

Jesus Came to Seek and Save the Lost, Part 2

Luke 19:10

Well, as we come to God's word this morning and consider the significance of the resurrection for us today, I want to direct your attention to a single verse in Luke's gospel, which is Luke 19:10. Luke 19:10. You can turn there in your Bibles. And Luke 19:10 says, "The Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." What does it mean for Jesus to seek and to save? What does it mean for Jesus to seek and to save? And to answer this question, I'd like to turn over to Luke 15 and just spend a few minutes there. Luke 15, a chapter that begins once again with a controversy. A controversy over Jesus spending time compassionately, mercifully spending time with the lost.

In Luke 15:1 to 2, we read this: "Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'" Familiar complaint once again, Jesus is here offending all propriety

among the religious elites. Because as a famous rabbi, he ought to be acting differently. Shouldn't be spending time with these people. He shouldn't be engaging in table fellowship with these lost people, these deplorables.

So he's hearing these complaints, this grumbling, this typical Israelite grumbling, complaining against God, complaining against God in his ways, God and his compassion. And so it says in verse 3 that "Jesus told them this parable." We actually see in, in Luke 15, he tells three parables, but they're really all one and the same, and that's why it's in the singular. He tells them "this parable," he tells them about a shepherd who seeks and saves his lost sheep. He tells about a woman who seeks and finds her lost coin, and he tells about a father who seeks and saves his lost son.

The three are one and the same. They're telling the same story. They're making the same point to say this is God's way, don't get on the wrong side of God's compassion. So what does Jesus mean in Luke 19:10 when he says that this is his mission, "to seek and to save them the lost"?

Well, Luke has already prepared us for the answer in chapter 19 by telling us these stories in chapter 15.

Let's read a couple of them, starting in verse 4.

"What man of you," Jesus asked. He's starting into the parable. "What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he's lost one of them, does not leave the 99 in the open country and go after the one that is lost until he finds it. When he's found it, he lays it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he comes home he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I've found my sheep that was lost.' Just so I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.

"Or what woman having 10 silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it. When she's found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I'd lost.' Just so I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

In the case of the lost sheep, listen, that sheep is wolf bait. If the shepherd does not go searching for it, doesn't go find it, doesn't carry it home on his shoulders. And in the same way the lost sinner is ravaged by sin and subdued by Satan and by other sinful abusers and victimizers in this cruel and wretched world.

That's a picture of a lost sinner, like a helpless sheep lost in the wilderness, prey to every predator at the mercy of eating from a bad food source or drinking from a bad water source, subject to every pitfall, every ditch falling off every Cliff, victimized by every disease. Every parasite latching on to it take away its life.

In the same way, every lost sinner falls prey to sin, is controlled by degrading lusts, controlled, enslaved by desires and covetousness and greed. And only Christ, when he comes seeking, is able to save that lost sheep. Only he is able to find them, wherever they are, in whatever gully or alley or ditch they've fallen into, and reach down, lift

them up, put them on his shoulders, clean them off, take 'em home and heal them.

In the case of a lost coin, you think about a small, dirty little coin, perhaps tarnish silver. It's not going to be easy to see in the dim light of a home, like especially a first century home only lit, lit by a lamp. As a small coin, easy to forget, its value is negligible. Its loss may have little impact in some homes, so if it falls between the floorboards or gets buried in the dirt floor of the home, that coin is gone. It's forgotten forever, just like that inanimate object, a dirty, tarnished silver coin lost in the dust of a dirty floor.

Sinners, too, are like that. Covered in mire and filth of a fallen world, ignorant of their true condition, oblivious about the wretchedness, the hopelessness of their hearts and their condition, their situation. And unless Christ notices that lost coin, unless he comes searching for it, like this woman who comes and looks for her small, insignificant little coin of little value, but to her of

great value, there that lost sinner is going to sit until Judgment Day, abandoned to a dreadful and inescapable fate.

But no coin of Christ's is without value. No possession of his is insignificant. Each and everyone is remembered by him, known by him. He always comes looking, always comes seeking actively, searching diligently. And whatever he seeks, he is sure to find, eager to reclaim as his own. Oh, I know others may count it of little value, but he will polish it up, make it shine with resplendent beauty, and he will affix that little coin into the crown of his victory and display that coin forever, of his saving glory.

Safe in the arms of the shepherd, we're like a coin held in his loving hands. This is what it means to be sought, found, and saved by Jesus Christ. Charles Spurgeon says that in his incarnation, "Jesus came after the lost sheep. In his life he continued to seek it. In his death he laid it upon his shoulders. In his resurrection he bore it on its way, and in his ascension he brought it home rejoicing. Our Lord's career," says Spurgeon, "is a course

of soul winning, a life laid out for his people, and in it you may trace the whole process of salvation." End Quote.

So born upon Jesus' shoulders, Christ's sheep are under divine protection, held fast by strong loving arms. John 10:27 Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, they hear me, I speak, and there are a lot of people who hear but don't hear. But my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one." That is what it means to seek and to save the lost, to be eternally saved, forever saved, held fast by his power.

We're in Luke 15. We can't leave Luke 15 without reading the next parable, right. So let's read in, starting in verse 11 about the parable, the prodigal son. "He said, 'There was a man who had two sons. The younger them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of property that's coming to me.'"

Basically, just to help you understand the significance of that in that day, this is basically saying, "Father, I wish you were dead so that I could get my inheritance. Now can we just pretend that that's the case, that you're dead, gone out of my life so I can have your money?" Basically, what he's saying.

Look at the father, "He divided his property between them." He did it. It's not a really a parable about parenting, by the way. It's a parable about the father's love for this guy. But look how wretched he is. "The father divided his property between them." Had to hurt. "Not many days later, the younger son gathered all that he had took a journey to into a far country and there he squandered his property in reckless living."

It's his character. It's predictable. A son who dishonors his father like that, cares nothing for his father, is going to do exactly this. It's totally predictable, inevitable. Verse 14, "When he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country and he

began to be in need. And so he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields, fields to feed pigs." Oh, that's a low spot to fall for a Jewish boy. "He was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything."

Heartless, ruthless, cruel world, isn't it? "When he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread? But I perish here with hunger. I'll rise and go to my father, and I'll say to him, "Father, I've sinned against heaven, and before you, I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' " By the way, this is not repentance. This is yet another scheme for him to find a way to get what he wants. He's not thinking of himself as a son. He's still not thinking about a relationship with his father. He just wants to eat.

"So he arose," verse 20, "came to his father. But [look at this] while he's still a long way off, his father saw him, felt compassion." Why, when he's still a long way off? Why? Because the father has been searching for him,

seeking him, looking for him. His father saw him while still a long way off, saw him, felt compassion and did what no Jewish, dignified man would ever do. He ran in public, embraced his son and kissed him.

The son coming back into town, he would be on, in danger of being publicly disgraced and banished from the community for the dishonor he showed his father. And so the father prevents that he takes a preemptive act of love and compassion to run and get there before the rest of the townspeople can get there and drive this kid away to give him what he deserves. He runs, embraces him, kisses him. This kid dirty, filthy, unclean, having spent all this time with the pigs, the father brings him close.

The son said to him, here's his prepared speech, "Father, I've sinned against heaven, and before you, I'm no longer worthy to be called your son." The father cuts him off right there, said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe, put it on him, bring a, bring a ring, put a ring on his hand and the shoes on his feet. Bring out the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my

son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. They began to celebrate."

It's a picture there of sovereign initiative, the Father's Sovereign initiative, running after his lost son. And it says there "He was dead and is alive." So what has he done with his son? He's caused him to be, it's a picture of being born again. He's brought back into the family. He's adopted as a son. He's a true heir. He's wearing his father's ring. He's wearing his father's cloak, his robe. He's prepared by wearing shoes on his feet, ready to do the father's work and the father's business.

Listen, when Jesus says, "The Son of man came to seek and to save the lost," he's talking about a grave condition, a mortal danger, and he is portraying a situation truly of resurrection. Resurrection is what's required. Resurrection power to take the dead person, the dead lost person, and raise him to life. To give him new life, eternal life, real life, fruit-producing life.

That's what he means when he says, "The Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." Jesus came to conduct a rescue operation. To search, find, rescue, save, deliver. He came for the purpose of seeking. And he's going to continue seeking until he finds. The search is not over until the lost thing he's looking for is found. And get this, the means that he employs, namely that of seeking the lost, it's sufficient to the end for which he purposed it, namely that of saving the lost.

So what he seeks, he finds. What he finds he saves. What he saves, he saves fully, he saves finally, he saves deeply, profoundly. He saves eternally, so that the lost escape the grave. The mortal danger that threatened them of being lost and gone forever. Jesus says, That's gone. Think of it no more. I give them eternal life. They'll never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. Like a loving shepherd, he seeks the lost sheep all over the countryside, over hill and dale until he finds it.

Like a woman in her home, she lights a lamp, sweeps her house, diligently searches, and so, in the same way

Christ searches for his own. However long it takes, wherever it takes him. We see in Luke's gospel that Jesus sought and found Simon Peter, also, his brother Andrew, two sons of Zebedee, James and John. We know from John's gospel that he found them first while they were with John the Baptist, but near the Jordan River while John was baptizing.

But the, later on, we see in Luke's gospel, we see them back in Galilee and they're fishing. They're conducting their fishing business. And so Jesus seeks and finds them there on a fishing trip. He saved them. He saved them, called them to lifelong discipleship and he called them to apostleship.

Jesus, as we already saw, he sought and found Levi. Where was he? He was sitting in a tax booth in the city. Saved him, called him to discipleship, then turned him into an apostle. As I said, this Levi is known to us as Matthew. He wrote a gospel you may have heard of.

We read about the sinful woman, came into Simon's house. He sought and found her too, while having lunch in the home of Simon the Pharisee. The last place that you would ever expect to find someone like that, and there she is. She comes into a midst of a hostile crowd, "tractor beamed in," finding her savior because he's drawing her to himself. All those there, I mean, there's no one more hostile is there, than, than those who are religiously minded, attentive, church going scribes and Pharisees, ready to condemn, ready to judge, ready to banish. Jesus brings her in, seeks her, finds her, saves her.

Many of the lost that Jesus sought and found. Kind of ironically, they were in synagogues, places of worship, attending worship services. That's kind of worth keeping in mind, right, every time we go to church? That's a good place to find lost people. And why wouldn't? Why wouldn't it be that way? It's here where the truth is preached and proclaimed. This is the only place that lost people can find truth. To understand it, to see how the sin problem is dealt with. You should expect that every time you come to church, every, every, time you come to church, you're looking for the lost people that Jesus may be drawing.

But we see all through Luke's gospel it's in the most unlikely of places; at times, at the most unlikely and inconvenient of times, in the most, like, unlikely of circumstances that Jesus seeks, finds, saves his lost people. Story after story throughout the gospels, Jesus seeks the lost. He seeks them whenever they are, wherever they may be, in whatever condition they might be in. It does not matter. He goes and gets his own. He's got 100% record of getting who he's after.

When we get into Luke's second volume, the Book of Acts, even though Christ has risen from the dead and ascended into heaven, even from heaven, that doesn't stop him from seeking and finding his own. Christ is doing the same thing he's seeking and saving the lost. We see the young zealot Saul, who travels from Jerusalem. In fact, if you want to turn to Acts chapter 9. We'll come back to Luke in a second, but in Acts chapter 9 we see the young zealot Saul, who we know then later as Paul.

He's traveling from Jerusalem and he's not yet saved. He's not converted to this point, but he's on the Damascus road, going to Damascus. And Luke tells us in Acts chapter 9 verse 1 that Saul "still breathing out threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord." Interesting picture, isn't it? Him breathing, he's breathing in and out threats and murder. That's what, that's what fills his lungs, that's what gives him life, is to threaten and murder.

"He went to the high priest, asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way," the way is the early Christians, men or women, "he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'

"He said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise, enter the city, you'll be told what you're to do.'" There's nothing can stop the Lord. Saul, knock off this nonsense. Stop this

foolishness. You're persecuting me. You're mine. I'm redeploying you. You got a new mission. From that moment on that road, as he was on his way to engage in religious persecution, the jailing and the executing of the followers of Jesus Christ, Saul is radically saved. The world has never been the same.

He starts preaching the faith that he once tried to destroy, and he's aggressive about it. He preaches the risen Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah, the Lord of all. What explains that? How does that make sense? Only because of the power of Christ, the mission of Christ to seek and to save. It's fueled by resurrection power, miraculous divine power.

Even from heaven, we know Christ seeks and saves the lost. We can see all through Acts this is the case. He deploys his Holy Spirit and by the Spirit working in and through the members of his church preaching his saving gospel, he keeps doing the same thing. He sends Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, a high court official traveling by chariot. He sends Philip to seek and save him.

He sends Peter to Caesarea, to the House of Cornelius, to a Roman centurion, to preach the gospel. Cornelius is saved. His entire household is saved. He sends Paul and Barnabas, then Paul and Silas, to seek and save the lost, those whom the Father is given to the son, those who for whom Christ died all over the Roman Empire, all over in Asia Minor and into Europe, to the ends of the earth.

He sends Paul and Silas to a Philippian jail. Puts him in jail for a time. Why? Because there's an evangelistic prospect there. A Philippian jailer, he's about to kill himself. No need to live anymore after the earthquake happens, all the prisoners have escaped. He knows his life is over, so he's about to kill himself. And on the brink of his own destruction, he's saved. Jesus finds his own. He saves them, rescues them. In the case of this Philippian jailer, he saved his whole household too.

We can go on story after story. In the historical records of the Gospels, in the historical record of the Book of Acts, throughout the history of the Christian

Church, down to this very day, Christ is seeking the lost. Wherever they are, whenever they are, to the uttermost parts of the earth and in whatever condition they may be; it does not matter. Christ is the risen Savior. He's been resurrected by divine power. He has all power, all authority in heaven, on Earth at his disposal. He's conquered sin, and death, and demons, and every foe. Nothing prevents him from seeking and saving his own. Never forget that.

Why does he come to seek and save? Let's go back over to Luke 19:10, because the answer is right there in the text in what Jesus said. It's subtle, but it's clearly there. "The Son of man came." "The Son of man came," and then we see, in order "to seek and to save the lost." Those two infinitives showing purpose, to seek and to save. They tell us, yes, why Christ came. That's the purpose of his coming. We've summarized that briefly already, but it's that title, "the Son of man," followed by the main verb in the sentence "he came," the Son of man "came."

We find here a greater and an ultimate purpose at work. I can only summarize this briefly, but that title "Son of man," it points to the various roles of the Messiah prophesied all throughout the Old Testament, most particularly in places like Ezekiel and Daniel. But the title of the Son of man points to the various roles of the Messiah, the Christ, the, the one whom God ordained from before the foundation of the world to seek and save these people.

In an ultimate sense, Jesus came to seek and save because he is being obedient to an eternal calling. He is executing God's decree of salvation. He is carrying out his perfect will. This is way bigger than any individual one of us. This is eternal. This is an infinite mind at work. He is executing an eternal decree.

As the Son of man, Jesus is the ideal man. He is the perfection of humanity. As the Son of man, he's the one who represents man to God and God to man. As the Son of man, he is the mediator in perfect, righteous sympathy to the concerns of God and man alike, and bringing them into

perfect unity and harmony. And as the Son of man, he is the one who wields absolute power and all divine authority. It says in Daniel 7:14, "The ancient of days gave the Son of man Dominion and glory and an everlasting indestructible Kingdom."

The entire world, every human being without exception, belongs to him and will serve him. And so he has come, as we read here in the gospels, he has come first in mercy, offering salvation. When he comes again, he will come in recompense. He will come to dispense justice.

Maybe we could just look at one text. Well might be a couple, but go back to Luke chapter 4, Luke chapter 4 and just mention this, this one here in Luke when we see here in Luke 4:16 and following Jesus's revealing himself as Messiah, the Christ the prophesied Son of man, and when he did that, he did so first of all to the people of his hometown, a place where he grew up in Nazareth.

And it says in Luke 4, starting in verse 16, that "he came to Nazareth where he'd been brought up, and as it was

his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day he stood up to read. The scroll of Prophet Isaiah was given to him, and he unrolled the scroll, found the place where it was written. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And it says, "He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant. And sat down."

Sitting down in those days was the teaching position. "The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'" Remarkable. The words that he read from that scroll on that day, from Isaiah 61, described his mission to seek and to save. Described his rescue mission, described his mission of mercy. And what is so interesting about that is that he, in reading Isaiah 61: 1 and 2, he stopped short and did not read the entire passage.

In fact, where he stops, it's an abrupt stop. He reads all of Isaiah 61:1 and starts in the verse 2 and then he cuts off reading abruptly right in the middle of the verse. Had he kept on reading, here's what that would say. Isaiah 61:1 and 2. He says, "He's anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God."

He didn't read that part. Why not? Why did Jesus stop mid-verse? Why didn't he read the rest of the verse and tell everybody about the day of vengeance of our God? Because at his first coming, he came for salvation. And we now are still living in this gospel age. It's the same time. Now is the appointed time, the day of salvation. And it is the mission of Christ's Church that he's reigning on high. Building his church, he does it through us evangelizing, us preaching the gospel.

It is the mission, Matthew 28, for us to "make disciples," to teach this gospel, to spread it around the

earth and make disciples by amplifying God's love and mercy in the gospel. But that doesn't abrogate the rest of the verse. That's coming, too. When Christ returns to earth, at his Second Coming, he will come for retribution.

Jesus taught about it, as did the apostles. There are many texts we could go to, but I'll just give you one in 2 Thessalonians 1:6. You can just write that down. But 2 Thessalonians 1:6 and following. Paul writes this that "God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you." He's talking to believers here. "And to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."

You think they're gonna, the sinners of this world, whether they're in places of power, or in places without power, you think they're getting away with anything, with their sin? Think again. Paul says, "They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of

the Lord and from the glory of his might when he comes on that day, to be glorified in his saints and to be marveled at among all who have believed."

The day of the vengeance of our God, that's coming. So the time is now to take advantage of the opportunity to repent and believe. Today is the day of salvation. Now is the appointed time. Don't waste another minute. We're still living in the first part of the Messiah's mission, which Jesus proclaimed in that Nazareth Synagogue 2000 years ago. Good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, sight to the blind, and liberty or freedom for all who are oppressed.

The poor, captives, blind and oppressed. Those are the lost that Jesus came to seek and to save, and everyone who sees himself in those terms, in that lost condition, which is, they'll only see themselves that way by God's mercy, by God giving grace to them to open their eyes to it. But by God's grace in Jesus Christ and through faith in him, he will find them and he will save them. Why? Because Jesus loves his lost sheep.

It's a mission of love right now. This is a, a time of love and mercy and compassion; of salvation. Don't neglect it. Don't spurn the opportunity. Paul put this in personal terms and Galatians 2:20. He talks about the Son of God who loved me, who gave himself for me. He extends that same thinking to all believers in Ephesians 5:2 saying, "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us." Later on in that same chapter, verse 25, "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for the church."

This is a time of love and mercy and compassion and kindness. It's the mission of Jesus Christ to show love of God to lost sinners, to seek and to save those whom the Father has given to them, or given to him. So he comes to us. He demonstrates the father's love by dying in our place, offering his own life up as a sacrifice for our sins. He brings us the father's love by saving us from our sins, so that when he comes, 2 Thessalonians 2:16, he will be marveled at by us. Second Thessalonians 2:16 says, "God our Father loved us and he gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace."

Why does Jesus come to seek and to save? It's to fulfill stage one in his mission, the rescue mission. This is the time to bring divine love and salvation to everyone who believes. The means by which Jesus saves him, his people, from their sins is by dying for their sins. He loved us. He gave himself for us.

He died as a substitutionary sacrifice. That means he took our place. He did so to satisfy the just wrath of a holy God, the wrath that's due because of our sins against God. What has God done for us? He's given us every good thing. He's given us every opportunity. He's given us breath to breathe. He's given us a heartbeat. He's given us bodies. He's given us eyes to see. He's given us families. He's given us all good things to enjoy. And what have we done? Have we honored God as God? By obeying him and doing his will? No.

Have we given him thanks? No, we've been ungrateful, complaining, grumbling. We've sinned against God. So Jesus came to die for our sins. If you back up from Luke 19 and

go to Luke 18:33, or 32 and 33, Jesus points to this substitutionary cross work that he will fulfill. He tells his disciples here, and this is again a, a week or so before the cross, so it's, it's on the horizon for him. "The Son of man will be delivered over to the Gentiles. He'll be mocked, shamefully treated, and spit upon."

Can you imagine something more unfitting than that? To show that kind of an insult to the precious savior, the Son of God? "After flogging him, they will kill him." And then this: "On the third day he will rise." Why would the sinless Son of man be mocked, treated with contempt, spat upon, flogged, killed. Did he deserve it? No. Hebrews 4:15, "He is without sin." He is completely without sin, Hebrews 4:15. And so he is the only innocent victim, whoever has been. He didn't deserve to die. He didn't deserve any of this. We did, though.

So Christ suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, because he chose to offer himself as a subst, a substitute sacrifice for our sins. He died the death that we deserved so that God could give us the reward of life

that Jesus earned and merited for us. The suffering of the Messiah for sins is detailed in the Old Testament. You can read like Psalm 22, Isaiah 53. Magnificent texts that are fulfilled completely and only in Jesus Christ, his death on the cross.

But we can summarize that in the passage that Paul wrote, 2 Corinthians 5:21, that "God made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." So here's what that means: God placed on Jesus the sins of all lost sinners whom Christ came to save, punished him instead of us, poured out all of his wrath on Jesus when he was on the cross.

And then God took the righteousness of God in Christ, a perfect righteousness, a righteousness that fulfilled all righteousness and placed that righteousness on us. Like covering us with a garment, pure, spotless white. All those and only those who believe receive it. That's how it happened. That's the how question. It's how he did it. An act of pure mercy, perfect justice coming together in the cross. Jesus satisfied both the mercy and the justice of

God. Not one sin is ignored, dismissed, let go, overlooked. He finds them all, grabs them all, places them on Jesus Christ. So divine justice has been fully satisfied. He is just.

But he's also merciful. He is the justifier of the one who puts faith in Jesus Christ. There's not one ounce of saving mercy that's wasted. All the mercy that he poured out on his people is effectual to save all those that he came looking for. Not one ounce of wasted mercy.

Today, Jesus is still seeking and still saving his people. And the one distinguishing characteristic trait of every lost sinner who is found and saved by the Lord is this. They believe this message. Those who don't believe, who rejected, who turn away, or those who say they believe but then just go on living like they've never been changed, that's the rest of the world. That's unbelief.

It's only those who believe this message, believe this truth, they believe, and therefore they show they prove evidence, show forth they belong to him. Believing is

seeing. Believing is truly seeing things that are only perceived spiritually. Paul says it this way in saying in 2 Corinthians 4:18, that "we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient [temporal, passing away] but the things that are unseen, they're eternal." The things that are unseen, principled, those things last forever. Only faith the God grants, gives us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to receive, believe, and understand, and only those with eyes to see and faith to believe will see the Lord resurrected, risen in his salvation glory.

Remember what we read earlier in the service in John 20, who was the first one to see the resurrected Jesus? It's Mary Magdalene, wasn't it? Luke 8:2 says that she was rescued from a very severe case of demonic possession herself. Jesus cast seven demons out of this woman. She was one of the lost sheep that Jesus came to seek and save. And though Mary was once lost, supernaturally lost, which means it affected her physically, cast her out socially. She was affected morally, unclean, ceremonially and richly in all other ways.

Now she's the first one to see the resurrected Lord. What an honor, what a privilege. She's found. She's rescued. She's saved from her sins. Though she was once blind, she now sees. In fact, she's first disciple to see the Lord Jesus Christ before any of the apostles. She's the one reporting to the apostles. "I have seen the Lord."

So whom does Jesus seek and save? Sinners like Mary Magdalene, broken, decrepit, morally corrupt and defiled, blind and proud, supernaturally bound and slaved by sin, oppressed by the devil, sinners just like me and just like you. What does it mean for Jesus to seek and save? It means that he comes for us. By the Holy Spirit, he opens our eyes to our sinful condition. He shows us our need for salvation, that we're nothing more than spiritually poor captors of sin, blind of the truth, and possessed and oppressed by sin and Satan.

Then the Spirit draws us to Christ our Savior, takes us up in his arms as a loving shepherd carries his sheep. When and where does Jesus seek and save? Good news, whatever and wherever you are. He'll come get you in

whatever condition you're in. He's there, then and there to go and find you. He found all his people during his physical presence on earth. Not one of them was let go. He found every single one, hunted them down, all through Galilee and all through Judea, even into Perea, into the Decapolis. He found his people while he was on earth.

And now he finds them by his omniscient, omnipresent Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit whom he has deployed, given to his people, and all of his people go out sharing the gospel, spreading the gospel, preaching the truth to lost sinners who belong to Christ. And you know what they do? All of them respond, all of his people respond in faith. "My sheep hear my voice."

Why does Jesus seek and save? For the sake of God's glory In obedience to the divine mission that God gave him from before the foundation of the world, to love the people that the father gave him, to save them from their sins and bring them into the freedom of eternal life.

Finally, how does he do that? How does Christ seek and save? He died on the cross for all of us who believe to pay the just penalty, do our sins to deliver us from the wrath of God. And God showed his approval, his acceptance of that perfect sacrifice, by raising this Jesus from the dead, which is what we're celebrating today.

Lost sinner, if you're here and you realize that you're lost, if any of this is kind of affecting you, striking you, man, listen, don't turn away. If he's calling you, don't, don't ignore that call. Will you come to him today? For your sake, he said this in John 20:29, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed." That could be you. If you'll believe in him who you cannot see right now, but believe in him, hearing the message, reading it on the pages of Scripture, you will one day rejoice with inexpressible, glorious joy. Even now as you obtained the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your soul.

All you saints, you who once were lost and now have been found, you who once were blind and now see, when he returns, one day, you know what? We're going to see him as

he is. He will be glorified in us, in his saints on that day. He will be marveled at. As we look at him and rejoice, we see him in whom we have believed, as we share eternally in his resurrection life. Amen.

Let's pray. Our Father, we thank you so much for this glorious gospel. And we thank you for a day such as this to remember, as we do once a year on Easter and this Resurrection Sunday, to remember that Christ triumphed over the grave. We see the death of death and the death of Christ. We see the conquering of love, the triumph of your grace. We see your power over sin and corruption and death. And we are so grateful that you have been gracious to us.

For those who are here, who may still be in a lost condition, not yet found, we pray that you would show saving mercy and grace to them as well. For the sake of your glory, for the sake of your gospel, in the name of Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.