



What If? Jesus Came for you!

Luke 19:1-10

Sermon given on December 22, 2024

Calvary Chapel French Valley

Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster



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Opening Comments

- Taking break from Romans today – Christmas Message.
- Christmas = celebration of birth of Jesus.
- I love Christmas for a lot of reasons. One reason is the traditions of Christmas.
- One of the interesting things about traditions is that given enough time people forget how they got started and what they are meant to represent.
- One of the traditions as Christians is Christmas.
- The early church didn't celebrate Christmas.
- The earliest record of Christmas dates to 326 in Rome, Italy.
- Now Christians and unbelievers celebrate Christmas for various reasons and in many ways.
- Virtually every culture has their own way of celebrating – they have their own traditions.
- Even the date we celebrate Christmas is a tradition and not based on Scripture.
- No one knows the actual date Jesus was born.
- December 25th may have been chosen because it coincided with a pagan festival about the time of the winter solstice.
- Let's begin with a word of prayer.

Teaching

- **What if? Jesus Came for You!**
- Why was Jesus born at all? Why did He need to be born?
- Let's begin by looking at the account of Christ's birth.
- First, an angel appears to a young woman in Nazareth.
- **Luke 1:26-27**
- Mary is naturally blown away by this visitor and his greeting.
- The angel Gabriel tells her something amazing.
- **Luke 1:28-33**
- Gabriel tells Mary she will have a son.

- He tells her what to name her Son.
- Jesus – which means God with us.
- Son of the Highest = Son of God – or God the Son.
- God will give Him the throne of his David = He will be the Messiah.
- This was to be no ordinary child.
- Not only was the child special, but His conception was special too.
- **Luke 1:34**
- Mary was a virgin, and she stayed that way until after the birth of Christ.
- **Luke 1:35**
- Conceived supernaturally.
- Born of a woman – so that Christ could relate to mankind.
- Conception supernatural = not natural - miraculous – power of God.
- This meant He could intercede on our behalf with God the Father.
- His birth was unusual too.
- Skip down to **Luke 2.**
- Everything about this baby is special.
- **Luke 2:1-7**
- He was born in a barn = placed in a manger/feeding trough.
- Such a momentous event - seems all of heaven bursts forth in praise.
- **Luke 2:8-15**
- Angel said “there is born to you this day...”
- Christ’s birth was predicted hundreds of years earlier **Isaiah 9:6.**
For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- Birthdays are celebrations of beginnings.
- Christmas = celebration of birth of Christ.
- Christ’s life did not begin when He was born, or even when He was conceived. **John 1:1-2**
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.
- John later identifies “Word” = Jesus.
- Jesus, God the Son existed with Father before creation.
- They always existed together.
- Never a moment when Jesus didn’t exist.

- A little later John tells us what happened when the power of God overshadowed Mary.
- Almost 2,000 years ago **John 1:14**.
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.
- The Word (Jesus) became flesh.
- That's what I want to look at.
- What does it mean to us that Jesus became flesh.
- What was Jesus before He became flesh?
- He was God! God the Son.
- Equal to God the Father in all ways.
- Bible teaches – One God – Three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- All equal in nature, character, and attributes.
- Absolute holiness, perfection, power existed together for all eternity together in perfect unity, oneness.
- Bible also says we were created in the image of God.
- But just how close are we to God?
- How close are we to being like God?
- Prophet Isaiah says not so close **Isaiah 55:8-9**
“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”
- Jesus stepped down out of the eternity to walk as one of His creations.
- Jesus could have come as a full-grown man.
- He **CHOSE** to be born. To experience childhood and puberty.
- To grow up with brothers/sisters, mother/father, neighbors.
- He chose to interact with people who would be unkind and unfair.
- He chose to know what it felt like to be loved and hated, accepted and rejected.
- He chose to learn a trade and work with His hands.
- He chose to experience being tired and hungry.
- He could have chosen a much more spectacular way to come into the world.
- He could have appeared as full-grown man dressed in dazzling white on the temple steps.

- Every moment of Christ's life on the earth was planned out by Him and God the Father.
- Jesus chose to come in form of an infant – God the Son chose to come to this world as a helpless baby.
- He chose to be born to a poor couple from the poor town of Nazareth.
- He chose to be born in a filthy, stinky barn in the little backwater town of Bethlehem. **Philippians 2:5-8**

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

- Why? Why do it like that? Turn to **Luke 19**.
- There must have been reason for Jesus would step down out of heaven and endure life as a human.
- Everything that happened in Christ's life happened by the sovereign hand of God working in the world.
- Everything in Christ's life happened for a reason.
- The same can also be said for all our lives also.
- In Luke 19 we have a familiar Sunday School story of a wee little man.
- **Luke 19:1-2**
- Tax collectors were despised by most, considered to be traitors working with the Romans.
- They were Jews, usually very corrupt – got rich from ripping off their fellow Jews.
- **Luke 19:3-4**
- Zacchaeus was very short – a wee little man.
- Doesn't say why he wanted to see Jesus – maybe just curious.
- Jesus sees him.
- **Luke 19:5-7**
- I love the fact that Jesus took the time to interact with Zacchaeus.
- Jesus was a busy man – everyone wanted to be close to Him.
- But Jesus was not so busy that He couldn't bring this wee little man into the kingdom of God.

- And I'm glad He did because that means He is not too busy to save those I hope to see in the kingdom of God.

- Zacchaeus responds to Jesus.

- **Luke 19:8-10**

- Jesus says this is why He came; in the way He came.
- God looked down from heaven and saw that all humanity was lost.
- Zacchaeus was "lost" – lost?
- Zacchaeus didn't seem lost. Rich! He had everything
- Everything but the one thing that matters - he didn't have God!
- Bible says sin separates us from God - causes us to lose our way.

Matthew 16:26

For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

- You can have everything in this world but without God – it will cost your soul – forever.
- One human soul is worth more than the whole world - more than all the gold, silver, diamonds, fame, and everything else the world values.
- Zacchaeus was lost – soul was lost - doomed to an eternity separated from God.
- Something more valuable than his soul had to be paid to save him.
- A sacrifice needed to be made, but nothing in this world could redeem his lost soul.
- God Himself had to come into the world and be that sacrifice for Zacchaeus.
- Referring to Jesus **Hebrews 10:12.**

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God...

- Jesus sacrificed Himself for Zacchaeus and for everyone else who would believe in Him.
- Gospel of John tells us why **John 3:16.**

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Message

- **What if? Jesus Came for You!**
- Jesus came for the lost – for Zacchaeus.
- Because of God's love, because of His love.

- What if Jesus came for you?
- What if He left heaven for you?
- What if He was born in that barn for you?
- What if He lived for you?
- What if He died for you?
- What if He is in heaven waiting for you?
- How should you respond?
- Quickly – three ways Zacchaeus responded.
- Verse 6 – ‘received Him joyfully’ - Have you received Jesus?
- This is speaking of faith, have you placed your trust in Christ to save you from your sins.
- If you have never done that we will pray about that shortly.
- And for you who are Christ-followers, or believers – is your heart still open to Christ.
- Would you climb down out of whatever tree of worldly things you are caught up in?
- The second thing Zacchaeus did - verse 8 – ‘give half my goods’.
- Zacchaeus was thankful for Jesus coming for him.
- Responded by being generous – are you responding to Christ by being generous toward others.
- Zacchaeus invited all his friends and family to meet Jesus.
- This is a very appropriate time of year to do, though I would say Christ-followers should always be generous.
- The third thing Zacchaeus did - verse 8 – ‘if I have taken anything’
- Zacchaeus was repentant – wanted to be right with God.
- If Jesus came for us - We must turn away from sin.
- If Jesus left heaven for you - to save you.
- Receive Him – open your heart – let Him in.
- Be thankful – be generous. Turn from sins.
- **Invite Worship Team Up**
- Christmas reminds us that Jesus was born.
- He came for you – for me – for all of us.
- Let’s remember that as we celebrate this week.
- Let’s be joyful, thankful, and generous.
- **Prayer, Last Song!**