

When resistance works...or does not work

- Sometimes our resistance can **slow or stop things**
 - Exercising to resist the decay of our bodies
- Sometimes our resistance **does not make any difference**
 - Resisting the change of the seasons
- Sometimes our resistance is **a disaster!**
 - Resisting a tornado
- Resisting God: people who wanted to stop the early church
 - “If it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves **fighting against God.**”

Prayer: Help us, God, to join your work, not to resist it

1

Seeking to Save

Luke 18:35–19:10

bib.ly/Lu18.NIV

tiny.cc/cmchandouts



2

Context in Luke

Question: Who can be saved?

People: Certainly the rich-and-righteous

Jesus: The **rich** can be the **hardest** to save!

No one can save themselves.

But God can save anyone!

Question: Whom do we want to be saved?

3

Jesus' defining words for His ministry:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to **the poor**.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for **the prisoners**

and recovery of sight for **the blind**,

to set **the oppressed** free,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Luke 4:18-19

4

Luke 18:35-43

As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him,

“**Jesus of Nazareth** is passing by.”

He called out, “**Jesus, Son of David,** have mercy on me!”

Those who led the way **rebuked him and told him to be quiet,** but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

5

Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord, I want to see,” he replied.

Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; **your faith** has **healed you.**” Immediately he received his sight and **followed Jesus,** praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

same words as “saved you”

6

Luke 18:35-19:10

35-43: Blind beggar: crowd resists, Jesus saves, all rejoice

- Jericho: a good place to beg (going to temple...)
 - Also a good place to be a tax collector! (trade route)
- The blind man had spiritual sight:
 - He was hoping for the Son of David (the Messiah)
 - He recognized Jesus as the Messiah
 - Jesus wanted the crowd to know the man's faith
- **The crowd was an obstacle for the blind man**
- Blind man persevered ("he shouted all the more")
- **Jesus overrode people's objections**
- People rejoiced at the healing

1-10: • Salvation came to a **poor, blind man**

7

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He **wanted to see who Jesus was**, but because he was short he could not see **over the crowd**. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

8

All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

9

Luke 18:35-19:10

35-43: Blind beggar: crowd resists, Jesus saves, **all rejoice**

1-10: Tax collector: crowd resists, Jesus saves, **all grumble**

- Jesus: “I **must** stay at your house today.”
 - God’s will and the Son’s purpose
 - Overriding people’s objections
 - Their objections made it all the more important!
- **Normal thinking:**
touching the “unclean” makes me unclean
- **Right thinking:** when Jesus touches the “unclean”
He brings healing

10

Luke 18:35-19:10

35-43: Blind beggar: crowd resists, Jesus saves, **all rejoice**

1-10: Tax collector: crowd resists, Jesus saves, **all grumble**

- Jesus rescued Zacchaeus from his money!
 - A **result** of being saved by Jesus
 - **Not a means** to get be saved
- Salvation is forgiveness AND transformation
 - A key way that Jesus provides for the poor is through the transformation of people like Zacchaeus!

11

In these stories...

- Someone whom society judged **tried to reach Jesus**
- **People got in the way** of them getting to Jesus
- The person **continued seeking Jesus**
- **Jesus sought the person**
- The person was **transformed**
- Jesus healed (saved) the blind man: **“all” praised God**
- Jesus honored Zacchaeus: **“all” grumbled**
- Zacchaeus was saved (and transformed)

12

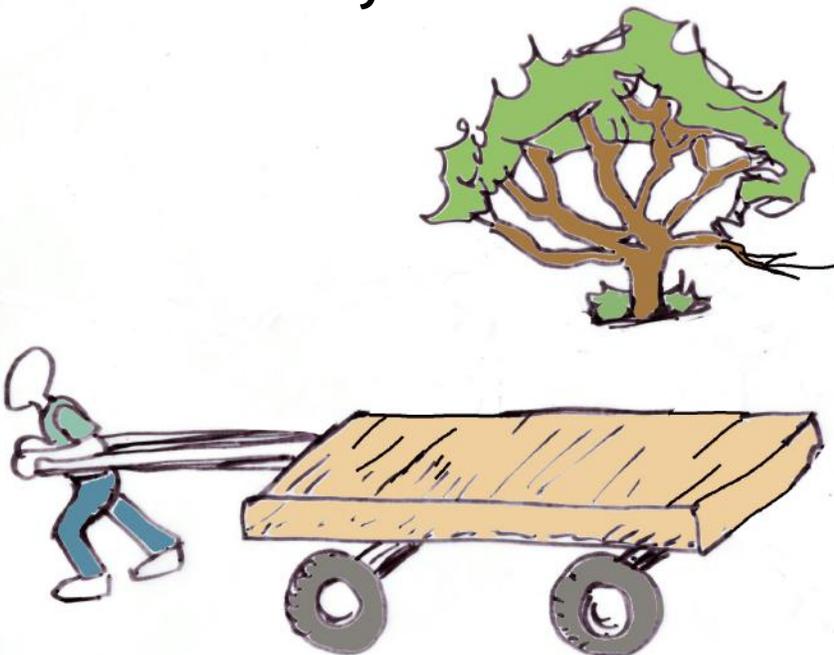
The Big Idea

**Jesus' purpose is
to seek and save all who need saving >> everyone!**

- **The crowd was an obstacle to Jesus' purpose in both stories**
- **Everyone was unhappy with Jesus' purpose in the second story**
 - **Perhaps because he was a traitor, oppressor, rich by injustice**

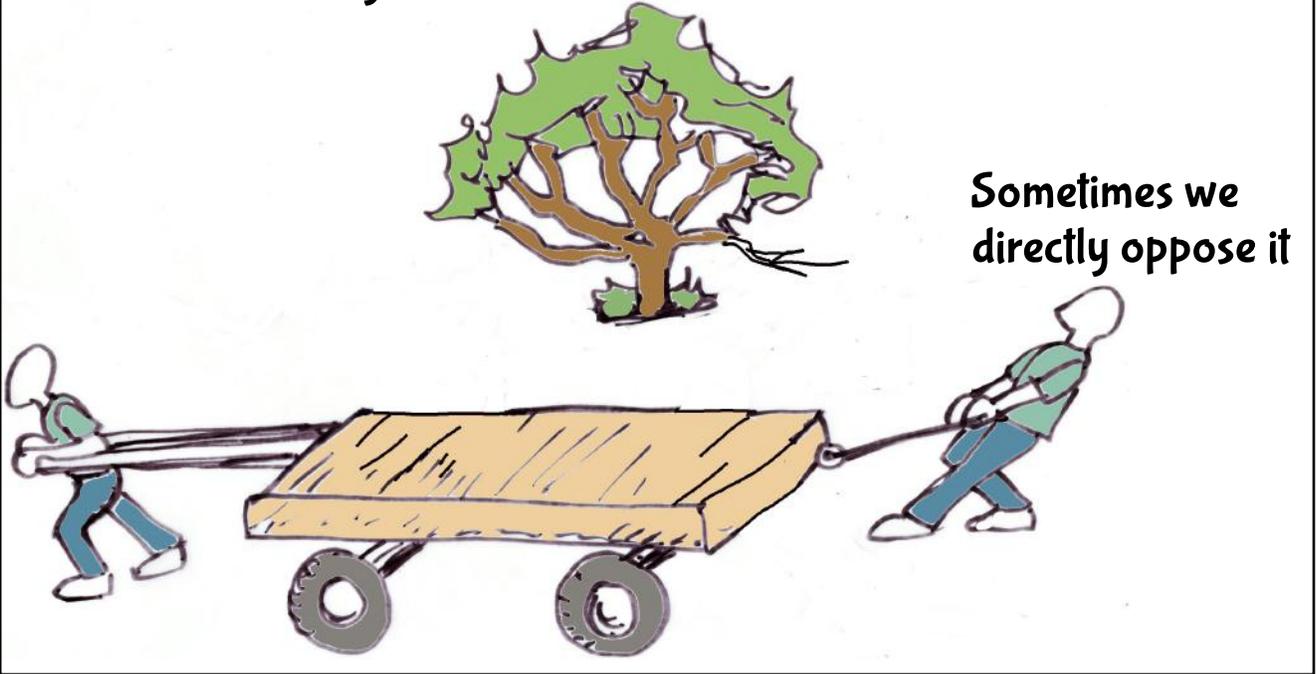
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When work is being done...



14

When work is being done...



Sometimes we directly oppose it

15

When work is being done...



Sometimes we drag our feet

16

When work is being done...

Sometimes we just ignore it



17

When work is being done...

Sometimes we are 'dead weight'



18

When Jesus is seeking to save those who need saving...
Jesus' purpose: to seek and save those needing rescue



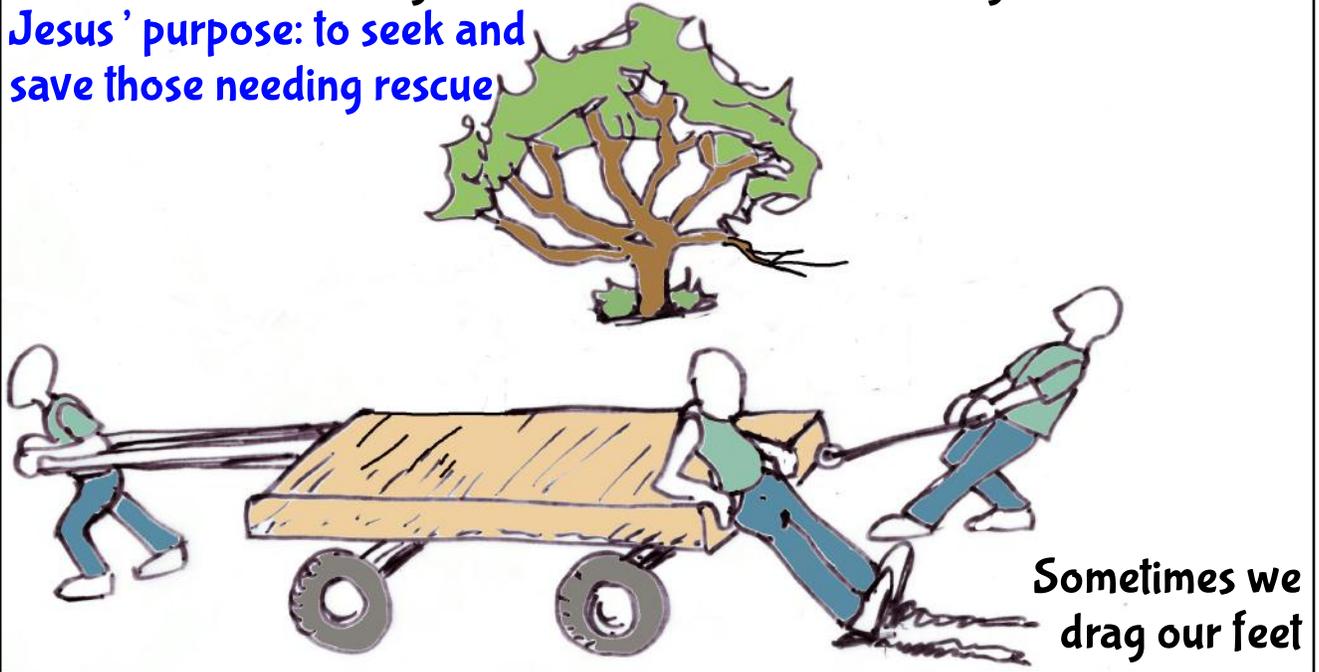
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When Jesus is seeking to save those who need saving...
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20

When Jesus is seeking to save those who need saving...
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21

When Jesus is seeking to save those who need saving...
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22

When Jesus is seeking to save those who need saving...

Jesus' purpose: to seek and save those needing rescue



23

The Big Idea

Jesus' purpose is

to seek and save all who need saving >> everyone!

Sadly, people (including Christians!)
sometimes create obstacles for others to be saved by Jesus

- Sometimes directly and intentionally
- Sometimes by dragging our feet
- Sometimes by being 'dead weight'
- Sometimes by simply ignoring it

24

Resisting Jesus' work...

- The crowd **would not make room** for a paralyzed man to get close to Jesus, yet Jesus healed him *Luke 5:17–26*
- The Pharisees and teachers of the law **complained** about Jesus accepting sinners *Luke 15:2*
- The older brother was **angry that the father forgave** the younger son and refused to go in *Luke 15:25–32*
- The disciples **tried to stop people** from bringing infants to be blessed by Jesus, yet Jesus chose to bless them *Luke 18:15*

25

The Big Idea

Jesus' purpose is

to seek and save all who need saving >> everyone!

Jesus made clear His purpose, even when people resisted

This was an important message for the early church

This is an important message for the Church today

26

Context in Luke

Question: Who can be saved?

People: Certainly the rich-and-righteous

Jesus: The rich can be the **hardest** to save!

People can't do it.

But God can save anyone!

Question: Whom do you want to be saved?

Jesus: All those who need saving (all of us)

People: Mainly people who are not-very-lost

Mainly people we like

Mainly people we think can actually be rescued

27

Application

Join Jesus' work of rescuing those needing rescue!

- **My high school "friend"**
 - **Maybe we each have people we prefer not to be rescued**
 - **Our implicit or explicit bias**
 - **Our own discomfort**
 - **Offense or injustice**
- **Our own priorities: life is filled with many things**
- **Our fears: the process / the possibility / the outcome**
- **Remember: The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost**
 - **Including you and me!**
 - **We are called to join His miraculous work > faith of blind man**

28

Application

Join Jesus' work of rescuing those needing rescue!

- Probably God has put us where we are so that we will be a means of His superabounding grace there
 - Neighborhood
 - Family and friends
 - Colleagues
- God also calls us to cross boundaries to bring the Good News
 - With great humility!
 - "Cross-Cultural Servanthood" by Duane Elmer
 - "Superiority cloaked in the desire to serve is still superiority."

29

Superabounding Grace in Christ

- **Jesus seeks those who need rescuing**
 - Even when other people prefer that they not be rescued!
 - Even when we think they can't actually be rescued

Complete obedience to Christ

- We are to join Jesus' work: **seeking those who need rescuing**
 - Admit when we prefer that they not be rescued
 - "We mistakenly assume that Jesus shares our prejudices"
 - Ask Jesus to change our hearts
 - Begin building bridges in our hearts, and then in person
- Christ's saving work includes transforming us, not just rescuing our souls

30

Application

Possible action items for joining Jesus' work of grace

- Care: longing for people to be rescued by God!
 - Saving souls: **to be without Christ is to be without real hope**
 - Transforming lives: Zacchaeus was rescued from his money!
 - Pray! **Together**
- Do what God gives us to do
 - As God has made us and as the Spirit works in us
 - Love & listen
 - Show & tell
- Together...with our diverse gifts, abilities, passions, ...
 - Invite / Go / "Alpha" on May 22 / Life Groups / ...

31

Application

Keep seeking Jesus, even if people are obstacles in your path

- An act of faith is to keep seeking
 - It is terrible when others are obstacles!
 - Yet blaming others for making it harder doesn't bring the wonderful rescuing work of Jesus in your life
- When you seek Jesus,
you will discover that He has been seeking you all along!
 - The blind man and Zacchaeus were trying to 'see' Jesus
 - Jesus was seeking them even more!
 - He called Zacchaeus by name
 - He calls you by name too

32

The Big Idea

**Jesus' purpose is
to seek and save all who need saving >> everyone!**

How are we responding to Jesus' work?

- **Opposing it is a disaster**
- **Ignoring it is such a great loss**
- **Joining His rescuing work is such great joy!**