

Like we talked about last time, you don't always know what people need. Sometimes you have to ask.

Sometimes, though, it's more obvious. Sometimes there are opportunities right in front of you where you can cooperate and lend a hand.

Think about a mission trip. When you decide to go and serve with a team, you're choosing to help people with what they *need*—whether it's a safe place to live, medicine so they can stay healthy, or an awesome camp that you help put on for their kids.

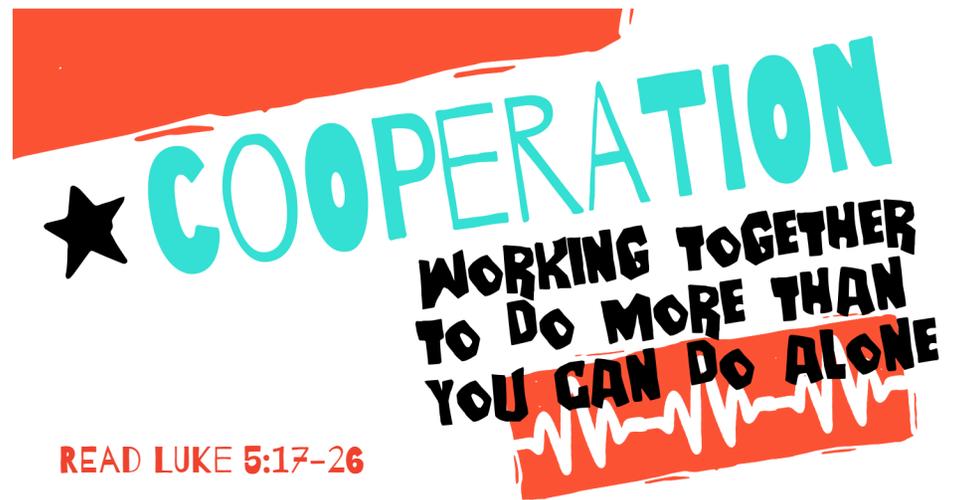
It doesn't have to be a trip you take, either. You can help people right in your own community. If you've ever done something like that, make a few notes here.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER MOST ABOUT IT?

HOW DID IT MAKE YOU FEEL?

WHAT SURPRISED YOU?

It feels so good to make a difference for others. And you know what? That's how it was meant to be. When we team up to help people, we can be a light shining God's love for everyone to see.



READ LUKE 5:17-26

Have you ever been riding in the car with your family, trying to get somewhere, and there was absolutely nowhere to park? At a certain point, you just feel like giving up! It must have been a little bit like that for the men who brought their friend to Jesus. They had carried him all the way to the house where they knew Jesus was teaching. Why? Look at the last part of verse 17.

They heard that the Lord had given Jesus the power to heal the sick. (Luke 5:17, NIV)

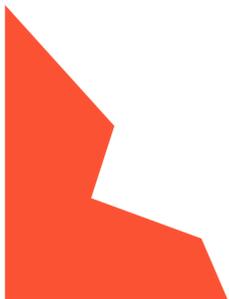
Unfortunately, there were way too many people crowded around for them to get their friend inside. Everyone wanted to see Jesus!

That didn't stop them, though. They didn't give up.

They went up on the roof. Then they lowered the man on his mat through the opening in the roof tiles. They lowered him into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. (Luke 5:19, NIV)

Have you ever tried to pick someone up like that? It's extremely heavy and extremely awkward. The fact is, you can do almost anything when you really care especially when you join forces with *other* people who care, too. If the four men didn't care that much about getting their friend to Jesus—if they weren't totally convinced Jesus could do something to help him—they probably would have given up as soon as they saw the crowds around the house.

But they *did* care. They *had* to do something for their friend in need. So they worked together, they persevered, and they found a way to help him!



It can be tough to step outside of your everyday world and think about what other people need. If we're honest, we spend a lot of time thinking about the things we need. (Or the things we *want*.)

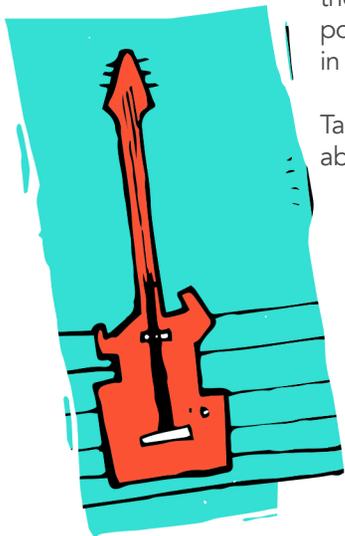
MAYBE THE BEST WAY TO GET IN THE RIGHT MINDSET IS TO THINK ABOUT WHAT GOD DID FOR OUR BIGGEST NEED.

We need to be rescued from our sin problem. We sin—we do things that we know are wrong. Every single person has sinned. Since God is perfect and we're not, our sin separates us from Him. That's why He sent Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment for our sins so we could have a relationship with our perfect Heavenly Father—*without* sin being in the way. All we have to do is believe, and trust that Jesus died for us.

If you believe in Jesus, then that should be a great reminder. It should change the way you act and treat people, too. It should even change the way you *think*—to make you more aware of what other people need. It should make you want to do something to help!

That's what the church can do, together. It's made up of lots of not-perfect people who have experienced the very best thing anyone could experience—the love and forgiveness of Jesus. His love is so powerful that it makes us want to make a difference in the lives of others, too.

Take some time to thank God for doing something about your greatest need.



PRAY
TO GOD

Today, we've got a different kind of challenge for you. It has to do with your brother or sister. If you've got more than one sibling, you can do this same thing with each of them. If you're an only child, don't worry. You can do this with a best friend, a parent, or a cousin.

So what's the challenge? Find out what they need.

Tell them you're serious—you really want to know.

IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH RIGHT NOW?

You have no idea how they'll react, of course. They might look at you funny and say "no." That's okay. No problem. But what if they say "yes?" What if there's something that's bothering them that you didn't even know about?

It could be something you can do for them yourself . . . or maybe you could even think of a way to cooperate with others to help them.

This might seem weird at first, but think of it this way. Wouldn't you want someone to ask you?



TALK
ABOUT GOD