

**Luke 2:11 RESCUE: A Savior Born unto Us**

*This week's teaching focused on the saving rescue we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

As you begin this study together, ask the Spirit of God to bring about a greater personal awareness of how Christ Jesus has been a Savior in your life...and how He might be so for someone else you know. ☺

**GETTING STARTED** – Have you ever been rescued? Share your experience with your group...

- Taken to the hospital in an ambulance
- Underwent emergency surgery
- Plucked from a too-deep lake or end of a swimming pool
- Helped in a time of financial crisis
- Found after a time of being lost
- Trapped in a cave or maze
- Your experience: \_\_\_\_\_

DISCUSS: (1) What is similar about the “before” of all the rescues you’ve shared? What kind of condition are you in? Why could you (personally) “rescue” yourself? (2) What is a “rescue”? How would you define or describe it? What actually happens? And (3) describe “post-rescue” feelings? What does a “rescue” teach you about yourself...and about the one who stepped in?

**IN THE WORD**

This week’s teaching brought the rescue of our spiritual salvation into view. My “salvation” – one brought about by the Savior – begins with a REPENTANT HEART (clearing away the “obstacles” that are in the way of receiving what Jesus can do). Then, it moves to RECOGNIZING IN FAITH (or trust) that only Jesus can deliver me from my sin, and give me His cleansing forgiveness and righteousness. Let’s look at these two steps.

**STEP #1 REPENTANCE** – the Biblical word means “to change one’s thinking or perspective.” We often have ways of thinking or perspectives that are “in the way” of acknowledging I need Christ. John the Baptist declared “Clear the way! Make a straight path for the Lord’s coming!” **IDENTIFY some of the ways of thinking—the obstacles—that often keep people (perhaps even us) from admitting a unique need for Christ.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Who must be at work to bring about a step of repentance? (John 16:8-11)

**STEP #2 TRUSTING IN FAITH** – the Biblical word “faith” means “to believe, to trust, to completely rely or depend upon.” “Believe” should actually be translated “believe into” – when someone believes in Christ, they are actually leaning into a new relationship with Him. Sometimes people go through religious ritual and ceremony, but have not taken that personal step—made the choice—to trust completely in the Savior. **What do the following passages teach about what happens when a step of faith is chosen?**

John 3:16-17

John 6:35

John 8:23-25

John 12:44-48

John 5:24,36

John 7:38

John 11:25-26

Ephesians 2:8-10

\* which of these verses particularly struck you? Have you personally “believed in(to) Christ yet? Is there someone you know who needs these verses?

**MY LIFE – OUR MISSION**

Surprisingly, surveys of churches (even Bible teaching churches) have discovered that there are many who come to church but have not actually taken the “faith step” of trusting in, or believing into, Christ. Again, have you? Are you completely trusting, not in what you can do to earn or merit the Lord’s “rescue,” but in what Jesus Christ did for you...in dying for your sin and being raised from the dead?

Our mission is “connecting people to life-defining relationships in Christ.” When we are rescued by the Savior from the penalty of our sins, and the power of sinning, we are (as Jesus said) “free indeed” (cf. John 8:36 *If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!*)

Identify someone who needs to hear clearly how Jesus can uniquely rescue them. Pray that what may be an “obstacle” in their believing be taken out of the way. Pray that they will see their need – clearly – for the Savior. The way YOU did! ☺

Good News of Great Joy #4

As the leader, you may be tempted to skip some of the steps suggested in the study. May we encourage you not to do this? ☺ Take the time to allow group members to reflect and discuss. There is "iron sharpening iron" in such discussions. Truths can sink it; values can be shaped; Christlikeness can be formed.

3 Insider Insights:

- **GOAL:** This week's Connect Group experience is about the RESCUE we have in the Savior who has been born of us. The objective is to help everyone in your group not only KNOW, but FEEL, and be willing to DO (i.e., perhaps actually share with someone else their story of rescue in Christ).

**It will be to your advantage** to think ahead so as to bring the NEED for our rescue in Jesus to life. What rescue(s) have you experienced in your own life? What rescues have you heard of (example: the trapped soccer team in the cave in South America) that could illustrate the fact that human beings often find themselves trapped and need of outside intervention? Have these at the ready because you've thought ahead.

- THIS MIGHT BE FUN...Here's an older hymn that has been sung in the American church for decades. **LOVE LIFTED ME.** READ this hymn together (or sing it, if you know the tune). What's the word-picture here? You could encourage group members to share about their experience of being lifted by the Savior's love.

I was sinking deep in sin  
Far from the peaceful shore  
Very deeply stained within  
Sinking to rise no more  
But the Master of the sea  
Heard my despairing cry  
From the waters lifted me  
Now safe am I

Souls in danger, look above,  
Jesus completely saves;  
he will lift you by his love  
out of the angry waves.  
He's the Master of the sea,  
billows his will obey;  
he your Savior wants to be -  
be saved today.

[Refrain]  
Love lifted me, love lifted me  
When nothing else could help  
Love lifted me  
Love lifted me, love lifted me  
When nothing else could help  
Love lifted me

- **BE SURE TO PRAY** for Christ Community Church's important ministry outreaches at this time of year --
  - **Special Services at Christmas** – pray that many will come to trust in Christ as Savior this season!
    - Christmas Eve Monday Night December 24, 2018 (2 pm, 4 pm, 6 pm)