



He Came to Seek and Save the Lost

Luke 15; Matthew 1

Steve Holdaway, LifeSpring Church, 12.24.18

Review: "He Came" series

He came to set the captive free.

He came to give abundant life.

He came to die a sacrificial death.

He came to serve the helpless and hopeless.

Next Sunday: He came to destroy the work of the devil.

Illus: Story of looking for **Cole Turner** at Chris Lake Seeking and saving Cole became the mission of the church! That is the mission of the Savior: to seek after and to save you!

Tonight: He came to seek and save the lost. From the very beginning, that has been the purpose of God coming to earth in the person of his Son. Before his birth, it was announced clearly by an angel.

Matthew 1:18-21 ESV (Angel image)

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

SAVE sozo (a) of present moment deliverance from danger, (b) of the spiritual and eternal salvation granted immediately by God to those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, (c) of God's power to deliver from the bondage of sin, (d) of the future deliverance of believers at the second coming of Christ (from Vine's Expository Dictionary)

PEOPLE laos is used of "the people at large,"

SINS The New Testament uses primarily three English words to describe sin. The first one is used here in this verse.

1. **Sin**, hamartia, "to fall short" or "miss the mark"
2. **Transgression**, *parabasis*, "to go beyond, to overstep the law"
3. **Iniquity**, *anomia*, "to break the law" *unrighteousness*

Sure, I sin, but I'm not lost!

Illus: Zacchaeus (selfishness, cheating)

Luke 19:9-10 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

Zacchaeus' behavior showed that he was lost and didn't even know it.

Guilty of violating God's law (10 Commandments)

We are all born lost. Dead spirits. Enemies of God.

John 3:17-18

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Jesus gave an illustration of his purpose when he told the most famous and loved story in the N.T.

The Lost Son: Luke 15:11-24 NIV

(Image of a wayward young man on the street-despondent)

11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons.

12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' 20 So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

V.20 "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Though no one can go back and make a new beginning - anyone can start from now and make a brand new end.--

Carl Brand

Closing:

In the story of the prodigal son, the son never got a chance to use his rehearsed lines when he returned home. His father was waiting and watching and came running to meet him. Before he could say a word, the father's arms were around him. Loving. Forgiving. Reminding him of his true identity...

Image of Christ on the cross

Those arms were never stretched so wide as they were on the cross. They were stretched for us. Saving. Loving. Forgiving. Comforting. Welcoming us home.

My suggestion for making this Christmas Eve the best ever: Run home. Run home to God.