

Men Reaching Men

How to Handle Disappointment

Unedited Transcript

Matthew 9:35-38

David Delk

Good Morning, Men. It is so awesome to be here today. I love being with you guys. I had a chance to hear both Brett and Pat's messages. I don't know if I can quite reach the level that they were at but those were some good messages. We're excited about what God's doing and about this series on men reaching men. I want to also express my appreciation to all of you that are watching via the internet. We have guys literally all around the world that join us. We appreciate you guys taking the time and effort to be with us as well.

We are going to look at Matthew chapter nine today, Matthew chapter nine. Before we get there, I want to review a couple of things about the last two weeks. Pat talked about how a cup of coffee could change the world. His big idea for the first week was that discipleship is one man caring enough about another man to help him build a relationship with God, a world view that's biblical, and a lifestyle that's worthy of Christ. We talked about how as men the idea of just taking that initiative to connect with another guy and to find out how they're doing, ask them some questions, and just how God often uses that in men's lives to make a huge difference.

Last week Brett asked how many of you were able to do that? We had forty-two guys as of last week that were able to do that. I want to ask this week just by a show of hands, again, no pressure, lots of grace, but I want to see a show of hands. If you didn't get counted last week, we're just going to add to the forty-two. How many of you've had a chance to have a conversation, take a guy to coffee, take a guy to breakfast, maybe another guy if some of you did it last week, but raise your hands if we can add to the forty-two. Raise it high enough for me to count. Look at that one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. All right. That's fantastic. Fifty-seven we're at now let's give a hand for that. That's tremendous. All right.

Then last week Brett talked about intentional spiritual friendships and the idea that sometimes the word "discipleship" can get a little convoluted as to what it means. Maybe another way of talking about it is just to be intentional in having a spiritual oriented friendship because that's what we're taking about. We're talking about being a real friend that really cares about a guy and wants to see him grow in his relationship with God. Brett talked about a triple threat, a triple option that we have to pray, to serve, and to give and so his big idea: be a friend, pray, serve, and give.

He talked about praying for a man. He talked about serving a man with something that they needed to have done. Then we gave you a very practical step which was to give away a book. Everybody who was here last week was able to take a book with them that they could give away to another man. I'm going to do the same thing, again, lots of grace but just to see what is happening here. It's nice to know what

God's doing. How many of you were able to pray for or with another man, were able to serve another man, or were able to give another man a book in the last week? Raise your hands high and let me count those if I can, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five. Wow, twenty-six that is awesome. Let's give a hand there.

We asked you to share your stories as God works in men's lives and to be an encouragement to others. We have a brief video here that John Anderson was gracious enough to share with us about his experience in giving away a book so let's here from John.

[Begin Video]

Hey, good morning, Brett. I wanted to share with you. Yesterday I happened to be at Best Buy, and we were talking this morning about what I call being purposeful about when you meet guys sharing Christ with them. I was looking for a gas range yesterday at Best Buy, and I spent about forty-five minutes with the appliance salesman and engaged him in conversation about appliances and learning about him. I happened to have a copy of How God Makes Men with me that I was planning to give to the general manager.

When I got done looking for appliances, I asked this gentleman, as I always do with men, "Tell me a little bit about your spiritual life." Well, he said, "Well, my wife's Catholic. I don't participate in it. It's a pain for me." I knew where he was way down on what we call the Engel Scale. I said, "Well, did you read?" He said, "Well, yes, I'll read." I said, "Well, I'll tell you what I'd like to give you a book, and if you'll commit to me that you'll at least read the first chapter, and then I'll get back with you in a few weeks when we're looking for ranges and see how you do." I gave him a copy of How God Makes Men. He was genuinely happy that someone cared enough about him to think that maybe he was worthy of giving a gift.

[End Video]

That's awesome. Thank you, John. It's not that hard. It's not that hard to plant a seed. It's amazing working at Man In The Mirror how we hear about years later how God brings these things to fruition. I cannot tell you the number of times, literally probably more than fifty times, I've heard a guy tell the story about somebody giving him a book, him throwing it on the ground or in the corner or on a bookshelf or whatever, and then one day it's just somehow was on top of the stack when he's going through some crisis and something's going on in his life. He picks that book up, and God uses it to transform his heart and so just planting those seeds by praying for men, serving men, giving men something practical like a resource such as a book.

Today we're going to talk about what we felt like was a logical next step when you start trying to be proactive in having spiritually intentional friendships and that is how to handle discouragement. Because, guess what, when you start trying to give yourself away to other guys, you're going to get discouraged. It's going to happen. The reality is that often we want men to grow more than they want to grow. We want to help them get better. We see what's coming don't the road, right? You've been with a man, maybe it's somebody in your family, could be a sibling, it could be a child, could be a neighbor, a coworker, and you've seen the behaviors that they're starting to get involved in, you've seen the choices

that they're making, and you know what's coming six months down the line. You know what's coming five years down the line. You can see it so clearly. They are completely blind to it, right?

It can be so discouraging to continually try to reach out to somebody, to continually try to invest in somebody, and feel like that there's not really any change. Let's look together at Matthew chapter nine verses thirty-five through thirty-eight, Matthew chapter nine verse thirty-five through thirty-eight, "Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'" May God add understanding to the reading of his holy word.

I think it was the first retreat I ever did when I started working at Man In The Mirror, it was one of the first three or four, I went to Alabama. I went to this conference center. The gentleman introduced me for my first message that I was going to be delivering and then he said, "But before David speaks, Tom wants to tell us a little bit more about the mission trip." This gentleman comes up to the front. He says, "Guys, you know the mission trip is coming up, six weeks. We're going out to Appalachia. We're going to be investing in this community. We're going to be helping these people rebuild houses, rebuild this church. We get three guys signed up. We need fifteen men.

At a church our size there ought to be fifteen men who love Jesus enough to go and serve these people. You have vacations. You've got time you can take off. What is the problem? Why do we only have three men signed up for this event, for this mission trip. I need you guys. If you take Jesus seriously, you need to sign up for this. Basically, I am very concerned about the state of our church when I see men as apathetic as all you guys are", and then he basically finished out and sat down.

I had to come up and give my first message. What I wanted to say was, "Look, if you stay home, I'll go on the mission trip, okay." Because I don't care if it was a cruise to Hawaii for a week, I'm not going anywhere with you because you're angry, you're bitter, you're frustrated, and nobody wants to be around a guy like that, right? What was going on in that man's heart? Well, what was going on in his heart was that guys were not living up to what he thought they should be doing. He allowed that to create discouragement in him.

Where does discouragement come from? Well, discouragement is often, almost always, a result of unmet expectations. Think about it: Discouragement is almost always a result of unmet expectations. I was talking to somebody about going out to dinner. This happens to me all the time. You think I'd learn my lesson. They went to this restaurant. They had this meal and it was unbelievable. It was one of the best things they had ever had. They talked somebody into going back with them and they were going to have this. They took their wife, their family, whatever, they ordered the same meal. They had it and put in their mouth, "What is this? This is not the same thing I had the last time I was here." It just didn't live up to those expectations, right?

You want to go see a movie or something, somebody tells you about reading a book, whatever it is and you invest this time and energy in it and at the end of it you're just like, "I don't know. I mean it was okay, but it wasn't what I thought it was going to be." Think about football, right, when you get all excited about your team from the season and you think things are going to go really well and then you lose those first couple games. You lose a couple more games you're like, "What in the world is going on",

right, because we're not living up to expectations. How does this come into play in friendships? How does this come into place in discipleship?

Well, our expectations often with men is that they will want to get better, that they will want to get better, right? I mean when you interact with a guy, you're giving your time and your effort. This is costing you something. You want that guy to appreciate it. You want that guy to respond to it. You want that guy to consider making some different choices in their life. If you don't see that, it's easy for us, because those are our expectations, it's easy for us to end up in discouragement. The problem is that we can either end up in discouragement or apathy either one of which is a bad place to be.

We're discouraged if we still care. If you get beat up enough, eventually you don't care that much anymore and you just end up in apathy. Frankly, that's where I find myself sometimes with some of the people in my life. It's like, "Well, if that's what they want to do that's what they want to do." We get to that point of apathy. The reality is it demonstrates that our expectations are based on something that we hope is going to happen in that guy's life. There's a subtle requirement that we're placing on them that you have to do something to be worth my time on energy, right? You have to respond to me in a certain way for it to be worth me doing these things with you or for you.

There's this idea that we're right, they're wrong, and we're going to fix them. That's how I feel a lot of the time, "I'm right, you're wrong, and if you just listen to me, everything would be better." Well, nobody wants to be a project. Nobody wants to feel like you're looking down on them, right? That's certainly not what we see in the scriptures with Jesus. Of course, we believe there's right and wrong. Of course, we believe that matters. The most important thing, as Brett talked about last week, is to love this person, to love this person for who they are. That's what God calls us to. He does not call us to change them. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. When we start expecting our efforts to result in what only God can do, then we're going to end up in discouragement. If we realize that what we're supposed to do is we're supposed to just love them ...

What we need to do is we need to really flip the story. We need to flip the story. A lot of times the way I approach guys is I approach them on the basis that if you're willing to respond a certain way, then I will invest my time and energy in you, okay. Imagine what that would look like in some other situations. Do we have firemen in the room? Anybody a fireman? Okay, we do. Great. Awesome. Thank you. We're all firemen up here, but we're a different kind of firemen. When we get the alarm, what we do is we get in our truck. We zoom over to the building, right? We see the building on fire. We see the flames coming out of the windows.

What we do is we just stand at the bottom and we wait. People are like, "Aren't you going inside?" "No, no, no we just wait for them down here. If they want to get out, they'll get out." "No, no, you're supposed to go in and get them." "It's smokey in there. I mean we could get to a place where it's completely on fire and we can't even get through. They might be trapped. I mean that's stupid why would you do that? If they come out, we'll take care of them. We got oxygen to clear their lungs. We can do all kinds of tests. We can get them in the ambulance. Yes, we're ready. As soon as they come out, we're going to take care of them. We're dedicated, okay."

Now, what would you think about firemen like that; be pretty ridiculous, right? It'd be pretty ridiculous to think of firemen like that. Let me ask you does that not represent sometimes the way that we treat other men? It's like I'm here for you if you want to come to a bible study with me. I'm here for you if you want to really have a deep conversation about your marriage. I'm here for you if you really want to

finally stop drinking so much, right? As soon as you come down out of the burning building, man, I'm here. I'll help you out.

In terms of going into the burning building with them, I'm not so willing to do that especially when it feels like sometimes we have to do it over and over and over and over again. Instead of looking for men to come to towards us, Jesus says that we need to be willing to go towards them. Think about what Jesus said about his mission he said, "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." We need to be willing to, just very practically, we got to be will to do something that they like even if it's not our favorite thing. Go watch the game with your brother-in-law even though it's not your favorite team and even though you know after the fifth beer he's going to be completely obnoxious. You're like the whole second half is miserable because the guy's slurring and screaming and yelling at the refs and all this; just go, just go.

A guy wants to go hunting, go hunting with him. A guy wants to go fishing, go fishing with him. Spend time on their turf don't always expect that they have to come to your turf. As Brett said last week, find a way to serve them and do something that they need to do, that they want to do. Think about Jesus calling the disciples at the beginning of the gospels when he found them fishing. What did he say to them? He said three words to them. He said, "Come follow me", come follow me. He knew something about them. Of course, they had already been talking with him it looks like from the Gospel of John. It wasn't like he just walked up and saw these strangers. He knew something about them. There was some relationship there. He said, "Come follow me."

Now look at the story of Zacchaeus, we actually won't turn there, but consider the story of Zacchaeus in Luke nineteen. You remember the story about the little man that was up the tree? Think about as Jesus walked by, he looked at Zacchaeus. Does anybody remember what he said to Zacchaeus ... Yes, why? Did he saw come follow me? He said I'm going to your house today. I'm going to your house today. You see, Zacchaeus was in a different place than Peter, James, and John. Jesus had built a relationship with Peter, James, and John. He knew they were ready to come follow him, but Zacchaeus he had just met and so he knew that the first step for Zacchaeus is I'm going to your house today. I'm going to meet you on your turf because I love you enough and I want you to know the truth about who I am.

That attitude of Christ is what we need to have. We need to be willing to say, "I'm coming to your house today." We need to be willing to get on that guy's turf even if it's inconvenient and part of that happens when we begin to see them for who they are, see them for who they are. Look at this passage here in verse thirty-six, "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd." In America, we emphasize personal responsibility especially with men, right? I mean some of us think maybe we don't emphasize it enough anymore and that's a debate, but certainly it's been a value of our culture. You got to pull yourself up by your bootstraps. You got to take care of your own stuff.

The reality is countries don't work very well if a whole bunch of people aren't willing to take care of their own stuff, right, and everybody else has to clean it up. That's a hard way to have a country. The country, economically, socially, governmentally, legally, works better if everybody stops at stop signs, if everybody pays their bills everything just works better, right? The problem is if we take that idea of personal responsibility into the spiritual world, it's a disaster. It's a disaster because that's not the gospel.

When we look at people and we think about them, we need to see them the way Jesus does. He says they are harassed and helpless, harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. He had compassion on them. That compassion that he had for them drove him to do what he did which was to seek and save the lost. He gave us some parables about that, right? He told us what happens with a lost sheep? Does the shepherd just stay with the ninety-nine and, "Here sheepy, sheepy sheep. Here sheepy, sheepy sheep. Come back," is that what Jesus says he does; no. What does he do? He goes out and searches for that sheep. When he finds him he throws him on his back and he carries him back to the flock.

He gives us a parable of the lost coin about the woman that searches for that coin no matter where it is. She's looking high and low for it because she's got to find that one lost coin. That needs to be the perspective that we take not that we're expecting guys to come and react a certain way, not that we're expecting guys to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and somehow fix their lives to a certain degree and then we can share Jesus with them and then we can have a friendship with them, but no that we would go and enter into their life just like it is now and that we would have the attitude and the heart of Jesus to have compassion for these men long term, low pressure.

Last night as I was preparing for this message I was thinking about a young gentleman that Ruthie and I have been investing in for probably fourteen years. He's now twenty-seven, twenty-eight years old. I hadn't seen him for a few weeks. I texted him. I wanted to find out how he was doing. He called literally in about a minute and a half. He was so excited to share with Ruthie and I about how his work is going and how he's getting a new job, it's going to be a better job, and all these different things.

The interesting thing about that is that this young man has heard me tell him about Jesus probably fifty times and so far has not responded, long term, low pressure. Pray for him, by the way. We'll call him Derek. I would appreciate you praying for him because he said he's coming over. Maybe we'll have another chance to love him and help him see that there's more than what he has right now in his life. We just need to be involved with people in a way that allows us to have that voice for them, to be able to point them in the right direction, to be there when they're ready to hear what God has to say so them.

Now, notice this passage here in verse thirty-seven and thirty-eight, "The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." How do people become laborers? How are you going to become a laborer if it's going to happen? What does it say here? Who sends them out? Who sends the laborers out? Is it willpower? It is me convincing you today that you need to do more than you're doing now or that you need to love men more? It says the Lord, "Pray that the Lord would send workers out."

You see, this has got to be a heart change in us. No amount of me trying to convince you of this is going to make any difference. When I don't care about men, when I'm apathetic towards my neighbors, that's a heart issue. That's something in my own heart where I have become hardened, and I'm not seeing them the way Jesus sees them. I'm not remembering the way that Jesus rescued me. I'm not excited about that and wanting to see that in somebody else's life. It's become old and stale and normal, right? How does that change? That changes because Jesus transforms my heart and the Holy Spirit works in my life. The Lord sends out the workers into his harvest field.

The **Big Idea** for today is **Jesus called us to go. Not to wait around and see if they come to us.** Jesus said, "Go and make disciples." The Lord sends out workers into his harvest field not to wait around to

see if they come to us. A lot of times the way that we interact with guys is just like this fireman that I described. We invite them to something and we say, "Hey, we have this thing going on at our church", or, "Hey, we have this thing on Friday morning", or whatever it is, and if they come and if they don't, oh well. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples." He said, "They're like sheep without a shepherd."

What do we expect them to do? This is something that has really transformed my whole world view in the last ten or fifteen years. When I see business guys that blow up because their ethics are messed up or somebody had an affair with somebody's wife or politicians that go off the rails or whatever, what do we expect them to do? We ought to be more surprised when they are honest and when they are people of integrity, right, because they're like sheep without a shepherd. They're harassed. They're helpless. This is what sheep without shepherds do they just scatter all over the place. They do whatever they want. We need to see them as people who are desperate for someone to come, someone to love them, someone to point them in the right direction. God can change our hearts, and he can help us to see these men with new eyes. He can help us be fireman who don't just stop at the edge of the building but are willing to go inside to find those people that are perishing and to bring them to safety.

I've got two follow up steps for you today. We're trying to be very concrete on the follow up steps for this series. Basically this depends on where you are in your interactions with another man. If they are like Zacchaeus, okay, then our action step is do something with another man that he wants or needs to do. Do something with another man that he wants or needs to do. It might be helping your neighbor build a fence. It might be watching the game with your brother-in-law. Find something that ... Maybe it's not your favorite thing, right? You're going to do it because you want to be engaged in this person's life and demonstrate practical love for that person. If you've got a Zacchaeus in your life, do something that he wants or needs to do.

Then if you've got a Peter, James, or John you've got somebody that you have that relationship that has started with them, then invite that man to take a next step with you. Invite a man to take a next step with you. It could be to come to this bible study on Friday morning. We have those little cards that Jim mentioned. They're on your tables. Take a card or couple cards with you and be ready to invite a guy to do that. It could be the Thanksgiving Leadership Prayer Breakfast coming up here in Orlando. We have flyers for that. Some of you guys need to buy tables. You need to buy a couple of seats.

Wayne Huizenga Jr. is going to be speaking. His testimony is very powerful and very clear about the way that God rescued him from really a pretty dramatic life situation. I think it'll be an encouragement to you and encouragement to anybody else that hears it. Maybe you want to go to one of the lunches downtown. You work downtown. The Gathering has a lunch series that they do. Maybe it's something at your church. Lots of different opportunities all across Orlando, all across the cities where you are, that you could invite guys to take a next step, a practical next step, with you that would result in them hopefully drawing closer in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

You see, the gospel says that these men who are harassed and helpless, who are like sheep without a shepherd, that Jesus is the good shepherd. They don't need us to save them, right? They don't need us to fix them. They need Jesus. All of us need Jesus. I need Jesus. Jesus is the only one who saves me. Jesus is the only one who saves you. Jesus is the only one that can save these men. When he died on the cross, he paid the penalty for our sin. When he rose from the dead, he demonstrated that he had the power to overcome all sin and all of the curse from the fall. Everything that we have done wrong has been triumphed over in the cross, in the resurrection. Paul says that same power is available to us who

believe. That same resurrection power transforms our heart so that we can be the men that we want to be and so that we can see men the way Jesus sees them and that we can go and make disciples for glory.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for your word today. I confess that often I don't see men the way that you see them. I would say most of the time I'm like that fireman that stops at the edge of the building and waits for people to come out so he can help. Lord, I love my own agenda. I love my own comfort. I love my own convenience. I don't want to step out of my comfort zone and do something that might get messy or might take a lot of time or where I have to be involved with things that I don't enjoy or people who's attitudes and perspectives are so different from mine.

Lord, I pray that you would change my heart. Lord, I want to see men the way that you see them. I want to have your eyes. Lord, I don't just want to wait around and see if men come to me, I want to go to them. Lord, I pray that you would, first of all, overwhelm me with the love that you have for me. Lord, that you are my only hope, that in and of myself I'm going to try to fix everything. I'm going to try to do it on my own. I'm going to try to make myself right and none of it's going to work.

Lord, when I abandon myself to you, you can do in me what I could never do for myself and that's the promise and the hope of the gospel. That's the promise and the hope of the work that you did on our behalf. Lord, I pray that you would do that in my heart that you'd convince me and show me how much you love me and how much you have done for me and how your power changes me from the inside out and then that would inspire me to overcome discouragement, Lord, that I would not be looking at the results of what I do with other men, but that I would be asking the question, "Am I loving men the way that Jesus loves them?" Lord, I pray that more and more you would make the answer to that be yes. For your glory we pray in Jesus name, amen.