

Church In the Community - 6 Jesus Mingled With People

(Pass out verses to read.) *

Luke 15:1–2 (NKJV) Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ² And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.”

A little boy was trying to get to sleep during a thunderstorm but was frightened. He shouted down from the bedroom, ‘Dad, it’s dark up here and I’m scared.’ His father shouted back, ‘Don’t be afraid. God is with you.’ After a few second’s pause, the boy yelled again: ‘Please come up here, Dad - I need somebody with skin on!’ This is the Incarnation.

1 John 1:1 (NKJV) That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—

Heard, Seen, and Touched

Christ’s Method Alone

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’” –
Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.

1. Jesus mingled with people as One who desired their good. (He opened networks.)
2. Jesus sympathized with people. (He formed attachments.)
3. Jesus ministered to their needs. (This also formed attachments.)
4. When He combined the first, second, and third elements, He won people’s confidence.
5. “Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (to become disciples).

This Lesson focuses on step 1

Our Sins Separate Us From God

Isaiah 59:1, 2 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. **But your iniquities have separated you from your God;** And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

***Genesis 3:8** And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Genesis 3:23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

Deuteronomy 31:17, 18 "Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our **God is not among us?**' "And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods.

Micah 3:4 Then they will cry to the LORD, But He will not hear them; He will even hide His face from them at that time, Because they have been evil in their deeds.

Restoration Through Jesus

Matthew 18:12 "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying?"

Ephesians 2:16-18 and that He might **reconcile them both to God** in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

If you have two countries at war and you want to have peace talks it is best to send in an ambassador acquainted with the language and customs of both parties. **Many missionaries have been drafted as ambassadors.**

2 Corinthians 5:19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. **Jesus provides radiation and heat proof suits of righteousness to endure the glory of God.**

***1 Peter 3:18** For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, **that He might bring us to God**, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

Matthew 1:22–23 (NKJV) So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

John 1:14 (NKJV) *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Lost and Found

***Luke 15:1–7** (NKJV) *Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ² And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.”*

Jesus tells 3 parables in Luke 15:3-32, in response to their accusation.

Parable of the Lost Sheep Lost back pack

³ *So He spoke this parable to them, saying: ⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?*

⁵ *And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ ⁷ I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.*

Parable of the Lost Coin

Luke 15:8–10 (NKJV) *“Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!’ ¹⁰ Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

Parable of the Lost Son Luke 15:11–32

Eating With Sinners

Matthew 9:10–13 (NKJV) *Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹² When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” **Hosea 6:6***

Psalms 51:17 (NKJV) *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.*

David’s Four Hundred Men

1 Samuel 22:1–2 (NKJV) *David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. So when his brothers and all his father’s house heard it, they went down there to him. ² And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.*

***Luke 19:5–7** *And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷ But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”*

Mingling Wisely

John 17:14–18 (NKJV) *I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. **A boat in the water but not the water in the boat.***

“Now, shall professed Christians refuse to associate with the unconverted, and seek to have no communication with them? No, they are to be with them, in the world and not of the world, but not to partake of their ways, not to be impressed by them, not to have a heart open to their customs and practices. Their associations are to be for the purpose of drawing others to Christ.” – Ellen White, SM-3, pg 231

Numbers 25:1–3 *Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. ² They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³ So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.*

In the Midst of a Crooked Generation

Matthew 10:8 (NKJV) *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.*

Philippians 2:14–15 (NKJV) *Do all things without complaining and disputing, ¹⁵ that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,*