

life groups

Believe In The Purpose Of Christmas
Luke 19:1-10

Sermon Summary

An overwhelming majority of Americans, 90% to be exact, believe Christmas is a time to celebrate. Sadly, however, most don't know what they are celebrating. Only 46% percent of Americans celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday, and that number is spiraling downward with each passing year. At the current rate of decline, within 10 years only 30% of Americans will consider Christmas a religious celebration. This raises the question, what really is Christmas? Why do we celebrate? What is the purpose of Christmas? Jesus' actions and words in Luke 19 provide incredible clarity for us.

Diving Into The Message

1. According to Luke 19:10, Jesus said He came to seek and to save that which is lost. How do you generally understand the word "lost?" In what way does a more accurate understanding of the Greek word behind our English word "lost" create a sense of joy? How does it create a sense of urgency?
2. What about Zaccheus caused him to believe that he was right with God?
3. Can you think of ways people today deceive themselves into thinking they are self-sufficient, they don't really need God? What are some ways we can lovingly, but truthfully and directly help lost people understand they are dying in self-sufficiency and need God?
4. How have people who believe they can work for their salvation misplaced their faith? What is the object of their faith? In what ways do people today try to work for and earn salvation?
5. Why is self-effort to earn salvation and impossible and deceptive approach to salvation?
6. Even people who have already trusted Jesus fall into the trap of thinking they have to earn God's love and favor. Why is this false thinking and how can it rob believers of the joy and contentment they should experience by already having a relationship with God?
7. What is one take-away from today's message and how will you apply it to your life?

Prayer Action

1. For many people, the Christmas season is a depressing time. Pray for people you know who have lost loved ones this past year or have wayward family members and are struggling with sadness.
2. As we begin preparations for a spring trip to South Asia, pray the Lord would put together the team He wants and provides all the necessary resources.