

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 19- Luke 19:1-10**

296- When Salvation Comes to Your House

November 15, 2015

Luke 19:1-10

1 He entered Jericho and was passing through.

2 And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich.

3 Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature.

4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way.

5 When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "**Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.**"

6 And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly.

7 When they saw it, they all *began* to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

8 Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much."

9 And Jesus said to him, "**Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham.**"

10 "**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**"

To the Glory of God

Now the entirety of Biblical Christianity is spelled out for us here in verse 10 when Jesus said:

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

... so if we were asked to summarize the very heart of the Biblical Gospel- that single Statement by Jesus would be it. So let's examine this Statement from our Lord.

Luke 19:10b

... the Son of Man...

Now by identifying Himself as "The Son of Man"- Jesus is confessing that He is the long awaited Messiah. And so the meaning of this term is very important to understand.

Now the most common understanding is that the phrase "Son of God" illustrates the full Deity of Jesus while the term "Son of Man" illustrates His Humanity. And that is true.

So when Jesus uses the term "Son of Man" to describe Himself- He is saying that He was a real human being. So "Son of God" refers to the fact that He has always existed as the Eternally Begotten One Who comes forth from the Father forever. He always was and He always will be. It refers to Him being the Second Person of the Trinity with all of the Divine Nature fully in Him.

And so the term "Son of Man" refers to the fact that Jesus didn't descend on the wings of an angel- but that He was actually born. And the Scriptures declare that Jesus was born of a virgin. So Jesus had a human foster- father- who was a direct descendant of King David- who was not intimate with his fiancé until after Jesus was conceived and born. So because He is both Son of God and Son of Man- the Scriptures declare that Jesus was

- ✓ "conceived of the Holy Spirit"
- ✓ "born of the virgin Mary"

So from *that* standpoint- He is fully human. And so the term "Son of Man" emphasizes this.

But even though that is true- there is a much deeper and more important *historical* insight to the term "Son of Man" that does *not* merely align Jesus with His Own full Humanity. This term is taken from the Old Testament- in **Daniel 7:13&14**.

13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven

One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

So, this mysterious, vague, shadowy figure that Daniel saw at a distance- about 400 years before Jesus was born- had some very Divine Characteristics:

- ✓ He was **"with the clouds of heaven"** (verse 13b)
- ✓ He was given **"Dominion", "Glory" and a "Kingdom"**
- ✓ **All the peoples, nations, and men of every language** serve Him
- ✓ **His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away**
- ✓ **And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.**

... and this lets us know that Daniel saw a vision of the pre-incarnate Christ. Now the term that Daniel used here originated from the *Aramaic* language rather than the Hebrew and is rendered as "Bar enos". And so the term "Son of Man" is a highly *exalted, esteemed, and powerful* figure- and *not* merely a *human* figure. And I think *that*- more than any other reason is why Jesus referred to Himself as "The Son of Man".

Now if you do a Word Study of the term "Son of Man" in the Gospels- you'll see that Jesus didn't refer to Himself very often as "Son of God"- but He called Himself "Son of Man" all the time. And again- there are two reasons for this.

On the surface- the term "Son of Man" is a simple term that refers to "human being." And by using this term to describe Himself- Jesus was illustrating that He was born of woman. But there would be no controversy with Jesus calling Himself a human being- because from that standpoint- *every* male who has ever lived is a "son of man".

But Jesus was also very subtle while He was here on earth in that He was always opening His identity to those with eyes to see and hiding Who He was at the same time from unbelievers- so that nobody would come and make Him a King. So Jesus had to steer a very narrow course in disclosing His Identity. Which is why He wasn't walking around

saying, *"I'm the Messiah, I'm the King of the World. Come and acknowledge Me as King."* Jesus never talked like that.

So He was quiet. He was subtle. And He would make claims that were *explicit* in certain settings and *implicit* in others. And only when the time was right- when He was on trial- and they asked Him directly,

Are you the Christ, the Son of the living God?

... that's when Jesus plainly said,

Mark 14:62b

... I am; and you shall see *THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN.*

... which had the desired effect because look at the re-action of His Statement in the very next verse:

Mark 14:63&64

63 Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses?

64 "You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

So at that moment- Jesus confessed His full Deity at the very point where He knew it would offend the most so He would be crucified for making Himself to be equal with God.

But until that moment- Jesus was very vague about saying Who He was- and that has bothered some people throughout the centuries. But we have to understand that Jesus wasn't vague about Himself because He was confused or because He didn't know He was God- it was simply to avoid having people come to make Him a King- which is *why* He also told people that He healed to not say anything about it.

And yet the entire time Jesus was being publicly vague- He was calling Himself the "Son of Man". And this was for those who were chosen and who had ears to hear and eyes to see and a heart to believe. So Jesus used this term so that His elect would remember **Daniel 7-** which linked Him to a very exalted role in the history of Redemption.

So the term "Son of Man" has the *double* meaning of saying to the

general population that He was fully human- and to those who had ears to hear- Jesus was also saying that according to **Daniel 7**- He was the exalted Heavenly One. And Jesus meant to communicate *both* of those concepts.

Luke 19:10c

... the Son of Man has come...

Now by Jesus saying that the Son of Man had "come" meant that He was saying that the Messiah- that every true believer had been waiting for all their lives- was here! And then Jesus said that He had come to do two things:

1. To Seek
2. To Save

... and He came to do those two things for only one kind of person:

... that which was lost.

Now by using those two *action* verbs- we can know two things:

- Jesus alone is the One Who does the seeking and the saving
- We must be "lost" for Jesus to save us

So right off the bat- we need to understand that Jesus is the One Who is doing the seeking. And that means that nobody seeks after God until *after* they are saved. In fact, the Bible itself teaches that in both the Old and New Testaments:

Romans 3:10&11

10 as it is written, "**THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;**
11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

Now the Apostle Paul is quoting two different Psalms here: **Psalms 14:1-3** and **Psalms 53:1-3**. And both of them were written by David- 1,000 years before Jesus was born, and both of them are identical. And we

should ask why that is. Now **Psalm 14** is just called "A Psalm of David" meaning it is a song of praise written by David as he was moved along by God the Holy Spirit. And these songs or Psalms that are in your Bible are the only songs on the face of the earth that are inspired. Every other song we sing may be true and they may be inspiring- but the Psalms are just as inerrant and infallible as the rest of Scripture- which is why we read and sing them every Sunday.

But **Psalm 53** is called "A Maskil of David". And a Maskil is different from a regular Psalm. A Maskil is a song that is also a Teaching. And so the fact that David wrote both a song of praise and a teaching Psalm- shows us that David was emphasizing this issue very strongly.

And what David was emphasizing here is that no lost human being seeks after God. Lost people do not have either the inclination or the desire to seek for God. That is part of the horrendous effect and the radical ruination that was brought on all of humanity by the Fall. There is nothing internal in the mind or heart or conscience of a lost person that would ever give them the slightest bit of concern about God or the things of God.

What lost people seek after is merely new and innovative ways to continue to sin without getting into trouble or paying a penalty. And lost people seek to try to better themselves by what they do for themselves- without God and without Grace and without Jesus Christ.

Listen, anything you can do that doesn't require a dead and risen Savior is not of God. Anything that human beings can engineer and carry out that is not done to the Glory of God and that is without being empowered by the Grace of God- is sin in the Eyes of God. It is merely the growing putrefied stench of human flesh. And it doesn't bring Glory to God at all. It is merely another exercise of sinful human beings robbing God of His Glory and give that Glory to themselves for what they have done for themselves. Now look again at **Luke 19:3&4**

3 **Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature.**

4 **So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way.**

You see, Zaccheus had a problem in the natural- he was short. But his real problem was that he was lost. And because he was lost- he went to great lengths to try to overcome his problem by expending human energy to improve his own condition. This is the way it is with all lost people.

Now the Greek word that Paul used in **Romans 3** that was translated as “**seeks**” means: *to desire, to crave, to want, to worship, and to search out*. So the Holy Bible teaches that while every lost soul wants to try to better himself- without God- they do not have the capacity or the desire to want God; they have no internal inclination to seek after God or to crave God; they have no internal will to want to worship God.

And they lost that desire and ability to seek after God in the Fall. In fact, that is part of what it means to be lost and fallen. You see it isn't that all lost people commit heinous acts of barbarity- they don't. But, lost people have no desire to love or serve God. And that is why Jesus has to do all the seeking. In fact, this is why Jesus said this to the woman at the well in **John 4**:

John 4:23b-24

23 ... an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Now this lets us know that the only people on earth who are privileged to be able to worship God- are those who are saved. Lost people can and do bring Glory to God in the sense that they are used by God to fulfill His Will- but they do not worship God. God uses lost people in the same way that He uses oceans and mountains and other things. But lost people are basically ignorant and unaware of what God is doing in them and through them, and they are entirely *uncooperative* in it. So they are glorifying God- but only in the sense that God uses them to fulfill His Will in the earth- and *not* because they are purposefully worshipping the Lord. And so they receive no joy at all at being used by God for His Purposes. So true worship- where God is honored and human joy is made full- is reserved solely for saved people.

But then please notice that Jesus doesn't stop at merely seeking worshippers. Jesus said that in addition to *seeking* after that which is lost that He is also:

Saving Them

And this brings in a whole different dynamic. And it takes the issue of Salvation *out* of the realm of God's *Desire* and puts it squarely in the realm of God's *Design*. And so God doesn't merely "seek after" the lost in the sense that He only *desires* them to be saved- but God *acts* on that Holy Desire and goes one step further and actually saves them.

So we must then realize that Salvation is not only a Desire of God but that it is something that He intends to do. And so as we ponder Salvation- we must not stop at God's Omniscience- that tells us that God "knows" who will be saved at some point in the future- but we must press on into God's Effectualness- in that God actually, and in reality, saves those whom He is seeking.

Now most people in America don't really pay that much attention to English Grammar anymore- which is why we are all so dumb and can't communicate very well. But every language has what are called "Rules of Grammar". And Grammar is the rules that tell us how to use the language we are using. So, for example- in English we have a rule of Grammar that says, "'I' before 'E' except after 'C'". And that rule tells us how to spell certain words and why. And that rule makes absolutely no sense at all- but it is law. And so you have to memorize the rule- if you intend on being able to communicate in life on a higher plain than the kind of language people use today on cell phones.

But the Bible was not written in English. It was written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. And those three languages all have rules of grammar as well. And these rules matter as much as English grammar matters. And just like the tense of English verbs makes a difference- so do the tense of the verbs in the Biblical languages.

And I said all that to say this. When you read this Passage here in **Luke 19** in the original Greek- you find out that Jesus was saying that all of those that Jesus is "seeking" He will "save".

In other words- the only people that will be saved- are those that Jesus seeks after. And conversely, the only people Jesus seeks after are those He intends to save. So there are no people that Jesus seeks after

that He doesn't save. And there are no people that Jesus saves that He has not first sought after. And this is exactly what the Apostle Paul taught in **Romans 8:29&30** when he said:

29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

And again as you examine the original Greek- you see that Paul was saying,

[All of] these whom He predestined, He also called; and [all] these whom He called, He also justified; and [all] these whom He justified, He also glorified.

So 100% of everybody that Jesus seeks after- comes to Jesus. And 100% of everybody who comes to Jesus will be saved, and 100% of everybody who is saved will be kept by God- all the way to Glory! Now I want you to turn with me to read what Jesus Himself said about this from **John 6:37-65**:

37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

40 For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

41 Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven."

42 They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"

43 Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves.

44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I

will raise him up on the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, '**AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.**' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.

46 Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.

47 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

50 This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

51 I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

52 Then the Jews *began* to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?"

53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves.

54 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

55 For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.

56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me.

58 This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever."

59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard *this* said, "This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?"

61 But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, "Does this cause you to stumble?

62 *What* then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.

65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."

Now two different times in this Passage- verses 44 & 65- Jesus used the word "can". Jesus said that no human being "can" come to Him for Salvation unless something happens to them first. And that word means: *having the power or the ability*. So Jesus is saying here that no unsaved human being has the power or the ability to come to Jesus for Salvation unless God sovereignly *draws* him or unless God graciously *grants* that power and ability to him- which is the same thing.

So Jesus is saying here that in and of ourselves- no human being possess the internal disposition to come to Jesus on their own for Salvation. That desire and the power to come to Jesus for Salvation has to be "granted" by the Father. And that Power and that Ability that is granted to us, that supernatural Force that overrides our natural inclination to run and hide from God, that miraculous Energy that drags us to Jesus for Forgiveness and Salvation is called "Grace".

Now look at verse 38 again:

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

... and the Will of God is that Jesus seeks and saves that which is lost. Now look at verse 37 again:

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

Now this verse tells us just who Jesus seeks after and who Jesus saves. This verse tells us who it is among all the lost people in the world that God sovereignly grants the power and ability to come to Jesus for Salvation:

All that the Father gives Me

So those who Jesus seeks after and saves are those who have been "given" to Him by His Father. So these lost people are a gift from God the Father to God the Son. Now look at the second part of verse 37:

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me...

So Jesus is teaching here that all that God gives to Jesus will come to Jesus. In other words- the only people that Jesus seeks after are those who have already been given to Him by His Father. And 100% of them will come to Jesus for Salvation. Now look at the last part of verse 37:

... and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

So out of His great Love for His Father- Jesus will receive 100% of all those who have been given Him- no matter how evil they have been.

And the criteria by which Jesus conducts His seeking has absolutely nothing to do with how "good" or how "bad" that individual has been. It is based on only one thing- the fact that before the foundation off the world- God chose to "set His Love" upon that person to save him. Now look again at **Luke 19:5-7:**

5 When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

6 And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly.

7 When they saw it, they all *began* to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

So once again- the worst person in the crowd- a wicked tax collector- who had become fabulously wealthy because of his criminal activity- is the only one drawn to Jesus. And yet, because the Hand of God is on this sinner- he receives Jesus gladly- while all the religious hypocrites are debating whether Jesus is satan or not.

So there is one more thing to understand here. Jesus seeks and saves a particular kind of person:

... that which is lost

... which means that He doesn't seek or save those who think they are already saved by what they do for themselves. So Jesus will bypass the self-righteous ones who think they are good enough to enter into Heaven by their own good deeds or the merits of their own internal righteousness, and He will seek after those who have been humbled by God's Grace.

And here in this Passage- there is only one man who is being drawn to Jesus- the very worst sinner in the whole town. So this shows us that it doesn't matter how bad we have been. If God has chosen- us- Jesus is seeking us, and if Jesus is seeking us- Jesus will come to our house, and if Jesus comes to our house- Jesus will save us.

So how do we know if we have been chosen by God? How does a person know if God is drawing him to Jesus for Salvation? How does a person know if Jesus is seeking him to save him?

All who are chosen for Salvation, all whom Jesus is seeking to save, all who are being drawn to Jesus - are given the gift of being able to see that they are lost. And that gift is called "Conviction". and is a sovereign Work of the Holy Spirit. Human beings do not originate conviction, they can't create it, you can't "work it up"- it is a Work of God the Holy Spirit- but without it- that lost person will never be saved.

Now this "Holy Spirit Conviction" causes the individual who has been chosen and whom Jesus is seeking after and whom God is drawing to come to the realization that he is entirely lost and sinful and separated from God and that the Wrath of God is bearing down on him like a freight train going at 300 miles an hour and he is chained to the railroad tracks. Here is how the Bible describes the mentality of someone who is under "Holy Spirit Conviction":

Ephesians 2:12b

... separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Now let's take these one at a time:

Separated from Christ

The elected sinner who is being brought under Conviction by God the Holy Spirit is sovereignly given the understanding that he is separated from Jesus Christ. He understands and feels the great distance between himself and God, and he is terrified of what he feels. He realizes that he is entirely alone and he will enter into Eternity alone. This person is granted the ability to understand that God is not near to him- his sin has separated him from the Lord.

Excluded from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers to the Covenants of Promise

God the Holy Spirit sovereignly causes this lost person to realize that he has no linkage- no connection to the long Heritage of believers through the Centuries, and he is entirely cut off from the Promises of God.

Now because Christianity has made such a mark on the American culture- many people today know something about the Bible. And so there are many lost and unsaved people who were raised in Church and who quote the Scriptures rather frequently. Many of these people "lay claim" to the Promises of Scripture- and when they do that- it is incumbent upon us to remind these people that those glorious Biblical Promises have nothing to do with them unless they are saved.

The only Biblical Promises that lost people have any claim to are the ones that guarantee Eternal Judgment. Other than that- God is not with them, God will *not* fight for them, God is *not* working all things together for Good for them, and God will absolutely put more on them than they can handle. We must know that lost people have no claim to the Promises of God- except for those that promise Damnation.

... having no hope ...

Not *some* hope, not a *little* hope- *no* hope. None. Zero hope. Lost people are *completely* doomed and they cannot turn to anyone or anything else to save them. Medicine can't save them from God's Wrath. Technology cannot hide them, Money can't buy a way out, and Political Connections are worthless; their sporadic good deeds in this life are meaningless, and family and friends are helpless.

... without God in the world.

... meaning lost people are completely separated from the only Being who can rescue them. God the Spirit has opened your eyes and you now see the horror of your sin- that you have repeatedly spit in God's face and stomped His Glory in the ground. This is where you full well comprehend how often you have willfully rebelled against the Almighty and how God is absolutely correct to be furious with you- and yet you are standing there all alone.

So this is way more than just "feeling bad" about something. This is infinitely more serious than having some "empty feeling in your heart", or being lonely or wanting to belong. This is light years different than wanting your life to work out or having a desire to achieve greater things in your life or wanting Jesus to come and be a part of your life so He will bless all your plans and help you to find success.

People who are under Holy Spirit conviction don't bargain with God. People who are being sovereignly drawn to Jesus don't debate about how much they need to give up. People who have been chosen by God from before the foundation of the world don't ask Jesus to help them hit more home runs or make more money or come on board their already mapped out life. These people are bowed down with Holy Spirit Conviction and they know they are lost, and they know they're not right with God and they know they need forgiveness. And so the only thing these people want from God is Mercy.

You see, people who are genuinely denying themselves come to Jesus as a broken, trembling, devastated soul who understands that the only thing he deserves is the terrifying Wrath of God. He is completely shattered over his sins- which he now knows are many. And he pleads for just one thing:

Mercy

And the best example of what this looks like anywhere in the Bible is found in **Luke 18:13** when Jesus said:

But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to

me, the sinner!

... no bargaining, no debate;, no struggling with how much sin to give up, no arguing about how many sinful friends to walk away from, no murmuring about how straight the path is, no complaining about how narrow the walk is, no bellyaching about how many times a week they can dabble in sin. No, there is only this- a broken and trembling and humble soul- begging for a Forgiveness and a Salvation they know they don't deserve. Because when a person has been broken like this by God the Holy Spirit- it doesn't matter what Jesus requires of him.

So Holy Spirit Conviction brings forth humble and obedient bond-slaves of Jesus Christ- who find their delight in serving the Lord- even to the point of death. And when people come to Jesus any other way- sooner or later they will want a broader road and they will seek after a return to their sinful rebellion.

Now what we need to know is that 100% of every lost soul who is chosen by God for Salvation experiences this Holy Spirit Conviction. In other words- every single person who is being sought by Jesus goes through this. Every single soul who is going to be saved- are first brought to this place of utter desperation by a sovereign Act of God the Holy Spirit.

And this is the most frightening place for anyone to be- but it is completely necessary. You see until God brings a person to this place- the lost sinner sees no reason to beg God for Mercy. He sees no purpose in repenting. Until God brings that individual to the place where he literally hates the person he has become- he will never seek a Savior. This is what Jesus meant when He said:

Luke 9:23b

... If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Now, as we discovered back when we were in **Luke 9**- "denying yourself" is not about seeing how much of this world's goods you can do without. It is *denying* that there is any "good" in yourself. It is *denying* that you have any merit or any righteousness or any quality that makes you attractive to God. It is denying that you possess something that

God has need of. It is denying that anything you have ever done or said is even remotely capable of justifying yourself before God.

So denying yourself is being sovereignly brought to Jesus by an Act of God the Holy Spirit where you are devastated over your sins- with no claim of deserving *anything* from the Lord.

And the result of this is that godly fruit will begin to be manifested in every single human being who has been drawn to Jesus for Salvation. Look again at **Luke 19:8**:

Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much."

Now this action on behalf of Zaccheus proves that God had sovereignly changed his nature. Because there is nothing so close to human beings besides God than their money. Watch how a person handles his money and you can see how he understands God. And all through the Bible- money is used by God to determine how much value a person places on God. And if a person places no value on God- he is not saved.

But part and parcel to true Salvation is that the transformation of the human nature from being fallen to being Divine changes the way a person looks at both money and possessions.

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Hebrews 13:5-6

⁵ *Make sure that* your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"

⁶ so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?"

So as God changed Zaccheus' heart- the outward manifestation that he had truly repented was that he took what he formerly loved and

had committed great evil in obtaining- his money and wealth- and he was willing to give it away.

You see, trusting God carries a strong impulse toward simplicity rather than accumulation. Jesus told His Disciples back in **Luke 12:33-34**:

33 Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys.

34 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Now focus for a moment on the words, "**Sell your possessions.**" Who was Jesus talking to? **Luke 12:22a** gives us the answer:

And He [Jesus] said to his disciples...

Now the disciples were by and large not wealthy people. They didn't have a lot of possessions. But still Jesus says, "**Sell your possessions.**" Now notice that He doesn't say how *many* possessions to sell. For example- to the rich ruler in **Luke 18:22** Jesus said:

... sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.

... so here- Jesus required everything. But here- when Zaccheus met Jesus- he said in **Luke 19:8**:

Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much.

So it isn't the dollar amount- but the degree to which Jesus is more valuable than what you possess that matters. In this case- Zaccheus gave fifty percent of all his possessions. But over in **The Acts 4:36&37** it says:

36 Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement),

37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

... so this man sold at least one field.

So the Bible doesn't tell us how many possessions to sell. But why does it say sell possessions at all? Why? Giving alms - using your money to show love for those without the necessities of life and without the Gospel (the necessity of eternal life) - is so important that if you don't have any liquid assets to give- you should sell something so you can give.

But now think what this means in context. These disciples are not cash-poor rich people whose money is all tied up in bonds or real estate. Most people like that do, in fact, usually have fairly deep savings. But Jesus didn't say, "Take some of your savings and give alms." He said, **"Sell something, and give alms."** Why?

The simplest assumption is that these folks lived close enough to the edge that they did not have cash to give and had to sell something so they could give. And Jesus wanted his people to move toward simplification, not accumulation.

But what's the point with all this? Was Zaccheus trying to buy his Salvation? Do we have to sell something in order to earn God's Favor? No, because there aren't enough possessions on the whole earth to do that. No, Zaccheus giving his wealth away was done *after* he was saved. In other words- his giving was part of the fruit of his Salvation that allowed him to treasure Jesus above half of what he had gotten before. So giving is not a means by which God saves- it is fruit in displaying the transformed heart.

The point is that there is a powerful impulse in a truly godly life toward simplicity rather than accumulation. And that impulse comes from treasuring God as Shepherd and Father and King more than we treasure all our possessions. And the impulse is a strong impulse for two reasons:

1. Jesus said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy (literally: those who have things) to enter the kingdom of God!" (**Luke 18:24**). In **Luke 8:14** Jesus said that financial and material riches have the power to "choke" the Word of God to the point where the Word no longer has any effect on us. But truly born again people want to

enter the Kingdom vastly more than we want things. And we don't want the Word of God to be choked in our lives. So there is a strong impulse to simplify rather than accumulate.

2. The other reason is that we want the infinite Value of God to be manifest to the world. And Jesus tells us here that selling things and giving alms is one way to show that God is more valuable than whatever we sell.

And the point is that the heart that has been truly converted by an Act of God the Holy Spirit is trusting Jesus alone to be Shepherd, Father and King. And that carries a strong impulse toward simplicity rather than accumulation. And this brings worship out from the inner, hidden place of the heart into more visible actions for the Glory of God. And that is what Zaccheus did here.

Now there is no other Statement like this from anyone else. Jesus is the only Person in the history of the world Who says things like this. Mohamed never said that he seeks and saves that which is lost. "lord" Kishna never said anything like this. Confucius never said this. Only Jesus said this.

Every other false and man-made religion and human philosophy has it completely backwards. Every other religion tells *us* to do the seeking. All false religions teach us to climb trees like Zacchaeus- to depend upon our *own* exertion, our own energy, our own actions for any hope of ascending to Heaven.

Demonically inspired religions teach that we are to do something to bridge the gulf between us and God. "*If you want Salvation*", they say, "*then seek for it*"!

So in a sense- we live in a planet full of seekers. We are, in one way or another, "tree-climbers"- maneuvering ourselves to gain some special advantage, to achieve some better perspective, trying to find personal peace. And then Jesus comes.

We are consumed by our own seeking until Jesus comes and says to us,

Luke 19:5b

... hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.

We are very busy trying to make ourselves better until Jesus says, *"Stop your searching. Stop trying to save yourself. I have come to seek and save the lost."*

And at that moment- our exertion is silenced- because no one speaks like Jesus. And so all of our seeking- our trying to reach the Divine on our own- is silenced when we learn that the Divine has reached down to us- by becoming one of us.

So here we are, spinning our wheels in hopes of getting God, and then God, despite all our belittling works- comes and gets us. The great gulf that we couldn't bridge- is the very burden He takes upon Himself.

We were lost sinners- who rightly deserved God's Judgment. And yet Jesus came to take that Judgment for us. He suffered in our place on the Cross, died and was buried, and then on the third day He was raised back to life. And then He ascended to the Father's Right Hand from where He now reigns over all. Jesus sought us, and He has saved us- if we trust Him. And that is why we worship Him. Do you believe this?

Amen. Let's pray.

© 2008- 2015 by The Covenant of Peace Church. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America

The Covenant of Peace Church 13600 John Clark Road Gulfport, Mississippi 39503 228.832.7729 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1996 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse study of **The Gospel According to Luke**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.