

**THE BIG IDEA: The pursuit is about the heart before it's about the hurt.**The Take-Off

There's nothing quite like being wanted, is there?

Actually being picked to be on a team, or offered a position at work... being lost is awful, but that's what makes being found so fulfilling!

I remember when I first met Wendy - as great as she was, we never would have gotten married if she hadn't pursued me. The pursuit changed everything.

What you and I need to know first - what we need to hear now and often during this new series in Luke 13-15 - is that we have a God who is in pursuit of people.

He's not content to just let people wander around aimlessly, or worse, to be taken.

Let's look at some Scripture for some evidence:

Genesis 3:15 / IMMEDIATELY after the big sin that looked like it ruined everything, God promised a redemptive pursuit

John 10:10 / Our enemy wants to steal from us, kill us, take us

Our Father wasn't content to let us be taken, and He had a message for our enemy who tried to take us

[VIDEO / Taken / Particular set of skills]

Luke 19:10 / Our Father sent a pursuer

**The point of this series is not to make us feel bad for BEING lost or even for not SEEING the lost. The point is to fill us with hope because God is SEEKING the lost.**

Now, one of God's particular set of skills in pursuing the lost is the church

His plan has been that FOUND PEOPLE FIND PEOPLE

John 20:21 / His mission is our mission

Because God has a plan, He also gets a little "in your face" with those of us who aren't helping with it ...

And that's exactly what we find in the first 17 verses of Luke 13

Jesus talks about the heart of the pursuer first because - as the Big Idea puts it - the pursuit is about the heart before it's about the hurt.

We KNOW God's heart for the lost, and the challenge from Jesus in week 1 of "Lost+Found" is to make sure that OUR heart matches HIS heart.

Proverbs 4:23 / we've got to guard the heart of the pursuer

Let's read Luke 13:1-17, and then I'm going to share 3 warnings and reminders from Jesus to the found who need to be looking for the lost...

**1. We won't extend grace if we think people are getting what they deserve**

- a. We need to be merciful
- b. Jesus talked about 2 tragedies - a murder & an accident - and challenged the way the religious saw them
- c. They thought people deserved it because of sin, and so they were content to diagnose the problem without actually dealing with people
- d. This is a lot like the "drive by" culture we live in today where people judge from a distance
- e. We live in a shaming culture / body, tattoo, luxury, snack, salary, even filter-shaming!
- f. Basically, we're just shaming the shakers, right?
- g. What about version-shaming?
- h. [IMAGES / KJV only church signs]
- i. The church can't afford to be known for sin-shaming, because Jesus didn't come to shame the sinner, but rather to save the sinner
- j. Jude 22-23 / we must be merciful

**2. A fruit tree without fruit is just an ugly stick**

- a. We need to be fruitful
- b. The mission to find the lost is too critical to simply exist for the sake of existing
- c. 1 Peter 4:7 / I love the urgency - "time is limited, THEREFORE..." do something!!!

- d. There are so many scriptures about bearing fruit - too many to read this morning
- e. You'll discuss a lot of them in Community Groups, but for now, look at John 15:16
- f. We're chosen (found) in order to bear fruit
- g. What fruit? In the context of Luke 13-15, the fruit is souls - that we would live on mission seeking the lost
- h. Jesus has no time for fruitless trees, but His mercy gives us space to grow in this area
- i. "Dig around the tree" - cultivate so that the fertilizer can get in there and work
- j. Jesus will fill the empty spaces with what we need to have a harvest of souls
- k. We must be fruitful

### 3. When Jesus straightens a life, it's an opportunity to realign ours

- a. We need to be mindful
- b. Finally, after some pretty hard warnings, Jesus gave everyone a test by healing a woman
- c. Verse 11 describes her - she couldn't straighten herself!
- d. How many of us are like her? No matter what we've tried, we can't get our lives straight?
- e. But Jesus heals her - and notice what happens when He does
- f. Her healing revealed their hearts - and they still weren't right
- g. Sometimes when Jesus straightens a life, it's an opportunity to realign ours
- h. To remember that all of us needed to be found, and therefore all of us can be a part of the pursuit
- i. **Found people find people**
- j. It all starts by staying mindful of what the mercy of God has done for us
- k. 1 Peter 1:3

#### The Landing

I love the ending verse - humiliation of the enemy and delight for the pursued!

It's like the ending scene of "Taken" when all the enemies have been killed and the daughter simply says to her father,  
"You came for me."

God came for you.

Who does He want to send you in pursuit of?

Let's pray.