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Why the Messiah Came

Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

I. Introduction: God Eternal in Human Form

A family was out to finish their Christmas shopping at a suburban mall. In the midst of all the fun and excitement, one of us noticed that little three-and-a-half-year-old Matthew was gone. Terror immediately struck our hearts. We had heard the horror stories: little children kidnapped in malls, rushed to a rest room, donned in different clothes and altered hairstyle, and then swiftly smuggled out, never to be seen again...We split up, each taking an assigned location. Mine was the parking lot. I'll never forget that night--concern for his safety outweighed all other things as I searched.

Unsuccessful, I trudged back to our meeting point. My wife had not found him, nor had my mother. And then my dad appeared, holding little Matthew by the hand. Our hearts leapt for joy. Interestingly enough, Matthew was untraumatized. He hadn't been crying. To him, there had been no problem. I asked my father where he had found him. "The candy counter," he replied. "You should have seen him. His eyes came just about as high as the candy. He held his little hands behind his back and moved his head back and forth, surveying all the luscious options."

Matthew didn't look lost. He didn't know he was lost. He was oblivious to the phenomenal danger he was in. This is a candy-counter culture, where people (even some saying they believe in God) who don't look lost and don't know they're lost live for consumption.¹

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1. At its mind-blowing simplest, Christmas is a celebration of the human birth of eternal God. Yet, this simple statement is loaded with suppositions, questions, and consequences.
2. Today our focus is on Why the Messiah came. In this, we make the presumption that you are not so much wrestling with whether there is a God, but whether the God of the Bible is THE

¹ Joseph M. Stowell, *Moody Monthly*, December, 1989, p. 4.

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Messiah...and if so, what this means to you, now and for all eternity. In the end, what matters is not whether you get all your questions answered, but who do you say Jesus Christ is? Actually, what matters most is who He says you are...child of God or not.

II. Luke 19:10: The Essence of Why Jesus Came

1. In the opening chapters of the book of Genesis, we are told that God created man in His image, to have relationship with Him, and to be stewards of the world God created. We are also told of the cataclysmic event of sin entering the world and creating an eternal separation of man from God. The Bible refers to this separation as death and as mankind being LOST; that is being apart from God – the One that we were made to spend eternity with...the One that gives us meaning and purpose...the One that heals and completes us.

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2. Our first verse speaks of the purpose of Jesus coming... Luke 19:10 says:

...for the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which is lost.

- Luke 19:10

3. Jesus Came

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- A. These are the words of the Messiah Himself, Jesus. He came. He did NOT send someone else. He came to seek that which was once His prized possession, but had been lost. He came not just to find, but to rescue the lost from eternal death in being separated from God. He came to die (Mk 10:45, 1 Pe 2:23-25). As God, He came where, when, and how He determined – including IN the mortal body of man. The Apostle John states this central tenant of our faith in this way in John 1:14:

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And the Word became 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.
– John 1:14

B. In this, we see that He also came in the flesh that mankind can know Him and choose to love, obey, and receive the new life He offers. What's more, Scripture says He also came because of His love (Jn 3:16, 10:11-18), to destroy the works of the devil (1Jn 3:8), and to bring light to a dark world (Jn 14:16) in bearing witness of the truth (Jn 18:37). He came to be worshiped (Mt 2:1-2), bring great joy (Lk 2:10), to model righteousness (Mt 5:17), and judge unrighteousness (Jn 9:39, 3:17-21). He came to serve (Mk 10:45) and reign (Is 9:6-7).

C. Before moving on, I want to encourage you

- i. For a quiet moment, consider that God eternal, in the person of the Son of God, willingly became man. Something He neither needed nor was obligated to; so, we might rightly ask: "What love is this that the Son of God would do such an unnecessary, outlandish thing?" It's a pure love...a holy love...a live-giving, life-celebrating love.
- ii. For a second quiet moment, consider the responsibility placed squarely in your lap by His coming. The person and will of Jesus is knowable. Mankind experienced Him, heard and rejected His message in favor of the world and their own self-righteousness, and crucified Him at Calvary. We know or can know His character and calling to be holy as He is holy. In His word, He tells us how...how to receive Him, how to walk with Him, and how to be transformed by Him.

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Your responsibility is to make a choice...to follow Christ OR to reject His invitation. There is no middle ground OR ½ way measures...one is to life and the second to death.

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III. Lost: Mankind's Terminal Condition

1. He came because we would NOT and could NOT go to Him – that is, apart from Him, we are LOST. Because of our heritage in

Adam, we were condemned to death in being bound to the things of this world. Because of the darkness of our hearts, without the supernatural intervention of God, we would NOT even know we were lost, much less have the wisdom, will, and knowledge to overcome the power of sin in our lives.

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2. While maybe hard for some of us to hear, being lost essentially means we value the things of this world greater than we value Jesus. It means that we ascribe meaning, purpose, and value in the pleasures, wealth, social status, relationships, philosophies, and other similar fleeting considerations of this world.

In being “lost” we are NOT aware nor desiring of the things of God. In being lost, we don’t know there is a good or holy way. We just do what “feels” right or offers the most benefit at the least cost. Indeed, we build entire philosophies (rightly called religions) around being lost – we reject God or create god’s out of the whole-cloth of the sweet things of this life or our own fears and sensibility.

3. As I was considering our “lostness”, some of the many stereotypical images that flood our culture came into view:
 - A. ~~An impressive 9 in 10 Americans say they celebrate Christmas. 46% of Americans indicate they celebrate Christmas for religious reasons with the balance celebrating Christmas for cultural reasons. While not so bad as I expected, the trendlines for those celebrating the birth of Christ and not the consumer materialism and emotional cultural aspects are decidedly not good.~~
 - B. Sex sells. From cars to mortgages to websites, beautiful people get clicks, move products, and otherwise build demand. No matter that nearly none of us will ever meet these people and that they are all just broken people like the rest of us, the colors, words, and other stimuli take root in our hearts in the forms of lust and covetousness.

- C. The world equates fun, adventure, relationships, and coolness with alcohol and, in some spaces, drugs. Yet, how often do you see the ads of all the shattered lives.
- D. Next up, sexual idolatry, in all of its many forms, runs rampant with the world saying if it “feels” good, it’s your body so go for it. What’s more, to point out that God says sexual idolatry is sin makes you a “hater” and needs to be cancelled.
- E. The American Dream has come to mean achieving material wealth, fame, and upward social mobility. Pursuit of these certainly share some commonalities...they are all about “me” in the here-and-now AND have nothing to do with a born-again sacrificial life belonging to the Lord.
- F. Lest you think that religion is the bulwark against all the cultural and enemy attacks bringing people down. There are over 5,000 false religions in the world today...and that does not count the great number of apostate churches claiming to be of Christ.

I note this because religion is mankind’s attempt to make or find God on our own. In doing so mankind is brought into a false security of having been rescued when they have never come to know and give their lives to Jesus.²

~~G. How often do we hear that it’s your body, so you can terminate a pregnancy with no moral or spiritual implications. Not only is this untrue, but we have been sold a lie that somehow a not-yet-born baby is not fearfully and wonderfully made by the God who has given him or her His image.~~

These are just some of the examples of the many parts of our culture saying some version of, there is NO God, NO transcendental truth, and/or NO eternal standard by which we are held, so do what seems right to you.

² <https://www.interpretingthetimes.com/blog/75-of-americans-have-forgotten-the-true-meaning-of-christmas>

What's more, if we played this list out, we would all find our own failure points listed. *That is, every one of us has fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) with our starting point being "lost".*

4. For those thinking this is NOT a very encouraging message for Christmas, I understand. *But truth is, this how God rolls.*

You see, NO MATTER your social status, your legal history, your failed marriages, failed parenting, use of pornography, adultery, racism, bitterness...*NO MATTER your fears, uncertainty, depression, and hurts...*NO MATTER if as Isaiah says in **Is 53:6**, you are like every other sheep and have chosen your own path over Gods...*No matter any, all or more of these things, Jesus came for you!*

I hope you are feeling a little encouraged now.

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5. Turn with me first to **1 Timothy 1:12-17 and then Romans 8:26-28**. Maybe Paul's backstory recounted in the 1st passage reminds you of how far you ran from God and how horrible you offended Him...*MAYBE fear, hopelessness, anger, shame, depression, or some other distress has you feeling not valued, trapped. or even hopeless* - if so, let the One who is personally seeking and has the power to save you, wash over you...

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, ¹³ although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴ And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. ¹⁶ However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. ¹⁷ Now to the King (ALL AUTHORITY) eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be honor and glory forever and ever.*
Amen. - 1 Timothy 1:12-17

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Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. - Ro 8:26–28

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Now, if you are down or perhaps thinking you are among the worst-of-the-worst, I pray you are encouraged to the point of rejoicing and worshipping. **Not because your circumstances and history of have changed, but because you know that you know that you know, Jesus came for you!**

IV. To Seek & Save: The Heart of the King

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1. The Lord has some comforting, beautiful, and hard words for us as we close today. **First, turn with me to Matthew 9:36-38:**

³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. - Matthew 9:36–38

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Now turn to **Luke 15:3-7**:

So He spoke this parable to them, saying: ⁴ “**What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?** ⁵ **And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.** ⁶ **And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’** ⁷ **I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.” – Luke 15:3-7**

2. God is for us. What's more, as we read in the 1 Timothy passage, He has the authority and power to affect what He came to do. He IS seeking and He is saving. Yet, we are also confronted with a grim reality that NOT all are saved!

A. So, has God failed? What can we learn from this?

3. As one of God's created, you have been given "free will"...the right to make choices for yourself. Now these choices are not unlimited AND you are NOT granted the right to choose the consequences. What's more, as one commentator noted, "sin has infected your mind, your emotions, your will, your intellect, your moral reasoning, your decision making, your words and your deeds. No part of your life is exempt from the debilitating effects of sin."³

A. So, we can answer our questions with great clarity in absolutely knowing:

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- i. No, God has not failed.
- ii. Yes, He does have the authority, power, and faithfulness to seek and save.
- iii. As to the central lesson we can draw from all of this is the Gospel of Jesus Christ is real. He came for you, you, you...and every single "you" is now w/o excuse to receive Jesus as the Lord of your life. What say you?

[Prayer]

³ Ray Pritchard, <https://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/why-christ-came/>

Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28
Why the Messiah Came

I. Introduction: God Eternal in Human Form

II. Luke 19:10: The Essence of Why Jesus Came

- Consider all the reasons Jesus came.
- Consider your responsibility in light of Him coming.

Additional Scripture References: Mk 10:45; 1 Pe 2:23-25; Jn 1:14, 3:16, 10:11-18; 1 Jn 3:8; Jn 14:16, 18:37; Mt 2:1-2; Lk 2:10; Mt 5:17; Jn 9:39, 3:17-21; Mk 10:45; Is 9:6-7

III. Lost: Mankind's Terminal Condition

- We could and would NOT go to Him.
- God or worldly things, which do your time and treasure say you value most?
- We all fall short and yet, God came for us.
- Let us rejoice and worship that Jesus came for us.

Additional Scripture References: Ro 3:23; Is 53:6; 1 Ti 1:12-17; Ro 8:26-28

IV. To Seek & Save: The Heart of the King

Additional Scripture References: Mt 9:36-38; Lk 15:3-7

5-Day Devotional
Christmas 2025 - Why the Messiah Came
Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

Day 1: The God Who Came

Reading: John 1:1-14

Devotional: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." This simple yet profound truth transforms everything. God didn't send a messenger, a prophet, or an angel. He came Himself. Consider the staggering humility of this act—the Creator entering His creation, eternal God taking on mortal flesh. Why? Because we were lost, and only He could find us. Like little Matthew at the candy counter, we often don't realize our danger. We're distracted by the sweet things of this world, oblivious to our separation from the One who made us for Himself. Today, pause and marvel: What love is this that compelled God to come? Let gratitude fill your heart that He didn't stay distant but drew near.

Reflection: In what ways are you distracted by the "candy counter" of this world, unaware of your need for God?

Day 2: Lost and Found

Reading: Luke 15:1-10

Devotional: Jesus tells two parables about lost things—a sheep and a coin. Notice the intensity of the search. The shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep for one. The woman lights a lamp and sweeps diligently. There's rejoicing when what was lost is found. This is God's heart toward you. You are not a statistic, not one of many, but the one He seeks. Being lost doesn't always feel dramatic; it can look like success, comfort, even religion. But lost means separated from the relationship you were created for. The good news? Jesus came specifically "to seek and to save the lost." He's not waiting for you to find your way back; He's actively pursuing you. Will you let yourself be found?

Reflection: Do you recognize areas of your life where you've wandered from God, perhaps without even realizing it?

Day 3: The Terminal Diagnosis

Reading: Romans 3:9-26

Devotional: The diagnosis is sobering: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." No exceptions. Our culture celebrates self-sufficiency and moral relativism, but Scripture exposes our terminal condition. Sin has infected every part of us—mind, will, emotions, actions. We cannot save ourselves; we cannot even fully recognize our need without God's intervention. This isn't meant to discourage but to clarify reality. A proper diagnosis precedes proper treatment. Jesus came because we would not and could not go to Him on our own. We were dead in our trespasses, building lives around fleeting pleasures and false securities. But where sin abounds, grace abounds even more. Acknowledging our lostness is the first step toward being found.

Reflection: What false securities or "religions" have you built your life around instead of Christ?

Day 4: Grace for the Worst of Sinners

Reading: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

Devotional: Paul called himself the "worst of sinners"—a blasphemer, persecutor, and violent man. Yet Christ showed him mercy. Why? "So that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe." Your past doesn't disqualify you; it positions you to experience God's transforming grace. Whatever you've done—the broken relationships, moral failures, years of running from God—Jesus came for you. He has the authority and power to save completely. The question isn't whether you're good enough (you're not, and neither is anyone else), but whether you'll receive the gift He offers. Christmas celebrates this scandalous grace: God pursuing sinners, offering mercy to the undeserving, transforming the worst into trophies of His patience.

Reflection: What part of your past makes you feel unworthy of God's grace? Can you surrender it to Him today?

Day 5: Your Response Required

Reading: John 3:16-21

Devotional: God came. He sought. He offers salvation freely. But a response is required. You have been given free will—the dignity of choice. Jesus said, "Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light." This is the great tragedy: not that God is distant, but that we prefer our darkness. Not that salvation is unavailable, but that we choose the candy counter over the Father's embrace. There is no middle ground. To delay is to choose. To remain undecided is to decide. This Christmas, will you receive Him? Will you acknowledge your lostness and accept His rescue? The Messiah came to seek and save you specifically. He's calling your name. The only question that matters is: How will you answer?

Reflection: What is keeping you from fully surrendering your life to Jesus Christ today?

Small Group Study Guide
Christmas 2025 - Why the Messiah Came
Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

Tip for Leaders: Create space for honest sharing, especially around question 12. Some group members may be wrestling with their faith or struggling with specific sins. Respond with grace, pointing them to Jesus rather than offering quick fixes.

Opening Prayer: Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and give you wisdom to apply His truth to your lives.

Opening Question: Have you ever been lost or had someone close to you go missing, even briefly? What emotions did you experience? How did it feel when you were found or reunited?

Sermon Recap:

This sermon explores the central purpose of Christmas: Jesus came to seek and save the lost. We examined three key truths:

Jesus Came - God Himself took on flesh to rescue humanity

Lost- Mankind's terminal condition of separation from God

To Seek and Save- The Heart and Mission of the King

Discussion Questions: Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

Read Luke 19:10 and John 1:14

1. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus "came" rather than sending someone else?
2. The sermon listed several reasons why Jesus came (love, to destroy the devil's works, to bring light, to be worshiped, to serve). Which of these reasons resonates most with you right now, and why?
3. Take 60 seconds of silence to consider: "What love is this that the Son of God would become man?" Share your thoughts afterward.
4. How does understanding Jesus' voluntary choice to come change your perspective on Christmas celebrations?

Read Isaiah 53:6 and Romans 3:23

1. The sermon described being "lost" as valuing the things of this world more than Jesus. What are some subtle ways our culture encourages this mindset?
2. Review the cultural examples mentioned in the sermon:
 - a. Materialism in Christmas celebrations
 - b. Sexual idolatry
 - c. The American Dream as ultimate fulfillment
 - d. False religions and self-made spirituality
3. The little boy in the opening story didn't know he was lost. How does this parallel our spiritual condition before Christ? Have you ever experienced a moment when you realized you were spiritually lost?
4. Why is it important to acknowledge our "lostness" before we can appreciate being found?

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17 and Luke 15:3-7

1. Paul describes himself as the "worst of sinners" yet received mercy. How does Paul's testimony encourage you regarding your own past or present struggles?
2. The sermon states: "No matter your social status, legal history, failed marriages, failed parenting, use of pornography, adultery, racism, bitterness...Jesus came for you!"
 - a. How does this truth challenge common assumptions about who is "worthy" of God's grace?
 - b. How should this truth shape how we view and treat others?
3. God has the power to save, yet not all are saved. How do you understand the tension between God's sovereign power and human free will?
4. Personal Reflection: Where are you in your journey?
 - a. Still wrestling with whether Jesus is the Messiah?
 - b. Already found but need to remember the joy of being rescued?
 - c. Aware of areas where you're still "at the candy counter"?

Key Takeaways:

1. Christmas celebrates God becoming man to rescue us—this is an act of extraordinary, undeserved love.
2. Being "lost" means we don't even recognize our desperate need for God without His intervention.
3. Jesus actively seeks us, but we must choose to respond to His invitation—there is no neutral ground.
4. No one is beyond the reach of God's saving grace, no matter their past.
5. We have a responsibility to make a choice: be found and follow Christ, or reject His invitation.

Practical Applications: Query the group for applications first...you may explore one or more of those.

1. Exercise in Gratitude:

Each day, spend 5 minutes thanking Jesus specifically for coming to earth. Write down one reason each day why His coming matters to you personally.

2. Examine Your Candy Counters:

Identify one area where you're valuing worldly things over Jesus. Confess it to God and to one trusted person. Create one practical boundary to help you turn from this.

3. Share Your Story

Like Paul in 1 Timothy 1, share with someone this week how Jesus found you when you were lost. If you haven't yet been found, talk with a trusted Christian friend or group leader about what's holding you back.

4. Seek the Lost

Pray daily for one person you know who doesn't know Jesus. Ask God to show you one practical way to demonstrate His love to them this week.

5. Celebrate Rightly

Evaluate your Christmas plans. Add or adjust one element to ensure you're celebrating Jesus' birth, not just cultural traditions.

Closing Prayer Points:

- Thank Jesus for coming to seek and save us
- Confess areas where we've been "at the candy counter"
- Ask for eyes to see where we're still lost
- Pray for boldness to share the gospel with others who are lost
- Request grace to celebrate Christmas with proper focus on Christ

Discussion Questions
Christmas 2025 - Why the Messiah Came
Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

1. The sermon compares modern culture to a 'candy-counter culture' where people don't realize they're lost. In what ways do you see yourself or others being distracted by the 'candy' of this world while being oblivious to spiritual danger?
2. Luke 19:10 states that Jesus came to seek and save the lost. How does understanding that God took the initiative to come to us, rather than waiting for us to find Him, change your perspective on salvation?
3. The sermon mentions that 46% of Americans celebrate Christmas for religious reasons while the rest celebrate for cultural reasons. How can believers reclaim the true meaning of Christmas in a culture increasingly focused on materialism and tradition over Christ?
4. Paul describes himself as the 'worst of sinners' in 1 Timothy 1:15, yet he received mercy and became an apostle. What does this reveal about God's grace, and how should it impact the way we view our own past sins and failures?
5. The message emphasizes that being 'lost' means valuing the things of this world more than Jesus. What specific things in your life compete for the priority that should belong to Christ alone?
6. Jesus came in human flesh so that mankind could know Him and choose to love and obey Him. Why was it necessary for God to become man rather than revealing Himself in some other way?
7. The sermon states there is no middle ground between accepting or rejecting Christ's invitation. How do you respond to the claim that neutrality or indecision about Jesus is actually a choice against Him?
8. Matthew 9:36-38 and Luke 15:3-7 show God's compassion and active pursuit of the lost. How should the knowledge that God is actively seeking lost people shape our own attitudes toward evangelism and those who don't yet know Christ?
9. The message lists various cultural lies such as sexual idolatry, materialism, and moral relativism. Which of these false narratives do you find most pervasive or challenging in your own walk with Christ?
10. If God has the power and desire to save all people, yet not all are saved, what does this teach us about human free will, personal responsibility, and the urgency of responding to the Gospel?

Dinner Conversation Starters
Christmas 2025 - Why the Messiah Came
Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

1. Lost and Found

The sermon began with a story about a lost child who didn't even know he was lost. Have you ever had an experience where you were lost, literally or figuratively, and didn't realize it? How did you find your way back, and what did you learn from that experience?

2. Purpose of Christmas

The sermon mentions that many people celebrate Christmas for cultural rather than religious reasons. How does our family celebrate Christmas, and what can we do to ensure we remember and honor the reason for the season, which is the birth of Jesus Christ?

3. Being Lost without Knowing

The idea of being "lost" without knowing it was discussed in the sermon. Can you think of examples of things in our culture that might cause people to feel lost without realizing it? How can we guard ourselves against these influences?

4. The Role of Free Will

The sermon talks about free will and how our choices have consequences. What are some important decisions we've made as a family, and how did our choices reflect our values and beliefs?

5. Christ's Mission

Jesus came to seek and save those who are lost. How can we as a family actively participate in this mission? What are some practical ways we can reach out to others who may feel lost or in need of help and support?

Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens
Christmas 2025 - Why the Messiah Came
Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Recognizing Being Lost**: Explain being physically lost as a safe, everyday occurrence (like Matthew in the story). Relate it to the idea that people can also feel "lost" when they are sad or don't know what to do.
2. **Jesus's Help**: Teach that Jesus is like a loving shepherd who helps us when we feel lost, giving comfort and guidance.
3. **Kindness and Welcoming**: Encourage children to welcome and include someone who's left out, modeling how Jesus cares for each of us.

Discussion Questions:

Can you think of a time when you felt lost or didn't know what to do? How did it feel when someone helped you?

How does it feel to help a friend at school who looks sad or left out?

How can we show love to someone who feels lost, like Jesus does?

AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Recognizing Influences**: Help kids understand how shows, games, and friends can influence their thoughts about what's important or "cool."
2. **Making Christ Centered Choices**: Discuss how they can choose to follow Jesus's example instead of what might be popular or encouraged by peers.
3. **Digital Discernment**: Teach children how to evaluate online content or social media that promotes values conflicting with faith.

Discussion Questions:

What are some things you see on TV or in games that might try to influence what you think is important? How can you decide if those things match what Jesus would want you to do?

Can you think of a decision you've made recently because of a friend or something you saw online? Was it a good decision?

How can we tell the difference between a good influence and a bad one when we use the internet?

AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Social Pressures**: Acknowledge that friends and social media can create pressure to fit in or adopt certain behaviors that might not align with Christian values.
2. **Living Righteously**: Discuss ways to courageously live out faith in settings that might not always value Christian beliefs, knowing Jesus came to guide us.
3. **Positive Digital Engagement**: Encourage using digital platforms to positively reflect Christ's love and truth.

Discussion Questions:

What kinds of pressures do you face from friends or social media to act or look a certain way? How can you stand firm in what you believe is right?

Think of someone you admire for living out their faith boldly. What can you learn from their example?

How can you use your social media presence or online interactions to reflect the values that Jesus teaches us?

Tips for Parents

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it's okay to ask questions, even if things don't make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

Family Conversation Guide for Gen Z
Christmas 2025 - Why the Messiah Came
Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Romans 8:26-28

1. Recognize Our Need for A Savior

Biblical Application: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Lk 19:10)

Scenario: During a group discussion at school, the topic shifts to personal fears and insecurities. You're asked how you find peace amidst uncertainty.

Discussion Question: How does acknowledging our need for Jesus as Savior help us find peace and direction in times of uncertainty?

2. Share the Light of Christ in Digital Spaces

Biblical Application: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Scenario: You notice a friend posting about feeling overwhelmed and hopeless on social media. They seem to be searching for light in their darkness.

Discussion Question: How can you be a source of Christ's light and hope to friends who express feelings of hopelessness or despair online?

3. Choose to Worship God, Not Worldly Pleasures

Biblical Application: "Do not love the world or the things in the world." (1 John 2:15)

Scenario: Your friend group often plans outings or activities that push the boundaries of what you believe is right, focusing on parties and material gains.

Discussion Question: How can you navigate social settings where worldly pleasures are prioritized, while maintaining your commitment to worshipping God?

4. Embrace God's Love and Extend it to Others

Biblical Application: "We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

Scenario: A new classmate who seems shy and reserved is often left out of group activities. One day, you have the chance to invite them to join your group for lunch.

Discussion Question: In what ways can you show the love of Christ to someone who feels isolated, reflecting the love that God has shown you?

5. Stand Firm in Righteousness

Biblical Application: "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

Scenario: You're in a digital space where questionable humor or offensive jokes are being shared and laughed at by many.

Discussion Question: How can you be a positive influence and uphold your values in digital spaces, even when it means standing alone?

These structured points are designed to help Gen Z apply biblical truths directly to their lives, enabling them to make meaningful choices in group settings, relationships, and digital interactions.