



## He Came to Serve the Helpless

Mark 10; Luke 2

Steve Holdaway, LifeSpring Church, 12.23.18

### Sermon Bumper video

**What's at stake:** If you don't understand the depth of why Jesus came, how can you find meaning at Christmas or any time of the year?

#### Review: "He Came" series

He came to set the captive free.

He came to give abundant life.

He came to die a sacrificial death.

#### Today:

**Jesus came to serve the helpless and hopeless. Mark 10:32-38** NIV

#### Context:

32 They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. 33 "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, 34 who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise."

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

37 They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

38 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

39 "We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, (James-beheaded; John-imprisoned) 40 but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

41 When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.

#### Jesus explains why he came:

42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 **For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**"

#### Explanation

James and John were not bad disciples. They were not power hungry. John was "the disciple that Jesus loved." He proved his allegiance to Christ in serving him into his old age and suffering in exile on the island of Patmos. John would become the first disciplined martyr for his faith—beheaded by Herod.

But they (and their mother, Salome, Matt. 20) were misguided. They could not understand that their Messiah would not set up an earthly kingdom—that, instead, he would voluntarily serve, suffer, and die. They thought that the kingdom, in which Jesus promised that they

would each sit on a throne, (Matt. 19) was for their lifetime, instead of at the millennial kingdom to come.

To this day, one of the main reasons that the Jewish people reject Jesus of Nazareth as the long-awaited Messiah is because he suffered and served. They could not imagine a Messiah who would serve and suffer and die. That's why they do not believe that Isaiah 53 speaks about the Messiah.

### **Application**

**You enter the kingdom of God by becoming the least, not the greatest.**

If God's expression of himself on earth was the Suffering Servant, it's a pretty good indication that we are expected to suffer as servants when he asks.

It's part of God paradox for life: To receive, you have to give. To keep your life, you have to give up your life. To live to God, you have to die to self. To be first, you have to be last. To become great, you must become a servant.

**If you fail to serve the helpless and hopeless, you are not obeying, period.**

Jesus set the bar. He became the model. His whole ministry was directed toward the hopeless and helpless. That's why he spent his time with the poor and marginalized, not the religious elite.

It's the hopeless and helpless that know that they need a savior. Most self-actualized, self-sufficient suburbanites don't feel the need. If we are going to see more people come to Christ, we cannot just focus on people like us.

To receive salvation, one has to be convicted of their need. To be saved, you have to know that you are lost. **Homeless person image**

Someone you know going through a divorce? It's an open door. Someone lose a loved one? Have a friend who is addicted to alcohol, drugs, sex? Know someone who just lost their job? It's time to pray and reach out.

Leave margin in your life and finances for the poor and needy. Calendar it. Set aside money for it. Take your kids and teach them.

**Illus:** My kids hearing thousands of my sermons. But, it's the mission trips, the nursing home visits, the service projects that they will remember.

### **What are we doing as a church to serve the helpless and hopeless?**

- Freeway
- Essential Pregnancy Services
- Good News Jail and Prison Ministry
- Hillcrest Mable Rose
- Food Pantry/Emergency Assistance Fund
- World Hunger Fund
- Benevolence

**These are all included in our unified budget!**

Bellevue Together: Last week about 10 members gathered with dozens of others from area churches to distribute the Christmas gifts that many of you donated.

However, it's your one-on-one outreach that will make the most difference.

### **Where is this truth found in the Christmas story? (Image of angels and shepherds)**

**Luke 2:8-20 NIV**

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you

good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

### **Shepherds: A picture of the helpless and hopeless**

The surprise birth announcement came not to the priests, not to the religious leaders, not to the king—but to the lowest of the lowly: shepherds. They were looked down upon; they weren't good enough. They were outcasts and ceremonially unclean so that they couldn't go to temple even if they were in town and not out in the fields. They were taking care of smelly sheep, some of which would be sacrificed at the temple for worship—yet they couldn't go.

### **As one commentator puts it...**

"What a poignant description of what it was like to be an overlooked member of first century Jewish society. No wonder it was unthinkable that God would choose a group of sheep herders to receive the first birth

announcement pertaining to his Son's arrival. By instructing the angels to "go tell it on the mountain" the Creator wasn't just randomly selecting those who would be the first to hear. He knew what he was doing. He was making a statement. Nobodies are somebodies to God. Those who spend their nights and days caring for sheep with matted wool matter to him." So, the Good Shepherd came to shepherds.

### **Preview of the Announcement: v.10**

**"Do not be afraid"**—God is in your midst. Same thing angels said to the women at the tomb of Jesus.

**"I bring you good news of great joy"**—This message isn't doom and gloom; it's not a guilt trip. It is good news that will fill you with joy.

**"For all the people"**—for everyone here

### **The Content of the Announcement: v.11**

**"Today"**—not tomorrow or yesterday, but today. God is doing something today.

**"In the city of David"**—in Bethlehem (town of perhaps 300) God has always worked through the least, the common, the ones that others deem insignificant.

**"a Savior has been born to you"**—for you personally. Salvation is to be received individually and personally.

**"Christ the Lord"**—the Messiah/Anointed One is God.

**The Sign: v.12**—"a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger" When God is at work, he always provides a sign.

### **The Confirmation: vv.13-14**

Now a multitude of angels join the angel and proclaim the glory of God and pronounce peace upon those on whom God's favor rests—not good will to all men.

### **The Immediate Obedience: vv.15-16**

The hurried off to find the baby. If, instead, they had chosen to contemplate what they had seen, wait until a

less busy time, pray about it, or wait until it was convenient, the baby would have been gone. The manger was temporary. They would have missed the Messiah.

**Apply:** When you sense God is speaking to you, that is the time to obey.

**The Witness:** vv.17-18

They left and immediately spread the word. The result? All were amazed.

No pressure! Share what you have seen and heard.

**The Change:** v.20

They returned glorifying God. Their position had not changed but their identity had! They were still lowly, smelly shepherds, but now they had seen the Savior sent for them. Now they knew that God loved even them!

**He came to serve the helpless and hopeless.**

Illus: **Ron and Twany Dotzler photo** Abide Network  
14 children. For 8 years Ron worked as a successful Chemical Engineer in the computer industry. In 1988 he and his family moved into the inner city of north Omaha.

**Invitation** We are all born physically helpless and hopeless as babies. We can't survive on our own. In the same way, we are all born spiritually helpless and hopeless. Ephesians says that we were without God and without hope in the world.

Have you ever confessed your helpless condition to God? That you are a lost sinner unable to save yourself or undo your sins? That without Christ you are headed to place of separation and loss called hell?

**How do you need to be served by Jesus today?**

--salvation; --forgiveness; hope: hurts, hang-ups, habits