

# Zacchaeus Meets Christ

<b>Scripture:</b>	Luke 19:1-10
<b>Memory Verse:</b>	Luke 19:10 "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
<b>Teaching Objective:</b>	The unsaved child will depend on Jesus who wants to save him.
<b>Main Teaching:</b>	The Lord Jesus Christ came to save sinners.
<b>Emphasis for Saved:</b>	Others should see the difference God makes in your life.

## I. Introduction

Have you ever been to a parade in which a very important person, such as an Olympic gold medalist or an astronaut or maybe even the President, was going to appear? What was it like? (Noisy, crowded.) Do you remember how much you wanted to see, how hard you struggled to find just the right place to stand? Perhaps others wouldn't let you in. If they didn't, you'll understand just how Zacchaeus felt.

## II. Progression of Events

A. Excited that the famous Miracle Worker Jesus was coming through Jericho, a tax collector named Zacchaeus determined to see Him pass along the busy street (vv. 1-3).

[Jericho was a good place for a tax collector to live since it served as a major customs site for goods entering Palestine from the East. As a class, the tax collectors were despised by their fellow Jews. They were generally classified as "sinners" (Matthew 9:10, 11; Mark 2:15), probably because they were considered traitors for collecting taxes as agents of the hated Roman government and because they were allowed to gather more than the government required and pocket the excess.]

B. People were everywhere, all scrambling for a good spot; so short Zacchaeus, who longed desperately to see, hurried ahead and climbed a tree (vv. 3, 4).



Being too short to see wasn't this tax collector's real problem; if people had liked Zacchaeus, they could have made room for him. The problem was that the other Jews of Jericho despised Zacchaeus. He had betrayed them by agreeing to oversee the collection of taxes for the hated Romans who had taken over their country. The Jews saw Zacchaeus as an awful sinner – someone who had grown rich by cheating his own people. But Zacchaeus was not the only one who is a sinner. The Bible says, (read Romans 3:23). **You and I are sinners, too.** Every time you talk behind somebody's back, steal money from your mother's purse or do some other wrong thing, you show that you "fall short" – that you don't measure up to God's perfect standard of right. You sin because you were born with a "want to" to do wrong, and your sin separates you from God (Romans 5:12). It can also spoil your relationship[s] with others. That is what had happened to Zacchaeus.

C. As He passed, Jesus purposely looked at Zacchaeus and spoke kindly to him (v. 5)



Jesus is God the Son. He knows everything. He knew Zacchaeus's name. He knew that he was a sinful tax collector. He also knew that Zacchaeus was suffering because he was doing wrong and because others disliked him. Zacchaeus may have thought that even God disliked him. But God's perfect Son Jesus loved him no matter what he had done. And **Jesus loves you no matter what you have done or what other people think of you.** Others may not want to be your friend because of the bad things you've done. God knows all about you (Psalm 139:1-3) because He made you (Psalm 139:14-16), and yet He loves you. Others may reject you because of how you look or because you can't do things they

can do. God doesn't reject us; He loves everyone the same. He wants you to know Him in a special way. The Lord Jesus knew and loved Zacchaeus and wanted Zacchaeus to know Him, too. That's why He stopped and spoke to him.

- D. By saying that He wanted to spend time at Zacchaeus's home, Jesus let everyone know that He accepted Zacchaeus (v. 5).
- E. Surprised, but very pleased, Zacchaeus quickly jumped down from the tree (v. 6)
- F. The offended Jews grumbled because Jesus was being a friend to a man they viewed as a terrible sinner (v. 7).



The people had no time or concern for Zacchaeus, but Jesus did. Jesus saw Zacchaeus as a person of value, as someone who could be changed completely once he received God's forgiveness. It didn't matter to the Lord what Zacchaeus had done or what other people thought of him. Jesus, God's perfect Son, reached out in love to Zacchaeus, and He had come to help sinful men and woman, boys and girls to find the way to God (v. 10). Soon after this, Jesus gave His life to save you and me from our sins. He died on the cross, taking the punishment that we deserved. The Bible says His blood was given as the payment for sin (1 John 1:7b). three days later He rose again. Jesus has made the way for you to know and love God. **He wants to save you no matter what you have done wrong, no matter what others think of you.** And He wanted to save Zacchaeus.

### III. Climax

Zacchaeus was saved by his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in spite of his sin and the rejection of the people (v. 8).

### IV. Ending

#### A. Conclusion

1. Zacchaeus promised half of his possessions to the poor (v. 8).  
[“Half my possessions” may also mean half a year's earnings.]
2. He promised to make things right with anyone from whom he had stolen by paying back four times the amount – far more than the Law of Moses required (Leviticus 6:1-5; Numbers 5:5-7).  
[If you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, God wants you to show that you are a child of His by making things right when you do wrong.]
3. The Lord assured Zacchaeus (and all who were listening) that because Zacchaeus had truly repented – he had been saved (v. 9).

#### B. Invitation (Unsaved)



Jesus wants to save you from your sins, too. Just as He stopped to seek sinful Zacchaeus, He is seeking you today. He wants to save you from your sins. Tell him that you believe with all your heart that he is the perfect Son of God who died for your sins and that he came back to life again. Then the Lord **Jesus will forgive you for all your sins, no matter what you have done or what others think of you,** and he will come to live inside you (Romans 10:9, 10).