

What is the Attraction?

Mark 5:21-34

O.K., here's the deal. This evening you're driving home after the Super Bowl party. It's started to snow. . . mixed with sleet. You approach the stoplight, apply the brakes, and you feel like you're accelerating as you realize you're on black ice. You slide totally out of control into a sign that says "Warning—Black Ice," and then you careen into a concrete barrier totaling your car.

Immediately you think about the purchase of a new car. Your choice is between a Ford and a Toyota. Which will it be—given the recent worldwide recall of Toyotas due to faulty brakes and throttles that stick. Right now, which would you be attracted to?

O.K., let's say you're a high school senior being recruited by two different collegiate track or football coaches. One is known for developing his players and winning championships gaining the attraction of the pros. The other coach is known for his casual, lackluster program with few wins. Both offer scholarships. Which will you choose? Which program and coach sounds most attractive to invest in for the next four years of your life? In whom would you have the greatest trust and confidence?

Suppose, God forbid, you discover you have a critical, life-threatening illness. Let's say it's a heart condition. Your two choices are Dr. Kavorkian or one of the world's leading heart surgeons, Dr. Denton Cooley? As you lie on the gurney and the anesthesiologist tells you to start counting backwards from ten, whose face do you want to see looking down at you with that certain smile that uniquely reflects the personality of one or the other? Which would you reach out to? Which are you going to put your trust in for the procedure?

When you think about these and a jillion other examples, it seems obvious that we each make life decisions based upon who or what we trust or have confidence in. I suppose we would all have to say we live by faith in someone or something.

The question then is not an issue of faith . . . how much or how little, but rather what or WHO *is the object of our faith?* Who are you willing to trust with your next life decision, great or small? What is the magnetism of that person that would give you such confidence? What is it about him or her that would deserve such faith and trust? Do they have the capacity to fail you?

On an even more personal note, what is it about you that would invite another's trust and confidence? What is the attraction that would draw them to you at a time of need?

There is One and only One of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke and in whom we can have total confidence and trust. He wrote "*and he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.*" Today we will discover two examples of people who were certainly not disappointed, examples which should serve us well.

Life Response

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on 2 Timothy 1:7,12, “*For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.*”
 - a. Take the time to write this passage out on a 3x5 card. Keep it before you as you memorize and focus on its relevance in your life.
 - b. On the back side of the card identify the challenges (great or small) you presently face to which this passage applies.
2. Think about those things, people or personal abilities you trust or rely upon as a point of confidence and sense of well being. What happens when they fail you? What happens when your own abilities, wisdom or skills fail or are inadequate to meet your needs or expectations? In what way(s) do these *things* or *people* become barriers between you and One who will not disappoint?
3. When you think about being God’s child; indwelt by His Spirit;. . . “Christ in you the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27); one who is to be an “. . . Imitator of God” (Eph. 5:1); etc., what impression does it give you as to your relationship to one in need, . . . looking for hope? Why would one be attracted to you as they were to Jesus?
4. What is it about our church, “The body of Christ,” that deserves confidence and trust and makes us a safe place of hope for those within our church and our community? Are we “touchable” and if so, what is our response?
5. Is your Mini Church, Care Group or cell a place of hope and confidence? How sensitive is your small group to the “touch” of each one and their need?

*An undivided heart, which worships God alone, and trusts Him as it should,
is raised above all anxiety for earthly wants.*

- John Cunningham Geikie

THE OBJECT OF ATTRACTION:

Who Was the Attraction?

“*Who touched Me?*”

Rapidly moved from WHAT He could do for me to
WHO He would become to me.

Who Were the Attracted?

“A great multitude was following Him”

Total cross-section of society

- ...the curious masses
- ...the disciples
- ...two key figures

Who were the Attracted? Two Key Figures

- Total Contrast -

<u>Jairus</u>	<u>The Woman</u>
Religious leader	A Nobody
Respected	Rejected
Family	Alone
Admired	Despised
Of Means	Bankrupt
High Social Standing	Social Outcast

- Common Need -

Both found themselves at the feet of Jesus.
A matter of Life or Death

Point of Personal Encouragement

It's not an issue of how much or how little faith one has,
but rather the object of my faith – Jesus Christ.

*“Faith, confident trust, derives its value not from the one who expresses it,
but from the object in which it rests.” Dr. John Grassmick*

THE CHARACTER FOR ATTRACTION:

- √ A Person of Authenticity Mark 5:7
- √ A Person of Hope Mark 5:21,24,27,31
- √ A Person of Compassion Mark 5:32,43
- √ A Person of Purpose Mark 5:34

4 things happen

- (32) Personal Friendship
- (33) Glorified God
- (34) Salvation
- (36) Encouragement

THE PERSONALIZATION OF ATTRACTION:

The Point of Personal Encouragement

If in fact we are The Church...The Body of Christ...
should we not – have the Attraction of Christ
should we not – have His Character for Attraction?

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| ✓ A Person of Authenticity | John 1:12 |
| ✓ A Person of Hope | Colossians 1:27 |
| ✓ A Person of Compassion | Matthew 9:35-38 |
| ✓ A Person of Purpose | Acts 1:8 |

As a Church:

- What is the attraction toward us?
- Are we touchable?
... Are we responsive to the touch?
- How is the attraction of Christ—His Character—revealed in my Mini Church
...My Care Group?

As an Individual

- What do others see in my life that would give them hope?
- Would others see me as authentic—the real deal—as a child of God?
- How sensitive am I to the needs of my mate?
...my children?
...those with whom I work?
...the letter carrier?
...those with “no names”?

PRAYER:

Father, I thank You for how You have chosen to reveal Yourself in and through Your Son, Jesus.

Thank You for the magnetism of His character and care for us as He responds to my needs, even when I fail to recognize them.

Thank You that through the power of Your Holy Spirit I can not only become Your child, but by Your power I can reflect the same character and attractiveness as Jesus.

I pray that You make our church touchable, that we might be responsive to those who touch us, and that we would be a source of healing to those in need.

I pray You take my life and mold it into all You desire as I seek to ask...*Who touched me?*...for Your glory and honor.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.