



# "Out of the Pews"

## A Discussion Guide for

### "A Call to Arms! Out of the Pews and Into the Streets"

**By David May**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The book can be purchased from Amazon.com. Just enter a search on the Amazon website for "Out of the Pews." If you buy \$25 worth, you will get free shipping.

This guide is formatted as discussion questions. Hopefully they will help an individual or small group to come to a fuller understanding of the principles discussed in the book. I have divided the book into thirteen lessons in an attempt to make it friendly for use as a weekly study for one quarter, but feel free to use this guide however you choose.

#### **Lesson 1**

Chapters 1-4, Pages 1- 17

Does the parable accurately represent the churches you know? In what ways are the churches in your life like the ones in the parable? How are they different?

1. Is Satan winning the war in the streets, outside the churches?
2. What is the primary focus of the church where you worship?
3. My friend Roberta has had a tough time since the earthquake, but she is hanging in there. Like many of God's faithful she has been attacked from unexpected places. Do you know anyone like her? How can you help him or her?
4. What does it mean that we are God's only representatives here? What should a representative of God be doing with his or her life?
5. Have you ever been part of a physical rescue or watched one up close? What was that like?

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6. If no one has ever asked you for the reason for your hope, is that because you are not living in such a way as to let people know how hopeful you are, or do people just not ask that kind of question today – even of good friends?
7. If someone does ask you for the reason for your hope, what will you say?

### Lesson 2

Chapters 5-7; Pages 19-40.

1. Have you studied the Bible by looking at themes before? What themes did you examine? What did you learn?
2. Have you thought about the rescue theme before? Is it fair to say that God truly is a God of rescue? What does that mean for us if we are to be his representatives here?
3. Did the trumpet story add to what the book is trying to accomplish? When I get a chance to sign one of the books for someone I write “Listen for the trumpet.” What does that mean to you?
4. Do you think the last trumpet will play a tune, or be a blast? What tune would you recommend to God?
5. What do people today need to be rescued from?
6. What can you do about it?

### Lesson 3

Chapters 8-10; Pages 41-58

1. How much does the church where you worship spend monthly on the building and on people to take care of Christians? What percent is that of the total budget?
2. What are the evidences that Satan is winning the war where you live?
3. When Jesus announced His mission here on earth, he spoke of helping people who need help. When John sent to ask whether Jesus was truly the messiah, Jesus answered in the same way. When He described the final judgment, Jesus painted the same picture. How could so many churches have missed the point for so long? How can we get the word out?
4. Things that were too foul to be around the people of Jesus’ day and earlier were designated to be dealt with “outside the gates.” Yet Jesus suffered “outside the gate” (Hebrews 13:12-14), and we are encouraged to join with Him there. We are told that being “In the city” is not important because we are looking for the city that is to come. What is the importance of this imagery to the premises of this book?

5. What is in the headlines where you live? How can we hold up a light in the darkness around us?

#### **Lesson 4**

Chapter 11; Pages 59-74

1. What are the reasons for poverty? Is the American dream true; can anyone become anything they choose?
2. Do you believe that racism works to keep minorities from moving out of poverty? Why or why not? In what subtle ways might racism keep people from moving up economically?
3. How does social class define many of our churches? Why is it so hard to associate with someone from a different social level, regardless of their race?
4. How does the church where you are reach out to single mothers and their children? Could we do a better job of making them feel truly welcome, even if they cannot afford for themselves or for their children the kind of clothes we wear?
5. What has been the effect of the place and timing of our birth? Imagine having been born in a third world country without enough to eat and no medical care. Would that have changed our attitudes? Our faith?
6. What is the number one tool in our tool box to help us cross the divide between us and those who are different from us? (Hint: see John 13:35).
7. If injustice includes failing to correct the circumstances that brought the poor to poverty, and God is a god of justice, what are the implications for us as individuals and for our churches?

#### **Lesson 5**

Chapter 12; Pages 75-91

1. Imagine that you are Satan and you want to keep the church out of your business. What tools would you use?
2. Which of these ten tools do you think is most important in Satan's work? Why?
3. Are there some tools listed here that you think do not belong in this list? Why not?
4. Do you agree that Satan uses these tools only with our consent? What would happen if we said "No!"?
5. David's top three tools of Satan are Fear, Pride and Stuff. What about Greed for Power and Control? Should it be higher on the list? Why or why not?

## Lesson 6

Chapter 13; Pages 93-110

1. Is it true that the church has more going for it today than it has had at any time in its history? If so, what does that do to our responsibility?
2. Does the church also face greater opposition than in the past? Why do you think it does or doesn't?
3. What strengths do you see in the church today that are not listed in the book?
4. Does the church where you worship consciously draw on these strengths, or is it just drifting along, running in circles like the rabbit, doing what it has always done?
5. When Moses was arguing with God about going to Egypt, God asked him about the staff in his hand. When he put his little family on a donkey to go do what God wanted, scripture calls it the "staff of God." God will do the same with the strengths He has put in our hands. What can you do to help the church see God's tools as such and put them to work?

## Lesson 7

Chapters 14-16; Pages 111-136

1. Do you agree that to get the church into motion, you have to be moving yourself? If you were going to pick a priority and start to work on it, what would it be?
2. Would it be okay if several members of your group wanted to do different things? Might the church be frightened if too many initiatives were started at once? What would you do about that?
3. Is it fair to blame the problems of the church on its leaders? Why or why not?
4. Where is the war with Satan being fought?
5. What does "rescue" mean in practical terms where you live? Who needs rescuing? From what? How would you go about it? How would you start?
6. What should we be rescuing people to?

## Lesson 8

Chapter 17, Pages 137-149

1. What does the story of Horton have to do with the church?
2. Would it have been appropriate for a church outside the Glades to have taken up the cry of the people who lived there that they needed clean water?

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3. David's position on immigration is different from much of what we hear from Christian leaders today. What are the attitudes where you live? What do you think?
4. What is the Biblical relationship between our worship and how we treat the poor?
5. Was the reason Ezekiel gave for the destruction of Sodom a surprise to you? Why do you suppose that has not been given a higher priority in the teaching we have heard?
6. Are you willing to question the priorities of a church that is ignoring the poor around them and around the world? Can you do so in a way that does not turn you into a fractious individual?

### Lesson 9

Chapters 18-20; Pages 151-171

1. How would you describe the good news? Could you do it for a non-believer without first having to establish the authority of the scriptures?
2. What is the message people in your community get from the church? Ask a non-Christian friend what they are hearing from the Christians around them. What do you think they will say?
3. If you are going to reformat the message into good news, will some folks think you are "watering it down?" How will you respond to that?
4. What is the parallel today to Paul going daily to the market place with the gospel?
5. If you follow the money to see what a church's true priorities are, where would you count Sunday school? Do you know that Sunday school was originally an outreach tool? How do you think it evolved into a tool primarily for teaching our children and adults?
6. As you redirect your financial resources and the church's how can you be assured that you are giving to groups that are using the money wisely?

### Lesson 10

Chapters 21-22; Pages 173-187

1. Why is it bad to call the building the church?
2. If we are the church and we are God's staff, what are the implications for our activities? For the activities of those employed by the church?

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3. Can we, like Abraham, just do what God has told us to do – without question and without trying to figure out all the possible things that can go wrong when we do?
4. Reread Hebrews 11. What attitude gave those people their power? Is that power source still available to us today?
5. What can you do to remind yourself on a daily basis that this world is not our home?
6. How can we best learn how to carry our joy and peace along with us, uninfluenced by the circumstances of our lives?

### **Lesson 11**

Chapters 23-25; Pages 189-214

1. Unity is a scary and sometimes divisive term. Why is that? What can we do to overcome this difficulty?
2. What part does pride play in the unity problem? Is it always *their* pride and not *ours* that causes the problem?
3. How did the church in Jerusalem obtain unity? Might that work today? Would it be worth a try? Warning: it won't be a quick fix.
4. What are the differences among the concepts of "playing church," "doing church," and "being church?"
5. Is "being the church" different from being actively engaged in the activities of the church? How so?
6. What is the relationship between fellowship and work? What kind of work do the people do together in the group you worship with? What would you recommend to improve the fellowship of work?

### **Lesson 12**

Chapters 26-27; Pages 215-231

1. Make a list of the challenges facing our young people today. What kind of work is best to truly inspire them?
2. How can we redefine the church in the minds of our young people, so they begin to see it as a counter-cultural movement – not just a "No!" and "Don't!" movement, but a "Yes we can!" movement that has positive goals for our church and for the community in which we live and indeed for the world.
3. Do you have a "self-talk" going on in your head? What is it about? How can you redirect it to be more of a conversation with God?

4. How have you seen the Lord's Prayer? Can you think of a different set of lessons to take away from it? Pray the prayer together.

### **Lesson 13**

Chapters 28-29; Pages 233-247

1. What are our current motivations for doing God's will? Are they strong enough to sustain us through hard times and opposition?
2. Is "Peter's Prescription" for love real enough to work in today's environment, or is it more of a spiritual ideal?
3. What does Peter mean that we can be "partakers of the divine nature"? Is that only about escaping the corruption that is in the world, or is it something more?
4. Do you have a favorite quote about perseverance?
5. How is the "new church" suggested in this book like Jesus' "new commandment"?
6. This book is about restoration. That means returning what exists now to what it used to be. In this context, it is about restoring the church to what it was originally designed to be. Is that even a good idea? Why or why not?