



Reaching Those Who Are Lost In an Ungodly Culture

Ice Breaker: What are your plans for the 4th of July? Are you a fireworks fan?

Read together: Luke 19:1-4

1. Don't assume someone doesn't want to know who Jesus really is.

Discuss:

- We do not know who is ready to meet Jesus. Zacchaeus looked like he had it all together. He was rich. He had a house and money and a job, but none of that had led to satisfaction. What things have you accomplished that later didn't satisfy you?
- Who are some of the people that you would assume would not want to meet Jesus? Describe why you would assume they are uninterested.
- Imagine the scene that Pastor Jason described of Zacchaeus being in the tree with the children. There he is in the tree in his fancy clothes looking for a glimpse of Jesus – have you ever felt like you don't fit in? Talk about that together.
- Think about His social standing. He was not “worthy” in the eyes of the Jewish people to meet Jesus because he was an enemy of God's people. How does that strike you?

2. You cannot assess if someone is worthy of meeting Jesus.

Read together: Luke 19:5-6

Discuss:

- Jesus sees things in people's lives that we cannot see. What kind of comments do you imagine were made when Jesus noticed Zacchaeus? Tell the group.

Now read verse 7

Discuss:

- Here we see that Jesus invites Himself to Zacchaeus' home!!!! The people are muttering! What do you think they are saying? Do you remember any of Pastor Jason's examples from the sermon?
- How do you respond to the people saying things like, “Jesus, you don't know him like we do!”
- Our job is to call people to Jesus just like Jesus called Zacchaeus to Himself. Practically speaking, what does that look like?

3. Seek out those lost in your life so that they may be found.

Read together: Luke 19:8-10, Romans 6:1-14 and Acts 1:8

Discuss:

- Think about churches that you have been to in your lifetime. Have you seen churches beginning to celebrate sin? What sins seem to be celebrated?
- Have you heard a Christian telling someone who is sinning that it is ok? I have! What was that conversation like? Have you ever found yourself giving someone permission to sin because you weren't sure how to dialogue about it biblically?
- Talk about this statement: “The Church has lost credibility because we look too much like the world.”
 - What are some things we need to do differently?

- What are your thoughts on the credibility of the Bible? Do you struggle to believe it is the Word of God?
- Talk about this statement: “Deception is tricky because those that are deceived do not know that they are deceived.”
- We are invited to take a stand. Who are we to question God and say that His Word is not relevant to our culture?
 - We have a lot of Christians in our world who are indistinguishable. No one knows they are Christians because they look just like the culture around them. What do you think of that?
 - When people are lost, they can choose to be humble and ask for directions, or they can grit their teeth and surround themselves with people who tell them “We are not lost, we are not lost” Does that change the truth? How do we reach people in that space?
 - God chose to use us to reach the world. There are no other options. Tell us your plan for reaching someone this week.

Pray together:

*Lord, we recognize that the CHURCH, as a whole, has started to compromise in some ways. We confess that in our own understanding, we do not see how the Bible can be relevant in a world that is so hostile to Your ways. Please show us how to stand and how to be different so that we draw people to You. Please give us words when we are in conversations that bring life to us and the people we are talking to. Show us how to present Your hope and lead us to those who need it. Give us supernatural power and courage to speak the truth in LOVE so that deception will cease, and people will see the love You have for them. Show us how to stand for what is right and to walk in the right way!! We want to be different so that people know where to go for the truth. Give us the courage to do the right thing. Help us to live with integrity in every moment. We need Your help to share in a world that tells us we are irrelevant and You are not real. We declare that You ARE real and You ARE hope. Help us to live in that reality today and offer life to others in our area of influence! We need You and we lean into You for help and conviction of the truth.
IN the name of Jesus, Amen.*