

The Ultimate Search and Rescue Mission

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[0 : 00] Please be seated. But don't panic. This is a conclusion, not a sermon, okay? The coming of God's Son into this world is the greatest search and rescue mission of all time.

You're familiar with what that is. We've read stories of how the military or a law enforcement agency or other first responders have gone out to search for lost people, maybe lost in the mountains or in the rubble from an earthquake or even at sea.

Their mission is to search for and rescue the person or the people who are lost. Their purpose is to seek and save lives.

That's why Jesus said He came into the world. He came to carry out, truly, a search and rescue mission that He describes in Luke 19, verse 10 like this.

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Jesus uses that word lost to describe someone who is spiritually separated from God.

[1 : 25] He's really talking about someone who is spiritually dead. And a great example of that's how He's using the word is found in His story of the prodigal son.

In that story, the father, whose son rebelled and went away, but finally came back, the father describes the son's condition like this.

For this my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. And that gave them reason to celebrate.

The Bible says that all of us are separated from God by our sin. That's what it means to say that a person is lost. It means that we're without hope because we cannot save ourselves.

We cannot rescue ourselves from this spiritually dead condition. If Jesus had not been born, if there was no Christmas, we would all stand condemned because as the Bible says, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and the penalty or the wages of sin is death.

[2 : 45] But the good news this morning that we have heard about through the songs, through the music, through the narration is that Jesus did come.

He came to seek and to save the lost. If you're not a Christian and you'll admit to God that you are lost, separated from Him, and you want to be rescued by Jesus Christ, then the way to respond is like this.

Turn from your sin. Change your mind about living life your way instead of God's way. Grieve over the fact that you have dishonored God.

Repent of your sins, what I'm saying. And then put your faith in Jesus that when He died on the cross, He died as your substitute.

Think in terms of when He died on the cross, God placed your sin on Him. And He suffered the pain, the punishment of being separated from God.

[4 : 03] That's why He cried out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Because God had turned away from Him as He bore our sin. Put your faith in Jesus as your Savior.

Call upon Him to save you. Surrender your life to Him as your Lord, as your ultimate leader. The Scripture says that whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Now, if you are a Christian, and I know that most in this room are, thank God for demonstrating His grace and His love by sending Jesus into this world on this seek and saving mission.

What we all need to do as Christians this morning as we leave here is to join with our Lord, join with Him on this search and rescue mission by sharing the good news of why Jesus came and how anyone who will can know Him as Savior and Lord.

Would you pray with me? Father, Father, help us in this room as your people to understand that it is our responsibility to share this good news and be a part of your search and rescue mission.

[5 : 43] And Father, if there is anyone in this room who is not a Christian, work in their mind, their heart right now to cause them to see their need, their lost condition.

so work in them to cause them to put their faith and trust in Jesus, to call upon Him for salvation.

Help that man or woman or young person to know that a service that celebrates the coming of Jesus into this world to seek and save the lost.

This is the best service for them to be saved in. So work right now to call that person to trust Jesus and we come to you, Father, in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen.