

SEEKING AND SAVING THE LOST

Luke 19:1-10

Introduction: Jesus was always having people come to Him for all sorts of reasons, some wanted healing, some just curious, but some were serious about wanting to become a follower. A young man came to Jesus and the young man was a rich, young ruler. He wanted to know about what all he would have to do to have eternal life and when he learned that he needed to give away all he had, he backed off and went away. Someone might ask "if Jesus came to seek and to save, why did this young man go away still lost?" Obviously Jesus can save only those who are willing to do what it takes, to admit their sins and repent of them and this young man didn't want to get rid of anything. Just how does this "seek and save" thing work?

I. GOD SEARCHES AND THEN RESCUES

1. It is God's nature to find and save sinners. Remember the hymn "The ninety and nine?"
2. The very name "Jesus" means "savior."
3. All people are sinners and lost, but not all want to be saved.
4. Remember the prayers of the two men, the Pharisee and the Publican. One (Pharisee) didn't think there was anything wrong with him and he was grateful to God for being better than others.
5. A humble repentance is the ONLY acceptable response to the Gospel.
6. Jesus can't help those who will not acknowledge their sins and that they need a Savior.

II. SETTING FOR A MIRACLE

1. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem to die on the cross.
2. People had lined the streets to see Jesus as He entered the city.
3. Jericho was North East of Jerusalem and a major crossroads.
4. The Publican who was in charge of customs was in for a miracle that day.
5. Remember the song little children sing about a "wee little man?" Zaccheus? Well, this was the one who was in for a big surprise that day.

III. SEEKING THE SAVIOR

1. Zaccheus wasn't very liked by anybody.
2. Jesus seemed to have an extra special love for people like Zaccheus, not well liked.
3. No one seeks God on his own initiative, God always starts first.
4. Even though God starts the encounter, He always invites people to seek Him.
5. Zaccheus had heard of Jesus and wanted to see Him as He passed by.
6. Zaccheus overcame many obstacles in order to see Jesus. He was very short, nobody liked him, he could be hurt by his enemies, it was very crowded.

IV. THE SEEKING SAVIOR

1. Jesus stunned Zaccheus by inviting Himself to Zaccheus' house.
2. God had been preparing Zaccheus' heart.
3. The crowd didn't like it that Jesus was going to Zaccheus' house.

4. The scriptures are silent as to what took place in the house, but God had brought them together for a purpose.

V. THE FRUIT OF SALVATION

1. Zaccheus was saved in his own home.
2. He vowed to give back four times what he had dishonestly taken from his custom business.
3. He called Jesus, Lord.
4. Zaccheus was radically changed. His heart had been changed. Remember the rich, young ruler that came to Jesus, but refused to make any changes?
5. Zaccheus was saved by faith and his immediate change of heart and works of repaying those he had cheated was proof. It makes one wonder what all the people who knew Zaccheus thought after he was saved?

CONCLUSION:

1. Salvation changes a person's heart, thinking, behavior, the whole person is changed.
2. Saving faith bears immediate fruit and continues to do so.
3. Saving faith brings a change of heart and a whole new set of desires.
4. If a profession of faith is said to be made, but there is no change, then there was no change inside the person, therefore no salvation.