
o Knowing the comfort he brings
o And doing our best to walk toward him every day
♣ And wanting you to come along with us
• No judgement
• No agenda
• No timetable
• Inviting you along the journey with us

I tricked you, though
• There is one more person represented here
o It’s Jesus
♣ The one the crowds came to see
♣ The one the Scribes came to judge
♣ The one the friends knew would bring peace and healing to their friend
♣ The one who not only healed the paralyzed man, but forgave his sins as well

Jesus is here today
• The same – yesterday, today and forever
o Inviting you into his healing
o Inviting you into his grace and mercy that forgives you of all your sins
o Inviting you to join his community of disciples

Salvation prayer

I love my church because we are a church who isn’t perfect
• A church that moves toward Jesus
• A church that impacts our community with the Father’s love
• A church that raises up a body of believers
• Committed to one another
• And committed to Jesus