

Hide and Seek

Introduction:

- A. Hide and seek is a simple game children play.
 - 1. One person seeks, everyone else hides.
- B. In our lesson today we want to discuss:
 - 1. How the relationship between man and God is a story of hide and seek.
 - 2. Then we will look at the story of Zaccheus as an example of hiding and seeking.
 - a. We'll notice three things Jesus does when He seeks and saves that which is lost.

I. Relationship Between Man and God Is a Story of Hide and Seek.

- A. The Bible practically opens with this concept – Gen.3:1-10.
- B. What Adam and Eve did in the garden is what we do today – they sinned and then hid themselves.
 - 1. We hide because we don't want to be exposed for what we really are, a sinner.
 - 2. We hide from other people – from God – from truth – even from ourselves.
- C. The pattern of human relationships, with God and others, is the same as in the garden.
 - 1. We sin and we hide – Job 31:33,34; Prov.28:13; Ezek.8:12.
 - 2. In a second sense we try to hide from our responsibilities before God – 1 Sam.10:22; Jonah 1:3.
- D. But Genesis not only reveals a pattern of human behavior; it reveals a pattern of divine behavior.
 - 1. We sin and hide, but God loves and seeks – Gen.3:8,9.
- E. A bumper sticker that was popular years ago in some circles proclaimed “I FOUND IT.”
 - 1. We are searchers – Deut.4:29; Jer.29:13; Matt.7:7,8; Acts 17:27; Heb.11:6.
- F. But our seeking pales in comparison with God's.
 - 1. It is He who takes the eternal initiative – cf.Eph.1:4.

II. Zacchaeus and Hiding and Seeking.

- A. Luke describes an encounter between a hidden sinner and a seeking Messiah – Lk.19:1,2.
- B. In Israel, certain vocations carried a heavy social stigma.
 - 1. They were called “despised trades,” and no devout Jewish person would engage in them.
 - 2. Tax collectors were despised.
 - a. In the gospels they are linked with “sinners,” (Matt.11:19; Lk.15:1), prostitutes (Matt.21:31f), and pagans (Matt.18:17).
 - 3. Tax collectors were despised for at least three reasons.
 - a. Their work brought them into regular contact with the Gentiles, making them “unclean.”
 - b. Considered traitors who had sold out their brothers and sisters to their enemy for a profit.
 - c. It was just assumed that any tax collector was guilty of massive dishonesty.
- C. Zacchaeus was a tax collector – a wealthy tax collector, a chief tax collector.
 - 1. But he, who was despised by men, was sought after by God – Lk.19:1-10.

III. 3 Things Jesus Does When Seeking and Saving the Lost.

- A. **Jesus Summons Sinners.**
 - 1. In this account He goes up to Zacchaeus and tells him that He must stay at his home this day.
 - a. Jesus calls on him.
 - 2. If you were Zacchaeus what would you have been thinking?
 - a. What could Jesus possibly want to have to do with you?
 - 3. If you want to know if Jesus wants you, I would ask you to look at verse 10.
 - a. Lk.19:10– *“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.”*
 - b. He describes those He came to seek – those He came to bring out of hiding.
 - 4. Who are the people He has come for?
 - a. Lk.19:10– *“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

5. Who are the people He summons and calls?
 - a. Lk.19:10– *“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.”*
6. If you’re lost, if you are hiding, He calls **you**.
 - a. He calls you to come out in the open – Matt.11:28,29.

B. Jesus Saves Sinners.

1. Now it was God’s decision whether He would come searching for you.
 - a. He could have chosen to let us perish in our hiddenness and been totally just in so deciding.
2. Now we have a decision to make – whether we will come out of our hiding.
 - a. Zacchaeus does.
 - 1) When he runs ahead of the crowd, when he climbs up the tree, when he jumps down, when he welcomes Jesus to his home, when he owns up to any misdeeds on his part – Zacchaeus is coming out of hiding.
 - b. As a result, salvation comes to his house – Lk.19:9.

C. Jesus Sanctifies Sinners. He Changes Us.

1. Jesus loved Zacchaeus as a tax collector.
 - a. He loved him as a sinner.
2. But Jesus loves sinners too much to leave us that way.
3. He changes Zacchaeus.
4. The sign of a life that has been found is a strong desire to set things right.
 - a. This is the difference between repentance and just damage control.
5. When someone is saved, he or she has a process set in motion – a process of change.

Conclusion:

- A. A telemarketer called a home one day, and a small voice whispered, *“Hello?”*
 1. *“Hello! What’s your name?”*
 - a. Still whispering, the voice said, *“Jimmy.”*
 2. *“How old are you, Jimmy?”*
 - a. *“I’m four.”*
 3. *“Good, Is your mother home?”*
 - a. *“Yes, but she’s busy.”*
 4. *“Okay, is your father home?”*
 - a. *“He’s busy too.”*
 5. *“I see, who else is there?”*
 - a. *“The police.”*
 6. *“The police? May I speak with one of them?”*
 - a. *“They’re busy.”*
 7. *“Any other grown-ups there?”*
 - a. *“The firemen.”*
 8. *“May I speak with a fireman, please?”*
 - a. *“They’re all busy.”*
 9. *“Jimmy, all those people in your house, and I can’t talk with any of them? What are they doing?”*
 - a. *“Looking for me,”* whispered Jimmy.
- B. We are like Jimmy.
 1. We’ve done something wrong, and we’ve tried to hide.
 2. All of us sin – Rom.3:23.
 3. All of us hide.
 4. But God seeks.
- C. Are you a sinner hiding from God?
 1. God calls on all of us to come out of hiding.
- D. Now He is seeking us to save us from our sins.
- E. One day He’ll seek us to punish those who refused to obey Him.