



Time in the Chair

the week of **June 12-17**

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... Not liking to travel would have been a real hindrance to being one of Jesus' disciples over 2,000 years ago. Have you ever noticed when reading stories from the Gospels that Jesus and His buddies did a lot of traveling? And we aren't talking 15-minute walks to the nearest neighborhood before crashing back at their own house. No, the disciples following Jesus rarely stayed in one place a long time. They traveled all over Israel, and not by way of train, bus or taxi—but on foot. They didn't have a home to call their own in the three years Jesus was involved in His public ministry. And they didn't have a building or a meeting place where they held their services or where Jesus did His teaching. In other words, Jesus' ministry in those days looked a lot different from current Christianity. Most of us, whether we are self-admitted homebodies or not, like to be comfortable. We like having a home to come back to. We like going to church—as long as we know our friends will be there to sit with us, the songs we sing are ones we know already and our spot in the front row by the stage is left empty for us. We go to church. And when we invite our friends, we ask them to come with us.

So for us, it's easy to connect with God in one place. But Jesus left His home and His hometown. He didn't just hang out at the temple. In other words, the things Jesus taught, the way He lived and the way He loved other people didn't happen inside four walls. His ministry didn't happen in one place. It happened everywhere.

This past week we talked about the importance of taking what we hear in church and letting it spill over into the different areas of our lives, letting what we learn here affect the way we talk to our parents, the way we treat our siblings, the way we interact with our friends. What we hear here can't stay here. And there is a reason for that. Because sometimes the people who need to hear what we know, who need to encounter Jesus, will never step foot in a church at all.

Not only that, the things we hear here are meant to affect our lives as well. God's Word, His truth, changes the way we see and interact with our world and all the people who are a part of our everyday lives. His Word is even supposed to affect how we see ourselves. And when we begin to live in ways that go beyond the walls of the church, when we begin to live like God is with us everywhere we go and live out the truths we hear in here, people begin to see what Jesus is all about. And while it may change them, even more so, it will change you.

Let your life be the testimony of Jesus to people who need to hear it, no matter where they are. Don't count on the words of your youth pastor or lead pastor to communicate what your genuine and authentic life can communicate on its own. Go out. And live the message.

DAY TWO: Obedience Read James 1:22-25

Read the passage and then choose **one verse/thought** that seems important to you and answer one of these three questions:

1. What does it say about God?
2. What does it say about you?
3. What does it say about others?

Now talk to God about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it. Take a few minutes to begin **memorizing verse 22** and review it throughout the week.

DAY THREE: Lost Read Luke 19:1-10

In many ways and countless situations, being “lost” is part of the human condition—from needing directions on how to get back on the highway to asking for help to restore a broken relationship. Maybe that’s why Jesus was so passionate in his pursuit of people who’ve lost their way. In story after story we see Jesus deliberately making an effort to pursue lost people. It’s what we see in today’s passage: Zacchaeus was lost and Jesus went after him.

As a chief tax collector, there was probably a good reason for Zacchaeus to select a sycamore-fig tree—its large leaves would offer concealment to a man certainly despised by fellow Jews. His position, in the warm climate town of Jericho where many people had a second home, insured he received both his cut of all taxes collected and his share of hatred from his countrymen.

Even though he desired to be hidden, *When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today* (Luke 19:5). Jesus took the effort to connect with a powerful, but unpopular man.

In the same way Jesus entered Zacchaeus’ world, we’re to enter the world of those in our sphere who are lost. We seek because Jesus seeks. Our responsibility is to be available and willing, and open to the prompting of God, as we help the lost find their way. Ask God to help you see the people around you the way he does. Is there someone you can share with?

DAY FOUR: Like Jesus Read Luke 6:39-40

Read the passage and then choose **one verse/thought** that seems important to you and answer the questions that apply:

- Is there a sin to avoid?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a command to obey?

- Is there an application to make?
- Is there something new about God?

Then talk to God about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it.