

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

1ST GRADE

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 20

Zacchaeus



Zacchaeus

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will show the students Jesus' heart for sinners and encourage them to have the same heart.

Key Verses

Luke 19:1-10—Main Teaching Passage
Luke 18:18-30

Memory Verse - Romans 10:13

"For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, John 20:29b.

Bring up volunteers to act out some scenes with you. First, pretend to be a doctor who doesn't like sick people (have the kids be the sick people). Then pretend to be a zookeeper who doesn't like animals. Finally, be a dentist who is grossed out by teeth. Make the examples silly to show that none of these things make sense.

In today's story, some people thought that Jesus is like this. They thought that Jesus was a Savior who didn't like sinners.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

The focus of this lesson is on Jesus and Zacchaeus, but first we need to look at Jesus' interaction with a rich young ruler in Luke 18:18-30. This ruler came to Jesus asking how to receive eternal life, but left sad when he learned that Jesus wanted him to sell all he had and give it to the poor. Jesus then told His disciples that it was impossible for a rich man to enter God's kingdom, but with God all things are possible.

Then in Luke 19, we meet Zacchaeus, who was a rich tax collector. Zacchaeus was a short man, so when he wanted to go see Jesus, he could not because he was unable to see over the crowds surrounding Him. However, Zacchaeus was determined, so he climbed up into a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus. When Jesus saw him, He told Zacchaeus to come down, because He was going to stay at Zacchaeus' house that day. When this happened, some people complained that Jesus was staying with a man who was such a sinner, but this did not stop Him. Zacchaeus was changed by this encounter with the Lord and declared that he was going to give half of his money to the poor and repay anyone whom he had ripped off four times as much money as he had taken. Jesus celebrated that another person had come to Him, since His mission was to seek and save the lost. The very thing that Jesus had declared impossible with man, that a rich man could enter into the kingdom of God, had happened.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

As hard as it may be to believe, tax collectors were even more hated in Jesus' day than they are today. In that time, the Romans used Jewish tax collectors to take money from the rest of the Jewish people. These tax collectors were asked to collect a certain amount of money from each person, and whatever else they could get was theirs to keep. They were considered traitors and thieves by the Jews. This is how others would have seen Zacchaeus: a greedy, traitorous thief. That's why many people were so upset when Jesus had the nerve to go to his house.

Notice how complete a transformation Zacchaeus' salvation was. He didn't just pray a prayer or say some nice things about Jesus. His conversion led to action, and his life was totally transformed. In fact, he succeeded exactly where the rich young ruler failed. He was able to give up his idol, which was money, and give it to the poor as an act of worship to Jesus. When we become believers in Jesus, our actions should be totally transformed. Instead of living for ourselves, our words, thoughts, and actions should please Jesus.

LOOK (Continued)

This story shows us two different ways people may interact with sinners. The crowd responded to Zacchaeus with disgust. They didn't think that someone like him deserved to be with Jesus. However, our Lord's response was just the opposite. He not only loved sinners, but verse 10 says that He was actively seeking to save them (and He still does today). Sinners were the very people Jesus came to save. He spent time with them and loved them because He wanted to see them get saved. The Bible says "whoever" calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved, not just "good people."

We should have the same heart and attitude towards sinners that Jesus did. While we should be wise about the sort of people we allow to influence our lives, that doesn't mean we should avoid unbelievers, even the ones that we might think of as bad. Just as much as Jesus wants you to be saved, He wants the bully at school, the teacher who says God isn't real, people in jail, and every other person who does not know Him to believe in Him. If Jesus cares about them, we should too. We should make every effort to show sinners the love of Christ. Finally, for any in the class who feel like they are like Zacchaeus, this story reminds us that we can never sin too much for God to still save us.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Romans 10:13.

Have the class make a list of people in their lives who seem far away from Jesus. Pray for them to be saved and think of ways the class can show God's love to them.

Pray: Thank Jesus for coming to save us, no matter what we have done. Ask Him to help each of us treat others with love, even those who are considered to be really bad.

Parent Question: What was the difference between the way the crowd treated Zacchaeus and the way Jesus treated him?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Luke 19:1-10 by David Guzik

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

A. Jesus and Zacchaeus

1. ([Luke 19:1-4](#)) Zacchaeus climbs a tree and risks ridicule to see Jesus.

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, *there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.*

a. **Jesus entered and passed through Jericho:** Jericho was an ancient and important city, and as Jesus passed through the city on His way to Jerusalem, it seems that the reason was to meet with this **man named Zacchaeus**.

i. Jericho was a prosperous city. “It had a great palm forest and world-famous balsam groves which perfumed the air for miles around. Its gardens of roses were known far and wide. Men called it ‘The City of Palms.’ Josephus called it ‘a divine region,’ ‘the fattest in Palestine.’ The Romans carried its dates and balsam to world-wide trade and fame.” (Barclay)

b. **Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector:** Zacchaeus was not only a tax collector, but a **chief tax collector** — and the Jews hated men like him. This was not only due to their natural dislike of taxes, but more so because of the practice known as tax farming, the collector made his profit on whatever *extra* he could get away with charging his victims. A tax collector was highly motivated to make the taxes as high as possible.

i. When the tax collectors came to John the Baptist, asking how they could get right with God, he told them *collect no more than what is appointed for you* ([Luke 3:13](#)). If you were a tax collector and you were rich, you were a rogue.

ii. Morris on **chief tax collector**: “The title is not found anywhere else, so its precise significance is not known, but it seems to point to the head of the local taxation department.”

iii. The name **Zacchaeus** means “pure one.” This man was anything but pure — until he received Jesus. “He should by his name have been a puritan (in the best sense), but he was an arch-publican, a public sinner, not simple, but subtle, a griping extortioner, a rich but wretched sycophant.” (Trapp)

c. **He sought to see who Jesus was:** Zacchaeus wanted to set his eyes on Jesus; he *sought after Him*. Perhaps Zacchaeus had heard that Jesus accepted people like him; he longed to see this remarkable Man Jesus for himself.

d. **He was of short stature:** His natural state gave him a disadvantage in seeking after Jesus. It also probably affected his personality; small in size, we can imagine how Zacchaeus was mocked and hated by others — and how he returned the favor by increasing the taxes on his victims.

i. If Zacchaeus had a small heart, he would have given up and not worked to see Jesus. “But Zacchaeus had had a great will to grow rich, and he had found there a way to *that*. And now he had a great will to see Jesus, and he was not the sort of person to be stopped.” (Morrison)

e. **He ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him:** Because Zacchaeus sought Jesus so intensely, he didn’t mind doing something that many thought was beneath the dignity of a grown, wealthy man

— he climbed up **a sycamore tree**.

- i. He climbed the tree like a little boy, and without knowing fulfilled Jesus' word that unless we become like children we will not see the kingdom of God ([Matthew 18:3](#)).
- ii. "A traveller describes the tree as being like 'the English oak, and its shade is most pleasing... It is very easy to climb.'" (Barclay)
- iii. "I wish there were more of us who did not mind being laughed at if only what we did helped us to see Jesus." (Maclaren)

2. ([Luke 19:5-6](#)) Jesus invites Himself to Zacchaeus' house.

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." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

a. **He looked up and saw him:** Because Zacchaeus worked hard and risked embarrassment to see Jesus, *Jesus saw him* and did not pass him by. In the best sense, Zacchaeus stood out to Jesus, and Jesus connected with Him.

b. **Zacchaeus, make haste:** Jesus started by calling **Zacchaeus** by name. Jesus knew the importance of a person's name. This may have been the first time Zacchaeus heard someone besides his mother say his name in a kind way.

- i. Saying his name made all the difference; Jesus told **Zacchaeus**, "I know you, and I lay some claim upon you."
- ii. Jesus knew the importance of a name. He said that He calls His sheep by name: *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out* ([John 10:3](#)). In Revelation, we are promised a new name that only God and we know. When we get to heaven, there will be someone there who knows our name.

c. **Make haste and come down:** Jesus told Zacchaeus to *hurry* and to **come down**. If He did not hurry the opportunity might be lost; if he did not lower himself he would never meet Jesus.

- i. This says to each, "Come down from your high place; Jesus would never have eaten with Zacchaeus if he stayed in the sycamore tree."

d. **Today I must stay at your house:** Jesus didn't merely want to preach to Zacchaeus and convert him in a spiritual or religious sense. Jesus wanted to have *real relationship* with Zacchaeus, beginning with a meal and time spent together.

- i. Jesus invited Himself to spend time with Zacchaeus, the hated outcast. The early church was despised for its acceptance of outcasts ([1 Corinthians 1:26-31](#)), but the early Christians regarded this as something glorious, not shameful.

e. **And received Him:** Jesus would only come into the house of Zacchaeus and into his life *if invited*, *if received*. He received Jesus first, and then started a relationship with Him.

- i. "Christ will not force himself into any man's house, and sit there against the man's will. That would not be the action of a guest, but of an unwelcome intruder." (Spurgeon)
- ii. Perhaps Zacchaeus had a lot of questions; but he didn't ask them from the sycamore tree. He came down from the tree, met Jesus, and then asked Him whatever he wanted to.

f. **And received Him joyfully:** Zacchaeus was *happy* to receive Jesus. Jesus called Zacchaeus to Himself, and it was to *Jesus* that he came, and happily so. Zacchaeus received **Him** — that is, Jesus Himself. Not primarily to a creed or a doctrine, not to a theory, and not to a ceremony — but to Jesus.

- i. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, and would be received into the city with joy, with what is called *the tri-*

umphal entry. Here, before that, He had a different entry into the heart of just *one man*. This entrance, this reception seemed to have more lasting results.

ii. Jesus is joyful to receive sinners, and they are joyful to be saved. We know that the joy of Jesus is greater, because it is more blessed to give than to receive.

iii. Zacchaeus is a model to everyone of how to receive Jesus:

- Receive Jesus by seeking after Him with real effort.
- Receive Jesus by humbling yourself.
- Receive Jesus no matter how sinful or hated you are.
- Receive Jesus as He invites you by name.
- Receive Jesus without delay.
- Receive Jesus by coming down to Him.
- Receive Jesus Himself.
- Receive Jesus into your *life*, your *home*.
- Receive Jesus joyfully.
- Receive Jesus despite what other say.
- Receive Jesus with repentance and restitution.

3. ([Luke 19:7-10](#)) Zacchaeus renounces his sin and Jesus proclaims his salvation.

But when they saw *it*, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.” Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

a. **He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner:** The people (**they all**, not only the religious leaders) thought Jesus had gone too far by associating with a man as bad as Zacchaeus — so they protested.

i. “Jesus Christ did not teach Zacchaeus by going to his house that character was of no consequence; on the contrary, Zacchaeus perceived at once that character was of the greatest consequence, and so he stood forth, and said ‘Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.’” (Spurgeon)

b. **Look, Lord... I restore fourfold:** In receiving Jesus and spending just a little time with Him, Zacchaeus knew he had to repent and make restitution. First he just sought after Jesus; but in seeking Jesus he also came to seek repentance.

i. Zacchaeus cheerfully offered to do as much or even more than the law demanded. The promise to make restitution to **anyone** he had wronged was remarkable; “Considering the way he had made his money it was unlikely that this would be a short list.” (Morris)

ii. *Can a life change this quickly?* Yes. Not every habit in the life of Zacchaeus changed immediately, but the heart changed and there was some evidence of life-change immediately.

c. **Today salvation has come to this house:** Jesus knew that the repentant Zacchaeus was saved, rescued from the bondage, power, guilt, and penalty of his sin. The word was no longer **sinner** but **salvation**, and Jesus told everyone.

- i. Jesus commanded the rich young ruler to give away everything ([Luke 18:18-23](#)); but for Zacchaeus it was enough to make restitution to those he had wronged. Jesus knew Zacchaeus by name and knew exactly what *he* must do to repent and be right with God and man.
- ii. In [Luke 18:24-27](#), Jesus said that it was impossible with man for the rich to enter into heaven; but it is possible with God. This is a fulfillment of that promise. Zacchaeus became a joyful giver, thus showing God's *impossible* work in him, but the young ruler went away sorry, holding on to his riches.
- d. **Because he also is a son of Abraham:** Since Zacchaeus was so hated by his fellow Jews, they probably often said that he wasn't a "real" Jew. Jesus wanted everyone to know that Zacchaeus really was a **son of Abraham**, both by genetics and by faith — because he really, joyfully received Jesus.
- i. The priests of Jericho (it was a Levitical city) had probably often condemned Zacchaeus and called on him to give to the poor. But after meeting Jesus, such a sacrifice was done joyfully. Love for Jesus can motivate us for greater things than legalism, guilt, or manipulation can ever do.
- e. **The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost:** Jesus explained why He sought and extended friendship to a notorious sinner like Zacchaeus. Jesus came precisely to save people like Zacchaeus.
- i. Zacchaeus *really* believed on Jesus. A true **son of Abraham** was not only descended from Abraham genetically, but also had the *faith* in God Abraham had.
- ii. Even though Zacchaeus sought Jesus, it turns out that *he* was the one who **was lost**, and *Jesus sought him (has come to seek)*. Zacchaeus was lost to his parents; lost to the religious, lost to his community, lost to whatever friends he might have had — yet in a sense, not lost to God. "As the story of his conversion unfolds, his seeking Jesus ([Luke 19:3](#)) turned out to be the result of Jesus' first seeking him ([Luke 19:10](#))." (Pate)
- iii. The entire account with Zacchaeus gives us a remarkable who, what, where, when, why, and how of receiving Jesus.
- *Who* Jesus wants to receive Him: those lost.
 - *What* Jesus wants with those who receive Him: relationship.
 - *Where* Jesus wants to go: down to Him.
 - *When* Jesus wants you to receive Him: immediately, quickly.
 - *Why* Jesus wants you to receive Him: to be with Him, to connect with Him in life.
 - *How* Jesus wants you to receive Him: joyfully.