

Purpose of His Coming - Part 2

by Chuck Smith

The purpose of Jesus' coming is to seek and to save that which was lost, from the destructive consequences of sin and from the eternal consequences of sin.

Duration: 34:56

Scripture: Numbers 6:24-26, Isaiah 53:6, Matthew 11:28-30, Luke 2:11, Luke 19:1-10, John 3:16, Revelation 20:14-15

Topics: "Second Coming"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing our sinful state and the need for salvation. He explains that sin is a destroyer and that Jesus came into the world to seek and save the lost. The preacher highlights that God seeks to get our attention in various ways, such as through unexpected deaths, to remind us of the brevity of life and the need to be ready to meet our Creator. He emphasizes that salvation from sin is only possible through Jesus Christ, who took our sins and sorrows upon himself. The preacher encourages listeners to respond to Jesus' invitation to come to him and find rest for their souls.

Transcript

Tonight we continue our study through 2 Samuel. In fact, we finish 2 Samuel tonight and next week go into the Kings. And so we encourage you to join with us at seven o'clock for the time of worship and the study of the word.

When the angel announced to the shepherds the birth of Jesus, he said, unto you is born this day in the city of David the Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Years later, as Jesus had grown up and as he had begun to minister, we read in Luke 19 that he was coming through the village of Jericho and he invited himself for lunch at the house of a tax collector whose name was Zacchaeus. The Pharisees found fault with Jesus.

They said, he's eating with sinners and publicans. And more or less as an apology, certainly an explanation, Jesus said, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. As we look at Christmas, as we look at the coming of Jesus Christ and the purpose of his coming, it is expressed in these words, the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

But what does it mean to be saved? We are saved, first of all, from the destructive consequences of sin. God has given to us rules for a good life. The prophet Micah said, he has shown you, O man, what is good.

The psalmist said, the law of the Lord is perfect. If you want to know and live a truly good life, God has given us the rules for the good life. I challenge you, find one rule that God has made against things that are decent and good.

Everything that is decent, everything that is worthwhile, God says, do that. But those things that are destructive by their very nature, those things that can harm, those things that can bring pain, those things that can bring sorrow, God has warned us not to do those things. Only the things that are hurtful, only the things that are destructive, sin destroys.

And so God has warned us against things that will destroy physically, things that will destroy emotionally, or things that will destroy you socially. By violating the rules of God, you're inviting physical disabilities. You are inviting emotional traumas.

And of course, you're inviting breakup of good relationships, breakup of marriages and families and things of that nature, because sin destroys. That's the very character and nature of sin. Now, man in his pride and arrogance, so many times thinks that he knows better than God what is good.

And oftentimes engages in those things that God said we were not to engage in, they will destroy you. But still, we find ourselves sort of experimenting in these areas where God said, we don't belong. And as we do, we find that the result of sin is destructive.

It destroys us spiritually, emotionally, physically. If it were possible for all men to obey the rules that God has set, we really wouldn't need doctors, or psychiatrists, or judges, lawyers, police officers, military budgets, or a host of other things. It's because man breaks God's rules that we are suffering so much in the world today.

When we talk about being saved, we're talking about being saved from the evil consequences of our sins. And when Jesus said, I've come to seek and to save, He's talking about saving you from the destruction that sin brings upon all. As we look at our world today, we can certainly see the destructive effects of sin, and it is blighting every segment of our society.

Read the papers, read what's going on, and you'll see the destructive effects of sin. You don't have to go to Afghanistan. It's happening right around us in our neighborhoods.

But it also means that we are saved from the eternal consequences of sin. Man can exist on two planes. All men exist on the physical plane.

But there is another plane upon which a man can live, and that is the spiritual plane. And the Bible teaches us that the spiritual plane is far superior to the material plane of existence. One night, a Jewish ruler named Nicodemus came to Jesus, and he questioned Jesus.

He said, We know that you must be from God. No man can do the things that you are doing unless God is with him. And Jesus, cutting right to the chase, said, Nicodemus, you need to be born again.

And he questioned, How can I be born again? I'm an old man. I can't enter the second time into my mother's womb and be born. Jesus said, No, Nicodemus.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. You have to have a spiritual birth.

You've had a fleshly birth. Now you have to have a spiritual birth if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven. He said, Well, how can you do that? And Jesus said, As Moses was lifted up in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever would believe in him would not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him would not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness.

Going back into the Old Testament, we read how the children of Israel were murmuring against God in the wilderness. And God allowed these poisonous snakes to come into the camp, began to bite the people, and they began to drop like flies, thousands of them dying from the bite of these poisonous snakes. The people came to Moses, and Moses cried out to God.

And God said to Moses, Make a serpent of brass, put it on a pole, and set it up in the middle of the camp. And it shall come to pass, when a person has been bitten by one of these poisonous snakes, if they will look at that serpent hanging on the pole, they'll be healed, they'll not die. So Moses made that brass serpent, put it on the pole, set it up in the middle of the camp, and as people were then bitten, as they were going into convulsions, they would look at that brass serpent, and in looking, they would not die.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. Brass is a symbol of judgment. The serpent is a symbol of sin.

The people had sinned against God, and murmuring against God. The brass serpent on the pole represented that their sin was judged. And now by just looking at that brass serpent, they would be healed and not die of the snake bite.

Jesus bore our sin on the cross. God judged our sins. He bore the judgment of God for our sins.

And by believing in Him, we have a spiritual birth. That was the answer of Jesus to the question, how can I be born again? Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish. Now perishing is the result of sin.

But shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Paul wrote, you He has made alive, who were dead in your trespasses and sins. He's talking about that spiritual life.

You've been born again. You've been born of a spirit. You've had a second birth.

Paul said that if a person was living purely for pleasure, that you were dead while you were still alive. That is, you can be physically alive, but spiritually dead. And that is the condition of so many people today.

Physically alive, but spiritually they are dead. They are lost. But the Son of Man has come to seek and to save.

That's the purpose of His coming, to save those who were lost. But when is a person lost? Well, if you are not born again, you are lost right now. You've not received God's gift of eternal life.

And if you would die today, you would be eternally separated from God, eternally lost. First of all, you're a loss to God. God has a plan and a purpose for each one of our lives.

We were created by God for the glory of God. In the book of Revelation chapter 4, as the elders are responding to the worship of the cherubim, they say, thou art worthy to receive the glory and honor because you have created all things and for your pleasure they are and were created. That's the purpose of your existence.

For God's pleasure, living to please God. And if you are living to please yourself, then you are lost to God. You are not fulfilling the very basic purpose of your existence.

God has a work for each of us to do. And if we are not doing that work, then our lives are a loss to God. God wants you to be a light in this dark world, that it might bring hope to people.

But if you are walking in darkness, then you're just a part of the whole problem and you're a loss to God because you are not fulfilling God's purposes. God created you that you might enjoy fellowship with Him. If you're not fellowshiping with God, then you are lost.

You are lost to God. But not only that, you are a loss to your family. And that might just upset you for me to say, you are a loss to your family.

But in reality, you might say, what do you mean? I'm a good provider. I make sure that my family is well taken care of. Well taken care of in the physical needs, but the physical life is far inferior to the spiritual life.

The physical life is limited. It's only for a time. The spiritual life is forever.

It's eternal. And if you are not leading your family and providing for your family's spiritual needs, then you are a loss to your family. God wants you to be a godly example and to teach and instruct your family in the ways of the Lord.

And if you're failing to do that, you're a loss to your family. You will be lost in death. When you come to the end of the road, facing eternity, there is only one thing that will matter at that point.

When you take that last breath, the only thing that will matter then is your relationship with God. And if that relationship is not right, you will be lost forever. All of the good works that you have done will avail you nothing.

Your bank account will be worthless to you. You will pass into eternity without God, without hope. Lost.

Forever lost. You will be lost when you stand before the judgment seat of God. The Bible tells us that it is appointed unto man once to die.

But after that, the judgment. Do not be deceived in thinking that death is the end of things. That when death comes, it's all over.

No. It's appointed unto man once to die and after that, the judgment. In the book of Revelation, John describes what he saw, the future, the judgment seat of God.

He said, I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven had fled away, there was found no place for them. I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God and the books were open and another book was open, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it. Death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. And they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

And if you have not received God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, you will be lost when you stand there before the judgment seat of God and you will be sent into the lake that burns with fire according to the scriptures. Jesus describes that event. He said there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth for the fire is not quenched and they will not die.

Why weeping and wailing? Why gnashing of teeth? Because the realization lost, forever lost. How is a person lost? There used to be a track. It was a two-sided track.

On the front side it said, what must I do to be saved? Question mark. And then it had the scripture, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. On the reverse side of the card it said, what must I do to be lost? Big question mark.

And then in black borders in capital letters it says, nothing. You're already lost. And so you don't have to do anything to be lost.

And if you do nothing, you will be lost. Just go on as you are. Live a good life.

Do your best to be a good husband or wife. Become active in community affairs. But do nothing about your sinful state and you will be lost.

Because sin is a destroyer. At Christmas time we think about Jesus coming into the world. And as we look at the purpose for his coming in the world, he stated it very clearly.

I have come to seek and to save that which was lost. How does he seek the lost? Well, there are a thousand different ways that he seeks to get your attention. Sometimes it is the sudden unexpected death of someone who is close to you.

And in the shock of hearing that they died, suddenly you realize the brevity of life. And the Spirit of God begins to speak to your heart in that still small voice and says to you, are you ready to die? It's appointed unto man once to die. Don't you think you need to get your life right with God? So that when that appointment comes, you'll be ready to meet God? And at the time of death, we begin to think about eternal things.

But soon we get caught up again with the regular routine and we wait for another shock to come along. And maybe we're driving down the street and the light is green. And as we are going through the intersection, suddenly there appears this car at the side racing through the intersection against the green light.

You throw on your brakes. You turn the wheel. You hear the screeching of the brakes and you wait for the crash.

But somehow, somehow, you don't know how, they didn't hit you. But boy, you get weak. You get trembly.

You sort of need to pull over to the side for a minute, just sort of get your composure again. You realize that you came within inches, within fractions of a second from entering into eternity. And the Lord speaks to your heart.

He said, this is a wake-up call. This could have been it. You could have been snuffed out at that very moment.

And where would you be now if you weren't ready to meet the Creator? He speaks to us in that still small voice inside. He is saying, you need to get right with God. You need to live a better life.

You need to get on the right path. You need to do the right thing. You need to turn your life over to Jesus Christ.

Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He is seeking you out because He wants to save you from the consequences of sin, which is death. How does He save us from sin? As we have said, the reason that we are lost is because of sin.

And that sin is in the process of destroying us. To be saved, something must be done about my sin. And Jesus came to do something about my sin.

As we sang in the opening hymn this morning, He took my sins and my sorrows. He made them His very own. He bore the burden to Calvary and He suffered and died alone.

God laid on Him the iniquities of us all. He was sinless and yet He bore my sin. He took the judgment for my sin as He was hanging on the cross.

And like the brass serpent in the wilderness, if a person will just look in faith, believe in Him, they can have a spiritual birth. They can know eternal life. It is appointed unto man once to die.

It isn't appointed twice to die, but there are those who will die twice. After the great judgment seat of God, cast into that lake burning with fire, this is the second death. That's not really appointed for every man, but only those that reject the gift of salvation that Jesus Christ has brought to us.

The Bible tells us that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, will cleanse a man from all sin. So Jesus did His part. He came.

He came to seek and to save those that were lost. He provided the means by which they might be saved from death and hell. Now, you have to do your part.

You must receive Him as your Savior. As many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the sons of God, even as many as believed upon His name. At Christmas, we are celebrating the Savior who came into the world.

He was sent by God to seek and to save those that were lost. He found you. He brought you here today, and now it's up to you to do your part and to receive God's gift of love.

How deceived and how lost are so many people in this world today. They're deceived about Christmas. They think that Christmas is all about giving and receiving gifts for each other.

They think that the Christmas spirit can be found in a bottle and that Christmas is just party time. Time to put up lights on the front of your house. Time to decorate the tree.

And as I drive through my neighborhood, I see all of the lights on the houses. People who never go to church. People who never think about Jesus Christ.

And yet here they are, decorating their houses, putting up the lights, and they don't even know the light of the world Jesus Christ who came to seek and to save those that were lost. The big question is, what about you? Have you received the most important gift of all? This is the record God has given to us--eternal life. This life is in His Son, and he who has the Son has life.

But you've got to receive the gift before it is yours. Let's pray. Father, we are so grateful that you so loved us, that you sent your Son into this world to seek and to save we who were lost.

And we thank you, Lord, that you have provided so great salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, at this Christmas season, we pray, Father, that once again your Spirit might speak as you are seeking to draw men to receive your gift. Even this morning, right now, Lord, once more speak, challenging, calling us to live the better life, the life of the Spirit.

Father, I pray that today many might be born again. Many might have that spiritual birth so they can be saved from the destruction and the consequence of their sins. Thank you, Lord, for providing salvation for those who will receive.

In Jesus' name, amen. Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front. And as soon as we are dismissed, if you would like to receive the gift of salvation, if you would like to have a spiritual birth, born again by the Spirit of God, and have then that knowledge that you're no longer lost, but now saved.

And that when the moment comes when you pass on into eternity, it won't be the mournful cry of the lost, but the joyful rejoicing of being saved. They're here to pray for you. I wouldn't put it off another day.

The time has come for you to respond to Jesus Christ and His invitation. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest.

Learn of me. You will find rest for your soul. For that restless heart, Jesus is the answer.

He'll give you peace, hope, love, and salvation this day. So as soon as we're dismissed, we encourage you to come forward. Let this be that banner day in your life when you accept God's wonderful gift of salvation.

May the Lord be with you. May He watch over you. May He keep you in His love.

May He fill you with His Spirit. May He strengthen you for the days ahead. May you find that beautiful hope that is ours through Jesus Christ.

As we look at a dark and dismal world, the hope of eternal life in Him. The Lord bless thee. And keep thee.

The Lord make His face to shine upon thee. And be gracious unto thee. And be gracious unto thee.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee. And give thee peace.

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