

What is God's heartbeat for the world?

2

Aim of study: to see God's heartbeat for lost people through the words and actions of Jesus

Launching question: Think of a time you mislaid something of great value to you. What did you do?
Ask 2 or 3 people to share.

Hand out member's notes and ask someone to read this paragraph that is in their notes.

Luke 5 begins with Jesus calling his first three disciples: Simon Peter, James, and John. He challenges these fishing partners to join him in catching men instead of fish (v 9-11). Some time passes; Jesus goes from town to town, healing the sick and attracting a large following. He restored many to physical health (v15), confronted the religious system of the day (v20,21), demonstrated God's power and filled many with a sense of awe (v26). As Jesus chooses his fourth disciple, we can begin to see what lies behind his actions.

Read Luke 5:27-32

1. How did Levi respond to Jesus' invitation?

(Levi was later called Matthew – he wrote one of the gospels.)

2. Do you think Levi had come across Jesus already? Why, or why not?

3. What was the Pharisees' complaint against Jesus and why do you think they complained?

'Pharisee' means separated one. A strict religious sect of ordinary Jews, the Pharisees stuck rigidly to the Jewish laws, often making them harder to keep. Such strict rulings led many to become so concerned for the details that they lost sight of the spirit behind them. Some Pharisees were godly men, but many tended to despise those who did not or could not keep their burdensome laws referring to them as 'sinners'. Jesus often argued with them, condemning their self-righteous legalism.

4. How did Jesus handle the problem?

5. In what way were Levi's friends *sick*?

6. In what ways might your neighbours or colleagues be *sick*?

Draw out that there are cultural differences between our neighbours and Levi's friends, but no heart difference. Ask someone to read Romans 3:9-12

7. To what extent was Jesus suggesting that the Pharisees were *healthy* or *righteous*?

Refer to Galatians 2:21

8. Why do you think Jesus went out of his way to attend a banquet for Levi's friends?

That was the only way to reach them – to go where they were. These may not have been the kind of people who would have come to the synagogue.

9. What can we learn from Jesus' attitude to Levi and friends?

See behind a person's status or position to identify his real need / expect criticism if you are actively fishing for men / go to where people like Matthew's friends are comfortable – don't expect them to take the initiative to come to an unfamiliar uncomfortable setting like a church building.

Assign the 3 short Luke passages following to three groups and Before they read the passages aloud in their small groups, ask someone to read this introductory paragraph:

Luke 15:3-7; 8-10; 11-24

Jesus is still annoying the Pharisees by welcoming and eating with sinners (15:1,2). In response, Jesus tells them three parables about a lost sheep (v3-7), a lost coin (v8-10) and a lost son (v11-24).

Ask everyone to discuss the two parts to question 1 for their particular passage. Get feedback after 5 minutes.

1. In each story, what trouble or risk did the person go through in order to get back what was lost?

- What emotions are expressed after the lost item is found?

2. Who is represented by the lost sheep, lost coin and lost son?

vs. Sinners (self-centred men and women) who want to go God's way

- Who is the seeker?

Here it means God, who takes the initiative to search out and rescue people who are estranged from him, and to offer forgiveness and life through relationship with Jesus.

3. What do these parables show us about Jesus' attitude towards the lost?

Lost people are Jesus' main focus and concern. He will go to endless time and trouble to find them - ultimately giving up his life for them.

- Why did Jesus come to earth? (see Luke 19:10)

He had a compulsion to seek and save the lost and says that is why he came.

4. What happens to *the lost*? John 3:16-20,36; Matthew 13:42; Revelation 20:10-15

Ask someone to read the passages

It isn't God who refuses people, people choose their own way instead of God's. Rejecting Jesus is a choice.

5. Why do we tend not to see those around us as truly lost for eternity?

Seem such nice people / seem to be faithfully practising their religion / it's too horrible to contemplate close relatives being separated from God / people don't seem to have a spiritual need (lostness doesn't necessarily show itself - having no hope and without God) / the concept of hell seems so remote and unreal.

6. What would help us to have Jesus' perspective?

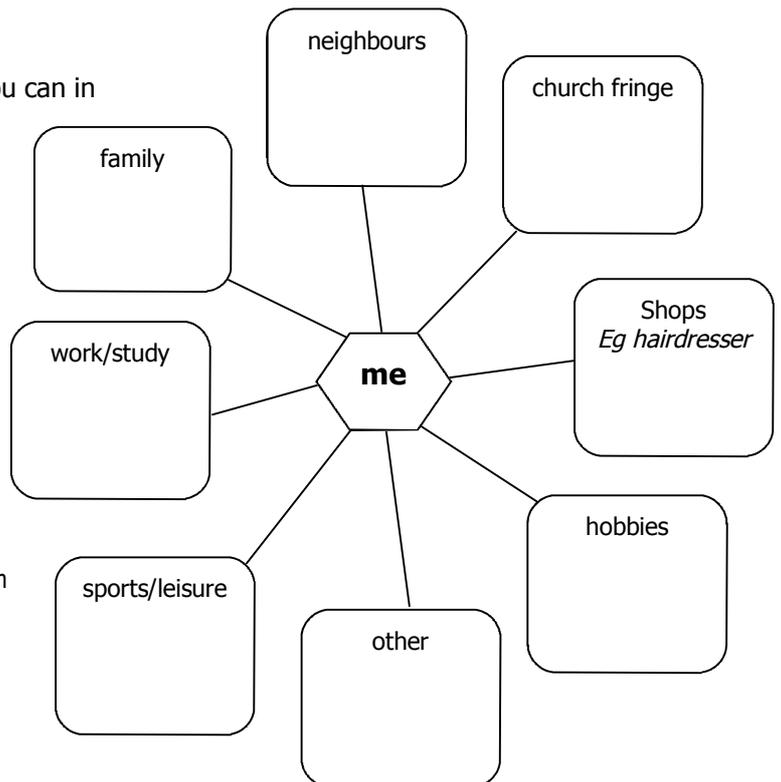
Discussing the topic openly with other Christians / praying for people we are concerned for / becoming more familiar with Jesus' heart, priority and purpose / remembering that God sees into our hearts.

Apply - Give 5mins for everyone to start filling in.

Write down as many names of acquaintances as you can in this diagram. Don't include people you know are followers of Jesus, and don't just write the names of people you know well, but anyone you come in contact.

Write the names of five people you want to pray for regularly here or on a 'Five in Focus' card

- 1 _____ 2 _____
 3 _____ 4 _____
 5 _____



Pray - that we would understand better God's heartbeat for the world, to help us view others as Jesus did, and to allow him to change us. Encourage everyone to pray for the people they have written down.

Before next time...

Read Acts chapters 1-15

What is God's heartbeat for the world?

2

Aim of study: to see God's heartbeat for lost people through the words and actions of Jesus

Luke 5 begins with Jesus calling his first three disciples: Simon Peter, James, and John. He challenges these fishing partners to join him in catching men instead of fish (v 9-11). Some time passes; Jesus goes from town to town, healing the sick and attracting a large following. He restored many to physical health (v15), confronted the religious system of the day (v20,21), demonstrated God's power and filled many with a sense of awe (v26). As Jesus chooses his fourth disciple, we can begin to see what lies behind his actions.

Read Luke 5:27-32

1. How did Levi respond to Jesus' invitation?

(Levi was later called Matthew – he wrote one of the gospels.)

2. Do you think Levi had come across Jesus already? Why, or why not?

3. What was the Pharisees' complaint against Jesus and why do you think they complained?

4. How did Jesus handle the problem?

5. In what way were Levi's friends *sick*?

6. In what ways might your neighbours or colleagues be *sick*?

7. To what extent was Jesus suggesting that the Pharisees were *healthy* or *righteous*?

8. Why do you think Jesus went out of his way to attend a banquet for Levi's friends?

9. What can we learn from Jesus' attitude to Levi and friends?

Luke 15:3-7; 8-10; 11-24

Jesus is still annoying the Pharisees by welcoming and eating with sinners (15:1,2). In response, Jesus tells them three parables about a lost sheep (v3-7), a lost coin (v8-10) and a lost son (v11-24).

1. In each story, what trouble or risk did the person go through in order to get back what was lost?
 - What emotions are expressed after the lost item is found?

2. Who is represented by the lost sheep, lost coin and lost son?
 - Who is the seeker?

3. What do these parables show us about Jesus' attitude towards the lost?
 - Why did Jesus come to earth? (see Luke 19:10)

4. What happens to *the lost*? John 3:16-20,36; Matthew 13:42; Revelation 20:10-15

5. Why do we tend not to see those around us as truly lost for eternity?

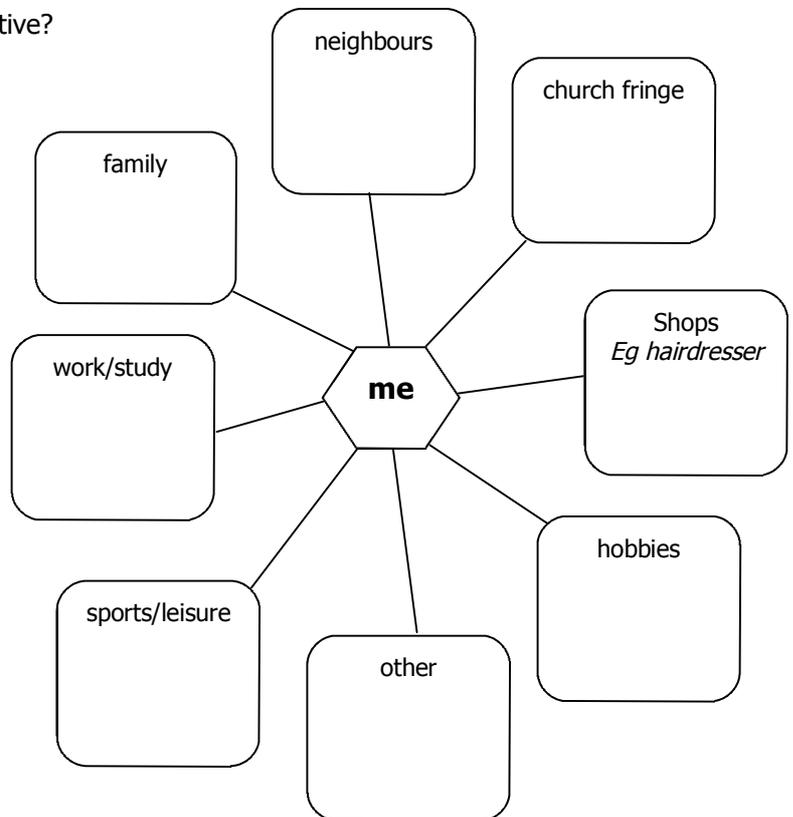
6. What would help us to have Jesus' perspective?

Apply

Fill in as many names of acquaintances as you can in this diagram. Don't include people you know are followers of Jesus, and don't just write the names of people you know well, but anyone you come in contact.

Write the names of five people you want to pray for regularly here or on a 'Five in Focus' prayer card

- 1 _____ 2 _____
 3 _____ 4 _____
 5 _____



Prayer

Before next time...
 Read Acts chapters 1-15