

Finders, Keepers; Losers, Weepers!

by George H. Alquist Jr.

Jesus is the One who finds and keeps us, giving us eternal life and securing our salvation forever.

Scripture: Psalm 40:1, Matthew 9:9, Luke 13:23, Luke 19:5, John 1:43, John 4:4, John 5:24

Topics: "Salvation Found", "Eternal Security"

Description

George H. Alquist Jr. preaches on the story of Zacchaeus, emphasizing how Jesus always does the finding, as seen in His encounters with Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, Philip, Saul, Matthew, and David. He highlights that Jesus seeks every sinner, coming to seek and save the lost, and that we are all found by Jesus, not the other way around. Alquist stresses that Jesus is the Finder and the Keeper, ensuring that once He finds us, He keeps us by His power and blood. He warns that those without Christ are losers, missing out on eternal life and Heaven, and that eternal Hell will be filled with weeping losers.

Transcript

"And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, this day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:1-10

This is one of the most familiar stories in the New Testament. There are flannel graphs and songs about Zacchaeus, and most Sunday school students have heard about him.

Zacchaeus was a wee little man,

And a wee little man was he.

He climbed up in the sycamore tree,

For the Lord he wanted to see.

And as the Saviour came his way

He looked up in the tree,

And He said, "Zacchaeus, you come down,

For I'm going to your house today!

For I'm going to your house today!"

I. JESUS ALWAYS DOES THE FINDING

When I was a boy we used to use the phrase "Finders, keepers; losers, weepers." In the story we've just read, who found whom? Did Zacchaeus find Christ, or did Christ find Zacchaeus?

Jesus Found Zacchaeus

"And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house."-Luke 19:5.

Zacchaeus "sought to see Jesus," so we might think that he was seeking Jesus; but the truth is, it was Jesus who found Zacchaeus. He knew that Zacchaeus would be in that tree. He knew Zacchaeus by name, though He had never met him before. He knew Zacchaeus had a need, and He came to the exact spot where he would be, just to find him.

"When Jesus came to the place, he looked up." I'm sure Jesus passed many trees along the way, and there were probably other people in some of the other trees trying to see Jesus.

People are always in trees trying to get a better view of a parade. At football and baseball games, people climb up poles or into trees to try to see the games. Jesus had no doubt seen other people in trees; but when He came to this place, He looked up and said, "Zacchaeus," because it was Zacchaeus whom He wanted to find that day.

He came looking for him, and He said, "Make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house." Jesus came with the purpose of abiding at Zacchaeus' house today! So Jesus came and found Zacchaeus.

Jesus Found the Woman at the Well

"And he must needs go through Samaria."-John 4:4.

Why did He need to go through Samaria? Why was that so important? Because He had to find somebody there. He went to find this woman at the well.

He already knew her life story when He met her. She "left her water pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." He knew who she was, He knew where she was, and He came to find her.

Jesus Found Philip

"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me."-John 1:43.

Jesus was always doing the finding. We say, "I was lost until I found Jesus," but that's not true because Jesus found us. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost!"

Jesus Found Saul

Saul was not looking for Jesus, the Messiah who came, but Jesus was looking for him. On the road to Damascus (Acts 9) as Saul was going about his business, persecuting the church, Jesus stopped him in his tracks. Jesus found him and saved him.

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."-Gal. 1:11-15.

Where did Jesus find him? He found him persecuting the very church of which he would become a member!

Jesus Found Matthew

"And as Jesus passed forth from, thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him."-Matt. 9:9.

Matthew was not looking for Jesus. He was a tax collector - part of a group who were despised and narrowly looked upon by the religious elite of that day. They would call them publicans and sinners.

Matthew was sitting at the receipt of custom, doing his everyday business. But Jesus came by and said, "Follow me."

The publicans were in charge of collecting the taxes for Rome. There was no set order or methodology for this, so they often extorted funds from the people by charging more than was actually due on their taxes. By robbing the people of God, the publicans made themselves rich; therefore, they were despised by the people.

Such a man was Zacchaeus. In Luke, chapter 19, he is called a chief of the publicans. Other publicans worked under him. But Jesus found him and saved him.

Jesus Found David

"I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear and shall trust in the LORD. " - Ps. 40:1-3.

David says, "I was in the quagmire. I was in the miry clay. I was sinking in the sands of sin, and Jesus came and found me. He put a new song in my heart. Jesus gave me a new life."

Jesus Seeks Every Sinner

Jesus came seeking David. Jesus came seeking Zacchaeus. Jesus came seeking Matthew. Jesus came seeking Saul. And, my friend, Jesus still comes seeking. He seeks the publican. He seeks the sinner. He seeks to save that which was lost.

Listen, my friends, it was the Lord Jesus Christ who came seeking after your soul, and it was the Lord Jesus who found you.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). We do not seek for Him. We hide from Him. We sinners lost and on our way to Hell, are not looking for the Light, not looking for Jesus.

The Bible says that we love darkness rather than light, and that's why we do what we do in the darkness. He came to seek us and to find us and to save us out of the darkness.

Romans 3:11 says, "There is none that seeketh after God." Rather, it is Christ who came to this world seeking the lost. Why? "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6).

He came to seek the sinner. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

He came to seek the unrighteous. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10).

He came to seek the unclean. "But we are all as an unclean thing" (Isa. 64:6).

We need to understand what we are without Jesus Christ. We are sinners, lost and on our way to Hell, without hope and without remedy. My friend, He came looking for you. He came looking for me. He came to seek us, to find us, and He came to save us.

Where Did Jesus Find You?

Where did He find you? What did He find you doing? What condition were you in when He found you?

I'll tell you where He found me. He found me in the miry pit of sin and shame. He found me in the sin and shame of alcohol. He found me in the miry pit of drugs and pornography and rock n' roll music. He found me lost and on my way to Hell.

I was sinking in selfishness and wallowing in the filth of this world, and Jesus came down with His glorious light into the darkness of my life. He sought me and He found me!

My friend, I wasn't looking for Jesus. I was looking for everything else but Jesus! But one day He stepped into my life, and I saw the glorious light of the Gospel. He reached down and put His hand into the mock, mire, slime and stench of my sinful life and grabbed hold of me. He wasn't afraid to get Himself dirty by touching me. He lifted me up out of there and set me on the Rock. He washed me and cleansed me in His own precious blood. He put a new song in my heart. He gave me new life.

I remember where I was, what I was, what I was doing when Jesus found me. He came into my darkness and gave me light. He shone into my reprobate mind and sin-sick heart. He found me! Praise God! He found me and He saved me, a sinner!

I will never allow myself to forget where He found me, how He found me and the condition I was in when He found me. My friends, by the grace of God, I will never allow myself to take for granted the salvation that God purchased for me on Calvary's cross with the blood of His own Son. By the grace of God I will never allow myself to become comfortable and to become presumptuous, self-satisfied and forgetful of what God did for me. I stand before you today saved and cleansed and on my way to Heaven!

Oh my friends, He finds. Praise God that He finds sinners! He looks everywhere, high and low, until He finds us, and then He saves us by His wonderful grace. Praise God, He makes us new creatures in Christ!

I know that some of you were found very early. Do not despise that fact. Do not look lightly upon the fact that He came and was merciful, gracious and kind and found you early in life. But even if He saved you early in life, you were still as much of a rotten sinner in your youth as I was in later years.

Within the bosom of every person born of woman, save Jesus Christ, beats a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. A child in the arms of a mother is a sinner. It takes as much of Christ's blood, as much of His grace, as much of the mercy of God to save someone when he's five or six years old as it does when he is fifty or, sixty!

It took as much of Jesus' sacrifice and suffering on the cross of Calvary to save you, though you had not gone the way I had gone, as it did to save me.

Never mistake it, my dear friends. If you never walked the road of the wickedness and sin of this world, you should praise God every day that you didn't. Praise God that He came to you early and saved you early.

Oh, my dear friends rejoice that you've been spared from a life of heartache and shame. Rejoice that you have more of life to be lived for Christ, more to be full of His glory, more to allow God to squeeze out of you all the honor and glory that He can.

II. WE ARE TO BE FINDERS

Jesus found Philip. The next thing we discern is that Philip found Nathaniel. The Lord Jesus is the finder, but when He finds us He sends us forth as finders. He allows us to find someone else for Him, but never mistake it: He is the One doing the finding, for we would find no one for Him if He had not first found us. Yes, Jesus is the Finder.

III. JESUS IS THE KEEPER

When Jesus finds, He keeps. The one Christ saves can never undo His coming all the way from Heaven; His enduring the contradiction of sinners; His suffering upon the cross in agony, shame and humiliation; and His death, burial and resurrection.

My dear friend, when Jesus finds you, He keeps you. It's His power that saves; it's His power that keeps. It's His blood that saves; it's His blood that keeps. It's not all null and void because you get out of His will and sin against God. My friend, you cannot undo what Jesus did. God would not sacrifice His Son and allow Him to endure what He did if all it took to make it go away was your disobedience.

Can we be lost forever after having been saved and washed in the blood? Oh, no! It never happens. That which He Himself only could accomplish, He Himself only can secure.

The blood and the life of the God-Man were given upon Calvary's cross. He was no mere human being. His blood was no mere human blood: it was the blood of God that was shed for our salvation. There is power in that blood!

If we could understand the power of Christ's blood, of His life that was given, of His resurrection, we would never wonder if we could lose our salvation. We would not have questions about eternal security.

Our salvation is not based upon us, and it is not continued by us. We "are kept by the power of God" (1 Pet. 1:5).

Jesus is the Finder, and Jesus is the Keeper.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."- Rom. 18:31-34.

When God says "justifieth", you are justified! My friend, how can anyone or anything condemn us when Jesus is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us? For you to lose your salvation, Jesus would have to stop interceding for you, or the Father would have to refuse to hear the intercession that Jesus makes.

Jesus ever lives!

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." -Vss. 35-39.

Who is going to condemn you? Who is going to separate you? My friend, you're not as powerful as you imagine if you think that you can separate yourself from God who has welded you to Himself! You are engraved in the palm of His hands. If you can lose your salvation, then He has to wipe out that engraving!

You'll find yourself in this text. You cannot separate yourself from the love of God once you've been saved. Forget it!

Hebrews 13:5 says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." He did not say, "Well, I'll never leave you as long as you, do everything right. I'll never forsake you as long as you toe the line." He said, "I will never ... forsake thee" - no qualifications whatsoever!

You either take Jesus at His word, or you don't take Him at His word. Friend, I took Him at His word. When I got saved, I just believed God. He said that I would have eternal life, and I believed Him. When I heard Jesus say that He would never leave me not forsake me, I believed Him.

I believe the One who cannot lie. You can lie, but Jesus cannot.

Ephesians 1:13,14 says that we are "sealed" until the day of redemption. There is no man or no thing that can break the seal that God has put upon us by His Holy Spirit.

Isn't it good that God told us in His Word the length of time for which we are sealed? He didn't just say, "You are sealed." That would leave it open for some old knuckleheaded theologian to say, "According to the Bible, we're sealed until..." and he would put a time in there. I'm glad God said, "You are sealed until the "day of redemption."

The day of redemption is the day when Jesus comes to take us to be with Him. We are sealed until then - signed, sealed and delivered!

"Verily, verily [truly, truly, trust Me and depend on Me] I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."- John 5:24.

Jesus said, "Believe the Word that I've given you! Trust the Word that I've given you, and you'll have everlasting life!"

How long is "everlasting"? Does it last only until next week? Does it last only until next month or until next year? Does it last only until you tell a lie? "Everlasting" is forever!

He says that we "shall not come into condemnation." When someone goes to Hell, he has been condemned. If I can be saved today and lose my salvation tomorrow, die and go to Hell, I would be under condemnation after I had been given eternal life. That would contradict that verse. Jesus did not lie!

It also says that I pass "from death unto life. To lose my salvation would mean that I passed from death to life and back over to death again. It would mean that "everlasting" life did not last forever. It would mean there was not enough power in that life to keep me from being dead again.

Jesus said: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." John 10:27-30

Jesus said that He gives unto His sheep, and if you are His sheep, then He gives you eternal life! "Eternal" means that it lasts forever from the moment you trust Him.

If you are His sheep, when are you going to perish? Never!

I trusted Christ as my Saviour, and He saved me and washed me in His precious blood. I was made a child of God. He made me one of His sheep. I have the assurance that I will never perish because He has told me that I have eternal life.

"Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand!" No one can take me out of Jesus' hands. I couldn't even get myself out.

I read this verse to a certain lady: "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

She said, "Yea, but you can jump out."

I said, "Why would you want to jump out? If you are in your Father's hand, why would you want to jump out into Hell? And just who do you think you are? Do you think you have the power to jump out of God's hands?"

God is not hiding you on the top of His hand. You are way down deep in the palm of His hand, and if you wanted to get out you'd have to pry up His fingers, but you can't do that.

"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." - Luke 19:9,10.

IV. THE LOST ARE LOSERS

If you are without Christ, you are lost! You are a loser! You lose, out on eternal life, on Heaven, on a relationship with God, on the forgiveness of sins, on new life. Without Jesus Christ you are a loser for all eternity.

You think it is bad in this world! If you die and go to Hell, you'll wish you could exchange it for all the little troubles, pains and agonies that this world gave you. If you do not have Christ as your Savior, you are a loser now and for eternity.

"And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods, And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." - Luke 12:13-21.

There is a loser. This man thought he would just live life the best he could and amass all the fortune he could. He didn't think about God or getting saved or about anything else spiritual. He didn't go to church; he didn't want to hear a preacher; he didn't want to put up with any Hell fire-and-damnation preaching; he didn't want to hear anything about being a sinner. He just wanted to make money and more money and more money and build, build, build, and get, get, get!

God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

Where is all that stuff going to go? What good is it going to do you to die and go to Hell and leave all your goods behind?

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" -Mark 8:36.

This man was a loser. To his friends and neighbors he may have looked like he had everything, like he was a winner; but he was a loser because his soul was required. Not only did he lose everything that he had spent all his life gathering, but he also went to Hell. He had never trusted Christ as his Saviour.

In Luke 16 is the story of another loser:

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."

This man had it made. People looked at him and said, "He has everything." This man is like some of our famous millionaires today.

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores."
-Vss. 19-21.

The world would call this man a loser. They'd look at the rich man and say, "Winner!" But they'd look at this poor man and say, "Look at that loser! He's disgusting! He's dirty and full of sores, and the dogs come and lick his sores! Get him out of here! Get him out of our sight! We don't want to see him!"

"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."- Vss. 22-31.

The one whom society called the winner was really the loser as he burned in the eternal fires of Hell. He desired to have one little drop of water placed on his tongue to give him a small respite, but he could not have it.

Lazarus, who had been looked upon as a fool and called a loser, was really the winner as he was comforted in Abraham's bosom, the place of wonderful peace and contentment.

This rich man who found himself in Hell said, "Will you send someone to tell my five brothers about this horrible place? If they saw someone who rose from the dead, they would believe and repent."

Abraham said, "No, they wouldn't!"

Friend, if you don't believe this Book, you won't get saved. If you won't believe the words of this Book, it wouldn't matter if all your relatives who are now burning in Hell came out of Hell and talked to you; you wouldn't hear them if you won't hear the Word of God!

There is no word more powerful than the Word of God, not even the testimony of those who would rise from Hell.

The rich man of Luke 16 was a loser. He lost out on eternal life. He lost out on Heaven. He lost out on the blessings of God even in this world.

V. LOSERS ARE WEEPERS

Eternal Hell will be filled with losers who are weepers.

"Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." - Luke 13:23-28.

Here's the picture of the Master who bids people to come. He says, "Come into My house, come into My solace, and I will feed you and give you drink." But they would not come, so the Master arose and shut the door.

Now they are hungry and thirsty, and they come beating on His door, crying, "We'll come in now! We'll come in now!"

He says, "I don't know who you are."

"But we saw You teaching in our streets, and we ate and drank with You one time!"

"But you wouldn't come in when My door was open. Now My door is closed. Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity!"

There's coming a time when the door of opportunity for trusting Christ will be closed. If Jesus comes today, the door will be closed. If you die today, the door will be closed, and you'll be like this rich man. You'll be banging on the door, saying, "Let me in! Let me in! I went to church. I heard the preacher, and I know what he said, and I believe it now!"

He'll say, "It is too late now! Too late! The door of opportunity is closed to you."

The Bible says, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Rev. 9:27). My dear friend, there is going to be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The Bible describes Hell as a place of burning fire where lost souls are tormented day and night, a place where the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth are heard continually. The eternal shrieks and cries of the damned forever resound in the ears of the occupants!

Will you weep for all eternity, with no hope of rescue, no hope of remedy? Your tears would evaporate before they could even reach your cheek because of the torment of the flame!

Oh dear soul, will you find yourself lost forever, or will you be found today? You see, Jesus wants to find you. He knows your name. He knows where you are, and He knows you are here today. He's waiting here to find you; but will you be found and kept, or will you lost all eternity?

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