

Luk 174 19v10 The Master's Mission

Sermon #174

Luke Sermons

Title: **THE MASTER'S MISSION**

Text: Luke 19:10

Subject: *The Purpose of Christ's Incarnation*

Date: Sunday Morning — December 12, 2004

Tape # Y-51a

Scripture Reading:

Matthew 1:18-23

18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise:
When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.
19. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.
20. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.
21. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.
22. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,
23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Introduction:

I want to talk to you today about the purpose of Christ's incarnation. You will find my text in Luke 19. The title of my message is — **THE MASTER'S MISSION**. Let's begin in verse 5...

“And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.”

SOVEREIGN GRACE

What a picture this is of the freeness, fulness, and sovereignty of grace! Here the Lord Jesus comes to a certain man, to a poor and needy sinner. He saw him. He called him. And he invited himself into his house. He said, to Zacchaeus, “*Today I must abide at thy house.*”

There was a “*must*” that caused the Savior to go to the place where this publican was perched in a tree. There was a “*must*” that compelled him to look up and see the man. There was a “*must*” that constrained the Lord of Glory to call him. And there was a “*must*” that brought the Son of man home into this needy soul's house to abide.

GOD'S METHOD OF GRACE

Is this the method of his grace? Is this the manner in which the sinner's Savior calls poor souls to himself? I take it to be so. Notice that it was not Zacchaeus seeking the Savior, but the Savior seeking Zacchaeus. I am sure that, sitting where he was, Zacchaeus must have thought it was his curiosity that led him to come to this place and scamper up that particular tree. But it was the prevenient grace of God his Savior that first awakened that curiosity in him.

Did the Savior seek Zacchaeus, call Zacchaeus, incline Zacchaeus to receive him, and bring salvation to his heart and house that blessed day? Of course, he did. Zacchaeus "*sought to see Jesus, who he was,*" because the Lord Jesus was coming to save Zacchaeus. And when the day was done, the Savior was found of him who sought him not.

"Salvation is of the Lord." It is not the work of man. And the eye of faith sees the Lord's hand alone in the work. Our faith in him is but the return of his gift to him. When my heart was first inclined to seek Christ, it was Christ who inclined my heart to seek him seeking me.

I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
He moved my soul to seek him, seeking me;
It was not I that found, O Saviour true,
No, I was found of thee.

I would never have looked on him, had he not first looked on me and given me the desire to look on him. I would never have sought him, had he not come seeking me. Tell me, you who know the Savior, is that not your experience? — Of course it is.

GRACE STILL NEEDED

And the grace that called us and saved us in the beginning is the grace we need today. As it was in the beginning, so is it now. How often we shut our door in his face, and would forever refuse to open to him, if he did not put his hand in by the hole of the door and drop in his grace!

If we find ourselves looking to Christ today, we ought to cry out with Abraham's handmaid, "*Thou, Lord, seest me.*" We look on him because he looks on us. Never, though we may have known him long and experienced his boundless goodness unceasingly, would we cast a glance toward our blessed Savior, much less look gazingly upon him with the eye of faith and desiring hearts, except he look on us in grace, as he did on Peter, in quickening and awakening grace.

Yes, we seek him, but only because he seeks us. We want him, only because he wants us. We desire him, only because his desire is toward us. We come to him only because he "*must*" come to us. Did I say, "*must*"? Oh, yes. He "*must*" come to his own.

- His love for us demands it.

- His engagements for us demand it.
- His Father's purpose demands it.
- His delight in mercy demands it.
- His very heart and being demand it!

Oh! Blessed Son of God, let me daily, hourly, moment by moment, hear your voice, calling me down from all creature concerns, creature cares, creature comforts and creature confidences, to receive my Beloved! Blessed Savior, be constrained by your love to come, not as a man visiting, but to abide, and dwell, and never depart from me. Be thou my God, and make me thy servant forever! — And what I ask for myself I ask for these who now hear my voice. Come, O Son of Man, come today in saving grace to chosen, redeemed sinners, and glorify yourself in being found here, this very hour, of them that seek you not!

Is it reasonable to expect the Lord Jesus Christ to do that? Is it reasonable to expect him to come here today, as he passed through Jericho of old and invite himself to go home with sinners like you and me, and to invite himself with such sweet omnipotence of love and grace, goodness and mercy, that we are delighted to take him home? I believe it is. In fact, I know it is a reasonable expectation, because, in verse 10, he tells us that is the reason why he took on himself human flesh and came into this world.

(Luke 19:10) For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Proposition: Here the Lord Jesus tells us, and it is verified throughout the Book of God, that he came into the world to save sinners. — “*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, — Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners!*” — “*Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins!*”

SON OF MAN

I. *First*, let's take notice of the title our Lord here uses to identify himself as our Savior.

He calls himself “*The Son of Man.*” Had he chosen to do so, our Savior might have spoken of himself as the Son of God, for he is God's darling Son. He might have called himself the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, Wonderful, Counsellor, or the Prince of Peace. All those titles are given to him and many, many others to describe his glorious character and work. But that name and title which our Lord Jesus used to describe himself more than any other is “*the Son of Man.*”

HIS HUMILIATION

How fond our Master is of that sweet title, “*The Son of Man!*” Surely, he means to keep our minds focused on his great humility and condescension as our Savior. He who is the Son of God became the Son of Man that he

might make us the sons of God (Phil. 2:5-11; 2 Cor. 8:9; 9:15).

We ought to take a lesson from the Master. — How foolish and vain it is for mere worms of the earth to court great titles and proud degrees to distinguish themselves from one another! The most distinguished worm of our race is still just a worm. If the Son of God called himself the Son of Man, when he had far greater names, so that he might identify himself with us, how much more we ought to seek to identify ourselves with one another.

THE SAVIOR'S LOVE

I think there is something sweeter than that indicated by this name our Savior uses to identify himself. — “*The Son of Man.*” The Lord Jesus called himself the Son of Man, because he loves men and loves being a man.

It was a great stoop for him to come from heaven and to be incarnate. It was a mighty stoop of condescension when he left the harps of angels and the songs of cherubs to mingle with fallen men. But condescension though it was, he loved it. When he became incarnate he did not become so in the dark. When the Lord God brought forth his only begotten Son into the world, he said, “*Let all the angels of God worship him.*” This was no secret thing. It was told in heaven and sung by angels in the earth. All the angels of God were brought to witness the event. And a star in heaven marked the place of his birth. Our

blessed Savior seems to count it his high and great honor to be bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh! He who is the Son of God became the Son of Man!

(John 1:1-5) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) The same was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life; and the life was the light of men. (5) And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

(John 1:14) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Hail! Thou once despised Jesus!
Hail Thou Galilean King!
Thou didst suffer to release us!
Thou didst free salvation bring!

HIS MISSION

II. *Second*, and I wish I had the ear of the world to hear this, our text tells us plainly that the Son of God became to Son of Man that he might do a specific thing. — “*For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*” — **The Son of God came**

into this world on a mission, with a specific work to do.

He came here to do the will of God, by the which will we are sanctified and saved. He came here to save his people from their sins. I state it as **a self-evident truth** that whatever the intention of Christ was in his coming into the world that intention shall most certainly be accomplished. His mission cannot fail. His purpose in coming down here cannot be frustrated. That is exactly what the prophet of God tells us in Isaiah 42.

(Isaiah 42:1-4) Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. (2) He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. (3) A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. (4) **He shall not fail** nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION

You are aware that there are many who tell us that the redemption work of our Lord Jesus Christ is not a matter of certainty in its accomplishment, that our Savior did not actually redeem anyone when he died, but that he merely made it possible for sinners to be redeemed, if

they will consent to the will of God.

They believe in what people call “general redemption” or “universal atonement,” declaring that Christ shed his blood for everyone and that his intention of Christ in doing so was the salvation of all. Such a doctrine is nothing short of blasphemy, because it makes the work of Christ a failure and his blood atonement meaningless.

GOSPEL REDEMPTION

We believe nothing of the kind. We believe, according to the testimony of Holy Scripture, that Christ came here to save “*HIS PEOPLE*” (**They were his people before he came to save them!**) from their sins, that the Good Shepherd laid down his life for his sheep, and that when he had by the sacrifice of himself purge our sins, he entered in one into the holy place with his own blood, “*having obtained eternal redemption for us.*” In a word, we assert dogmatically that the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ shall never be discovered a miscarriage! “*He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied,*” for “*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law!*”

INTENTION AND RESULT

Our Savior’s intention in coming into the world and the result of him coming into the world are the same. He came to the spot where Zacchaeus was because it was his intention to go home with him that day, bringing salvation to that sinner, who was a chosen son of

Abraham. That was his intention. What was the result? He went home with Zacchaeus! We trust an almighty, effectual Savior, who actually saves sinners, saves them by omnipotent, irresistible grace, flowing in a mighty tide of mercy in the blood of redemption effectually accomplished for them!

As I said, **this is a self-evident truth**. — Whatever the intention of Christ was in coming into the world that intention shall most certainly be accomplished.

ARGUMENTS

Here are three things that make this a matter of self-evident truth to any reasonable person.

1. **GOD'S CHARACTER** — It is inconsistent with everything revealed in this Book about **the nature and character of God** that he could ever intend, desire, will, or purpose anything that is not actually accomplished.

We are creatures without power, without ability to do anything. We begin to build, but cannot finish. We will, but cannot perform what we will. We purpose, but have no ability to perform. We desire, but cannot get what we desire. Why? Because we are but puny men!

Not so with God almighty! The “*I AM that I AM*,” the self-existent God, in whom we live and move and have our being, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the

Lord of Hosts, immense, filling all things, having all power and strength, knowing all things, having a fullness of wisdom, controls all things all the time. None can stay his hand or say to him, “What doest thou?” Failure is not a possibility with the eternal God. **As Spurgeon put it**, “A god who could intend a thing and fail in his intention would be no God.”

If Jesus were nothing but a man, he might be a failure. But since this Man is himself the eternal God his atonement and the redemption he accomplished is real atonement and real redemption. To believe otherwise is to deny that he is God. We dare not associate with the name of Jehovah Jesus any suspicion that the design of his death might never be accomplished. Such proud doctrine is nothing short of blasphemy!

2. **HISTORY** — I have a challenge for those who brazenly deny the sure, effectual accomplishment of redemption by Christ, for those who vainly imagine that some, or even one of those he came to save might not be saved. Here’s my challenge. — **Show me anything else, up to this point in the history of the universe God almighty ever purposed to do that he did not bring to pass.**

If any man can do that, if any man can show me anything, great or small, in the annals of history, among men, or angels, demons, or Satan himself that God ever purposed that was not brought to pass, I’ll throw this Book away and never speak in his name again. — That

simply cannot be done.

Whenever God uttered a word by the lips of his servants, the prophets, it came to pass, and came to pass exactly as he said. The instruments by which he accomplished his purpose have often been the most rebellious of men, men with no intention whatever of serving God; but his bit was in their mouths and his bridle was in their jaws; and they served him exactly as he designed.

- When **Lucifer** thought he would topple the throne of the Almighty, the Lord God laughed and said, *“This is the purpose that is purposed in all the earth!”*
- When **Adam** fell in the garden and plunged all his race into sin, God’s purpose was accomplished, even then. Had not the first Adam fallen, the last Adam could never have come.
- When **Pharaoh** sat on the throne in Egypt, the Lord God said to Pharaoh, *“Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”*
- When **Herod** sought to slay the Lord Jesus as a baby by slaughtering the infants, it was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, *“Out of Egypt have I called my Son”* and *“In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.”*
- **When the Lord Jesus was crucified** by the hands of wicked men as our sin-bearer, he was delivered to

death “*by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.*”

- When **the Jews rejected Christ** as the Messiah and King of Israel, it was that the gospel might go into all the world. “*And so all Israel shall be saved.*”

(Psalms 2) Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? (2) The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*, (3) Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. (4) He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. (5) Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. (6) Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. (7) I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (8) Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession. (9) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (10) Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. (11) Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. (12) Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his

wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

If God's purpose in providence has never been frustrated, are we to imagine that God's purpose in the glorious sacrifice of Jesus Christ shall be null and void? — Perish the thought!

“It is not to be dreamed of for a moment, that when he stoops himself from the highest heaven, to give his own heart's blood for our redemption, he shall in that be foiled. No though earth and hell be against him, every purpose of Jesus on the cross shall be consummated, and as the price was ‘finished,’ so shall the purchase be; as the means were fully provided, so shall the end be accomplished to its utmost jot and tittle.”

C. H. Spurgeon

3. **CALVARY** — Come with me to Calvary. Standing here, at the foot of the cross, looking upon the crucified, dying Son of God, our hearts cry with the amazed centurion, “*Surely, this man is the Son of God!*” Not, this man did not die in vain!

Behold the darkened sky, the rent veil and the convulsing earth, and hear the triumphant cry, “*It is finished!*” and understand that the blood that flows forth from the veins of incarnate Deity shall not fall to the ground in vain! Not even the Word of God that goes

forth out of his mouth shall return to him void. If his Word does not return to him void, his blood shall surely accomplish the purpose for which it was poured out in death. — Gethsemane — Gabbatha — and Golgotha proclaim this truth aloud, “*He shall not fail!*”

- His love shall not fail to save its object.
- His grace shall not fail to find its home.
- His power shall not fail to save his own.
- His justice shall not fail to satisfy him.
- His will shall not fail to gratify his heart.
- His intercession shall not fail to prevail with the Father. — “*Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory!*”
- His promise shall not fail to be fulfilled. — “*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me...All that the Father hath given me shall come to me...And I will raise him up at the last day!*”

Men tell us that the doctrine of universal redemption, the notion that Christ died for those who are at last lost forever in hell is a God honoring, beautiful doctrine. Is it really? — If Christ on cross intended to save every man, then he intended to save those who were damned before he died. Does that honor the wisdom of God? — If it were Christ’s intention to save all men, how deplorably he has failed! Does that honor the power of God? — If the Lord Jesus made atonement and satisfaction for the sins of men who afterwards are punished in hell for the sins for which God’s own Son has already suffered his

wrath, then God requires that the same crimes be punished twice. Does that honor the justice of God? You might say such things of gods like Ala, or Saturn, or Baal, or of the demons of hell, but not of the thrice holy Jehovah!

O Thou who didst Thy glory leave,
Apostate sinners to retrieve
From nature's deadly fall !
Me Thou hast purchased with a price,
Nor shall my crimes in judgment rise,
For Thou hast borne them all.

Jesus was punished in my stead,
Without the gate my Surety bled
To expiate my sin.
On earth the Godhead deigned to dwell,
And made of infinite avail
The sufferings of the Man.

And was He for such rebels given?
He was. — The incarnate King of heaven!
Did He for His foes expire?
Amazed, O earth the tidings hear—
He bore, that we might never bear,
The Father's righteous ire!

Ye saints, "the Man of sorrows" bless,
The God, for your unrighteousness
Deputed to atone.
Praise Him, till with the ransomed throng

Ye sing the never-ending song,
And see Him on His throne!

Augustus Toplady

If Christ came here to save us, if he suffered and died in our stead, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and save us from all unrighteousness; and he will do it! The intention of Christ's death cannot be frustrated. His mission shall be accomplished. Whatever he came here to do, he did!

SEEK AND SAVE

III. *Third*, let me tell you a little bit about our Savior's mission in coming into this world in human flesh. —
“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Here our Lord Jesus tells us exactly who they are that he came to save, who they are for whom he made atonement. And he tells us what he will yet do for them

THE LOST

The Lord Jesus came here *“to seek and to save that which was lost.”* Is there a lost sinner in this house? If the Lord Jesus ever gets you lost, he will save you. I don't run across many lost people. A lost person is a person who...

- Is condemned, justly condemned. — All you see in the Book of God is condemnation.

- Has no righteousness.
- Cannot change his condition.
- Is without hope.
- Dead in trespasses and in sins.
- Knows himself a sinner.

To understand these things aright,
This grand distinction should be known:
Though all are sinners in God's sight,
There are but few so in their own.
To such as these our Lord was sent;
They're only sinners who repent.

What comfort can a Savior bring
To those who never felt their woe?
A sinner is a sacred thing;
The Holy Ghost hath made him so.
New life from Him we must receive,
Before for sin we rightly grieve.

This faithful saying let us own,
Well worthy 'tis to be believed,
That Christ into the world came down,
That sinners might by Him be saved.
Sinners are high in His esteem,
And sinners highly value Him.

Joseph Hart

SEEK AND SAVE

The Lord Jesus came into this world in human flesh and laid down his life upon the cursed tree as the sinner's Substitute, that he might "*seek and save that which was lost.*" Those for whom he came, those for whom he lived, those for whom he died, he will both seek and save. I am so thankful he put both those words in there. Aren't you. He will both seek and save that which was lost. He will never seek one he does not save, and he will never save one he does not seek.

He did not come to save those that seek him, but to seek and to save that which was lost. This is his word on the matter...

(Ezekiel 34:12) As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

How does the Lord Jesus seek out his people?

- Electing Love
- Redeeming Blood
- Prevenient Grace (Ps. 107)
- The Preaching of the Gospel
- Holy Spirit Conviction

When the Master seeks a sinner he saves the sinner sought. Having caught him, like the ram of old, in the

thorns of conviction, he does not take a knife and slay him as the sinner expects, but he takes him by the hand of mercy, and begins to comfort and to save. Oh, lost sinners, the Christ who seeks you today in the preaching of the gospel, and who has sought you all the days of your life by his providence, will save you.

- When he has emptied you, he will fill you.
- When he has stripped you, he will bring forth the best robe and put it on you.
- When you are utterly dead before him, he will breathe life into your nostrils.
- When you are utterly condemned, he will come and blot out your iniquities like a cloud, and your transgressions like a thick cloud.

Perhaps, the word “lost” means nothing to you now. Oh, hear me, that shall not always be the case! The time is coming when that word “*lost*” will mean something to you. Soon, you will hear the great bell of eternity tolling forth that awful word — lost, lost, lost! The great sepulchres of hell will toll out your doom — lost, lost, lost! Through all the horrid terror of eternal misery you shall be lost forever.

But if that bell is ringing in your ear today, that you are lost, be of good cheer. It is a good thing to be lost to self, lost to pride, and lost to carnal hope. — “*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost!*” — He says, “*Look unto me and be ye saved.*” If you look,

you are saved, saved because he has sought you out and saved you.

O Blessed Son of Man, Lord Jesus, Son of God, our Savior, come gather your lost ones by your omnipotent grace!

Amen.