

### Come and See- John 1:39

1. Ice breaker- white lights vs. colored----- real vs. fake tree ----- presents on eve vs. day
2. Illustration August 7, 2021--- invitation to go to lunch with Trevor --- power in an invitation
3. Transition to Invitation
  - In **John 1:29**- As John the Baptist sees Jesus coming, he declares--- Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
  - John begins to testify Jesus.
  - As Andrew and Peter were with John, John says the same thing: Look! The Lamb of God. (**John 1:35**)
  - Andrew and Peter start following Jesus and ask Him where He is staying.
  - Jesus says- **come and see**. This is an invitation to follow Jesus. (**John 1:39**)
  - Andrew and Peter stayed with Jesus until the end. It is Peter who comes running to the empty tomb at the end of Jesus' life to see where He lay.
4. Journey with me
  - Tonight, I want to take you on a journey to come and see. Come and see what Christmas is all about. My prayer for all of us tonight- whether you have heard this story countless times or maybe just a few- that you would come and see for yourself.
  - I want to take us to the beginning and see what we are really invited to. If we don't find ourselves in the story tonight, we are missing out on what God has for us. So as you hear this story tonight, think about where you fit in in this journey.
5. Gospel picture (Genesis-Revelation)
  - **Creation --- Gen. 1:27**
  - **Gen. 3**—eats from the tree and God banishes them from the garden- most loving thing He can do.
  - Because Joshua didn't drive out the inhabitants, a whole generation after Joshua died & didn't know the Lord, nor what He had done for Israel (**Judges 2:10**). So God raises up **JUDGES** to help bring God's people back to Himself.
  - They then want a king like every other nation, so He gives them a **KING**. (**1 Sam. 8:20**)
  - After that didn't work out so well, God raises up **PROPHETS** to come to warn the people about the judgement coming to them.
  - What's the pattern here? Covenants, Judges, Kings, Prophets--- **God will do anything and everything to bring people back into relationship with Him again.**
  - **JEREMIAH** preaches the same message for 23 years, and no one seems to listen.
  - Israel splits into **Northern Israel and Southern Judah** and Israel is conquered by the Assyrians and Judah is conquered by the Babylonians. (**Jer. 25:3-4**)
  - **Period of 400 years of silence**- no new prophets are raised up and no one hears from God until the **cry of a baby** in a manger in Bethlehem.
  - The Christ child is born and this is what we celebrate that God made Himself nothing by becoming flesh and making His dwelling among us.
  - Jesus grows in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men. (**Luke 2:52**)

- As He grows up, he begins to teach, preach, and perform miracles. He tells the disciples that He is going to die but they didn't really believe it. Some followed Jesus for what He could offer them, and yet others followed because they knew He was the Savior of the world. Jesus does ministry for only 3 years, and then He gives up His life to pay for the sins of the world. **This is the only sacrifice that would be enough to enable us to be in relationship with God again.**
- In **Acts**, the church of Christ is born. The disciples become empowered through the Holy Spirit and begin to see people come to know Jesus. **(Acts 1:8)** As a result, they start to experience persecution from those who see the Jesus way as standing in opposition to the Jewish ways.
- The persecution actually leads to the Gospel being spread out. This culminates with the **stoning of Stephen**, who becomes the first Christian martyr. **It was Saul who stood giving approval to this act. (Acts 7:57-58)** Later, it was Saul who would **encounter Jesus on the road** to Damascus and realize his life would never be the same.
- Saul fell to the ground as one of the greatest persecutors of the Christian faith and rose as one of the greatest proclaimers of the Gospel. Saul goes on to teach and instruct others such as **Timothy**, as well as churches, such as the **Church of Corinth and Galatia**.
- While on Patmos, **John, the writer of the Gospel of John and Revelation**, records a vision that he sees. One in which there is **no more weeping and crying**. One in which **death** no longer exists. One in which **God is fully dwelling among His people. (Rev. 21:3-4)** All of this takes place back in a **garden** in which we see **God's original intent: *for the people of God to be thriving in the place of God with unlimited access to the presence of God.***

## 6. Conclusion

- This is a great story- **but so what?** This was 2,000 years ago and yet we are still talking about it today. Why? What is the relevance of this story for you and me?
- Like Adam and Eve you and I have done things that we know intentionally go against God's best for our lives.
- Like the nation of Israel, we have ignored God's instruction. When God captures our attention through sermons or pastoral advice from a friend or family member, we listen for a period of time--- until we turn back to the convenience of everything around us.
- Like Jeremiah's commitment to teach the truth, many of us have heard the truth proclaimed for many years, but we have tuned out the voice of truth to hear what our itching ears want to hear
- Like the nation of Israel offering sacrifices over and over to atone for the bad things they have done, we have strived to earn the favor of God through doing the "right Christian things."
- **We, like the whole world, have been separated from the goodness of God.**
- **But GOD** left the splendor of heaven to dwell among us

- But GOD made Jesus sin who knew no sin to be sin for US so that we might become the righteousness of God.
- But GOD sent Jesus to die the death that we deserve so that we could spend eternity with God!
- But GOD loved you so much that He gave up everything so He could know you personally.
- **It's because of Jesus,** that many of us, like Saul, have had a real encounter with Jesus and our lives have never been the same.
- It's because of Jesus that we don't have to strive to earn our salvation.
- It's because of Jesus that we who were once enemies of God can now be brought near to God.
- It's because of Jesus that many of us are awaiting the day when there will be no more pain, death or mourning when we are in the presence of God singing His unending praises for all eternity.
- INVITATION! --- **the only thing that God has for you is good.**