

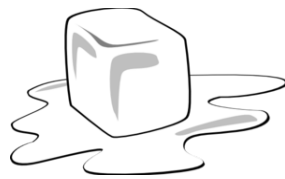
Home Group Study Guide

Sermon Title: Jesus Is Friend

Sermon Series: Jesus Is _____

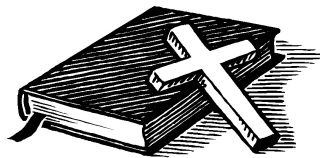
Sermon Scripture: Luke 19:1-10; Acts 4:13; John 15:13

Sermon Synopsis: The Bible is pretty clear that all of us are sinners. None of us is worthy of having a relationship with Jesus Christ, the perfect, sinless, Son of God. Yet, Jesus goes out of His way to find people that others go out of their way to avoid. God cuts through our sins and invites us into relationship with Him. Because Jesus is a friend of sinners, He is your friend. And because He is your friend, He wants the best for you. He loves you like you are, but doesn't want to leave you like are.



ICEBREAKER

This week's sermon was about Jesus' encounter with Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus is known for being a short man, which led to him climbing a tree to see Jesus. What is one of your physical characteristics that you wish you could change? Why?



THINK & READ

Have someone read Luke 19:1-10

1. How do you identify with the following statements Jacob made: “I work 70-80 hours a week, and I haven’t seen my kids at all lately, but at least I’m not using drugs! Yeah, I’ve cheated on my taxes, but I’ve never stolen anything that wasn’t mine! Maybe I watch things online that I shouldn’t, but I would never actually cheat on my wife!” “I know I’m not as bad as him...or her...or that group over there...” (Do you find yourself justifying yourself by comparing yourself to others who seem to do/be worse?)
2. Why do we rate our sins and compare them to the sins of others? (Jacob stated the following: Because we want to feel good about ourselves...and we are desperate to maintain some sense of control. Do you agree with this?)
3. To God, all sin is equally evil and all sinners are equally loved, but do they have the same consequences in the natural and spiritual realms?
4. Do you believe that Jesus is your friend? Why/why not?
5. How many of you have spent your life climbing? (From Jacob: What are you trying to reach? Love, status, acceptance? Are you trying to climb up to God? Or maybe you’re trying to climb out of a cage that has you feeling enslaved. Are you trying to climb out of sin? Out of pain?)
6. Have you ever had to earn love? ...approval? ...acceptance? Was it conditional? How do/does this/these experience(s) translate into your understanding about your relationship with God?
7. Like the others who wondered why Jesus would go to the house of a sinner, have you ever been frustrated by someone who “does wrong” getting attention? How does, “Jesus will always go out of His way to find people that others go out of their way to avoid,” impact you?
8. Have you experienced Jesus going out of his way to come find you?

9. Have you experienced Christ's friendship? How has it manifested in your life?
10. Have you ever extended friendship to someone others would not choose?
11. How do you respond to Zacchaeus' complete reversal of heart after meeting Jesus? Are you excited or threatened by his response to give away half his money and pay back anyone he ever cheated fourfold?
12. How has having a relationship with Jesus changed you? (...changed how you think/treat yourself? ...changed how you spend your time? ...changed your friendships? ...changed your attitude about your things? ...changed your attitude about your money?)
13. Has an encounter with Jesus radically changed you? (Do you believe it could? If you haven't been radically changed, do you know someone who has been?)
14. How will you intentionally "spend time with Jesus," so you can get to know Him better?



PRAYER

Take individual prayer requests from those your Home Group. Then take some time to pray out loud for the people in your Home Group.