



Leading People into a Growing Relationship with Jesus Christ!

Series: Catch and Release

Message: "Caught and Wanting Release"

Date: September 3-4, 2016

## Learn

Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, **"Would you like to get well?"** John 5:1-6 (NLT)

Pastor John's message this week encouraged each of us to be honest with what is catching us like a fish—unhealthy patterns that keep us hooked.

Do you believe the following is true?

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**Self-deception** (Pastor John called it "Hypofineiac"—"I'm just fine!")

**PLUS Self-reliance**

**EQUALS Self-destruction!**

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What is YOUR answer when Jesus looks at you and asks, **"Would you like to get well?"**

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. **Psalm 32:1-5 (NLT)**

In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. **2 Corinthians 1:9 (NLT)**

## Live

Everyone who wants to stay at the “Learn” phase can smile and nod their head, but those who want to LIVE OUT the healing Jesus brings has to take the crucial step. Pastor John stated that release comes when we confess our sin to God AND another human being.

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. **James 5:16a (NLT)**

Walls of self-isolation, self-pride, and even self-loathing come down when you tell someone else what is oppressing you. It might have been something you did, something done TO you, or something that you cannot seem to be released from. Find someone you trust, and trust them to help you lay your burden in Jesus’ hands. Remember Jesus’ words: “Would you like to get well?”

## Love

When you sense someone is struggling, do you give them enough time to talk to you? And when they share something that is really personal, do you handle it like Jesus? Loving people who need to share their burdens is not complicated. It starts by being available and listening well. Then, once you’ve patiently heard what is really being said, ask yourself, “What is Jesus hearing, and how IS he responding?” Is Jesus hurting for this person? Is Jesus responding in patience and kindness? Is Jesus offering forgiveness? Once you sense how Jesus IS responding, faithfully be the mouthpiece of Jesus and speak the truth in love!

## Lead

Would you trust a tour guide who had never actually seen the sights? Would you trust a trail guide who could offer a map but no actual life experience? Don’t expect to be used as a leader in Jesus’ family if you haven’t taken the first real step of obedience: humbly confessing your hurts, habits, and hang-ups to 1) God and 2) someone you trust. Jesus started his main sermon with “Blessed are the poor in spirit!”

## Pray!

Do you get the feeling, after this discussion, that the issues we face are not actually the real core issues at all? Underlying so many hurts, habits, and hang-ups is a fear of trusting Jesus and his plan for our life. Pray for each other to experience Jesus’ best life!

Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.” **Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)**