

Study Guide
Christmas – A Lost Cause
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What is Christmas about to you?

Christmas is not about lights, trees, or Santa. Christmas is about God coming to earth in and through His son, Jesus.

Discuss why Jesus came to earth.

We must never forget why God's son came to earth.

Read Matthew 1:21 and Luke 2:11.

What do these verses reveal about why Jesus came to earth?

God's son, Jesus Christ came to earth for one reason, and that reason was to save people.

Luke 19:10 (NLT) – “For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.””

The only reason Jesus came was to save the lost; Christmas is a lost cause.

What are some things you would be devastated if you lost?

When you lose something valuable, everything else becomes secondary; you cannot rest until that thing (or person) is found. This is why Christmas is a lost cause and why Jesus came to earth.

Discuss ways in which you can ensure the true meaning of Christmas and why Jesus came to earth doesn't become a lost cause?

There are three types of churches:

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| 1.) Battleships | 2.) Cruise ships | 3.) Rescue boats |
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Battleship churches see everyone as the enemy. They look for and are ready for a fight. They are angry at the lost, and they have forgotten that the cross is a lost cause. Cruise ship churches want to make everyone comfortable. Their whole goal is to ensure everyone in the boat has a smooth ride. They have forgotten that Christianity and the church is a lost cause. It's not about our comfort. Rescue boat churches have elevated saving souls above everything else. They want to be a lifeboat that saves every single person who is drowning. They have not forgotten that Christianity and the church is a lost cause.

Read Isaiah 59:19.

When the enemy comes, what will the Lord lift up?

The world is flooding, and people are drowning. The church is the standard that God will lift up against the enemy; the church is God's lifeboat.

What are some of the things you see the world currently drowning in?

We (the church) are here to rescue those who are drowning and pull them in to the lifeboat; this is the whole message of Christmas.

How can you personally assist in pulling in people who are drowning to the lifeboat?

The problem with some churches is that they get in the boat, and they start complaining about the boat. It's too wet, it's too loud, it's too small, it's too big... blah, blah, blah. Instead of pulling people in and helping, they're just yelping.

How have you been guilty of yelping instead of helping?

The only reason Jesus came was to rescue the lost. Instead of letting sinners offend you with their sin, just focus on pulling them in. You don't have to approve of or celebrate their sin to pull them in.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

Do sinners like you? Explain why or why not.

We will never move people toward God by moving them away from us. We can be so heavenly minded that we forgot about the real reason for Christmas and why Jesus came.

Read John 3:16-17.

Why did God send Jesus?

If Jesus didn't come to condemn the world, then why do we think we should?

The Bible tells us that we are to be fishers of men. To catch fish, you throw the bait and wait. We can throw rocks and scare all the fish away, or we can throw the bait and wait. As the church, we can throw rocks which are accusation and condemnation, or we can throw bait which brings love and salvation.

Discuss how you can avoid throwing rocks of condemnation and accusation.

What are some practical ways in which you can share God's love with others?

We can be in the boat so long that we become dried off and dried up; we forget that Christmas is a lost cause, and the only thing on the heart of Jesus is pulling others into the boat.

This Christmas season, how can you be a lifeboat to those who are drowning?

If anyone specific comes to your mind, make a decision to extend a hand to pull them in.