

GETTING TO GIVING

CORE PASSAGE: LUKE 19:1-10

CONTEXT

Luke's Gospel is broken into roughly three sections. Luke 1:1–9:50 is the initiation of Jesus's public ministry, including His teachings and miracles. Luke 9:51–19:10 tells of Jesus's journey to Jerusalem under the shadow of the cross. Luke 19:11–24:53 tells of Jesus's arrest, death, and resurrection. In today's passage, Jesus was making His way to Jerusalem for the joy set before Him, prepared to endure the cross (Heb. 12:2). But on His way, He needed to make a stop for the salvation of a sinner.

KEY CONCEPT

Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

As you examine Luke 19:1-10:

- Notice that Jesus saw Zacchaeus's eagerness and invited him to fellowship with Him.
- Contemplate that like Zacchaeus, we should respond to Jesus with joy, submission, and repentance.



TIMELINE

Jesus Feeds the Five
Thousand (Luke 9:10-17)

Jesus Heals a Blind Man
(John 9:1-41)

Jesus Raises Lazarus from
the Dead (John 11:1-44)

Jesus Walks on Water
(John 6:16-21)

SESSION STUDY:
Jesus Encounters Zacchaeus
(Luke 19:1-10)

Jesus's Triumphal Entry into
Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-40)

Daily Readings

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|---|--|
| ☐ Day 1: Matthew 17:1-18:35 | ☐ Day 4: Luke 17:1-18:43 |
| ☐ Day 2: Matthew 19:1-20:34 | ☐ Day 5: Luke 19:1-27 |
| ☐ Day 3: Mark 9:1-10:52 | ☐ Day 6: Psalm 49 |



Scan this QR code
to access this session's
Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 19:1-5

JESUS INVITES ALL WHO ARE EAGER TO FIND HIM.

Circle the details Luke offers about Zacchaeus, and underline Zacchaeus's actions in this passage.

1 He entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** There was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. **3** He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able because of the crowd, since he was a short man. **4** So running ahead, he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus, since he was about to pass that way. **5** When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today it is necessary for me to stay at your house."

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

"The door of hope which the Gospel reveals to sinners is open very wide. Let us leave it open, as we find it; let us not attempt, in narrow-minded ignorance, to shut it. We should never be afraid to maintain that Christ is able to save completely (Hebrews 7:25) and that the vilest sinners may be freely forgiven if they will only come to him."¹

—J. C. Ryle (1816–1900)

The Gospels show us that Jesus often extended grace to unexpected people. Zacchaeus is a perfect example. Notice how Luke introduced him as a rich chief tax collector. Zacchaeus, a Jew, would have collected taxes from his fellow Jews to give to Rome. While today an accountant might be given a salary, in Jesus's day, tax collectors routinely collected more than was due, skimming off the top and cheating the people to build their own wealth. As a chief tax collector, Zacchaeus was the boss, which meant his opportunity to collect was large. From his later confession, he made it clear that he made a lot of money through dishonesty and theft.

It should come as no surprise that Zacchaeus was a despised man as a traitor and a cheat. In the eyes of the Jews, he was the worst of sinners. Yet in Luke's Gospel, some tax collectors respond positively to Jesus's teachings, including Matthew the disciple (5:27-32; cf. 3:12; 7:29; 15:1-2; 18:9-14). Luke indicated that Zacchaeus, like the tax collectors who previously accepted Jesus's teaching, was eager to see Him.

What kinds of people might we be tempted to classify as the worst of sinners to despise and avoid today?

The text reveals another important detail: Zacchaeus was a short man. Given his reputation, the crowd was unwilling to make room for this short sinner so he could see Jesus walking by. Zacchaeus's desire to see Jesus was so strong that he climbed a tree, a highly unusual act for a man of his social status that exposed him to public shame and humiliation. His eagerness was rewarded, however, as Jesus walked his way. Upon seeing him, Jesus said that it was necessary for Him to stay at Zacchaeus's house that night.

This was a divine appointment. Jesus considered His visit with Zacchaeus as part of His mission. So even though Zacchaeus climbed the tree looking for Jesus, Jesus also was looking for Zacchaeus. More than mere chance or circumstance, this necessary encounter held a redemptive purpose—Jesus came to seek and save sinners, of whom Zacchaeus was one of the foremost of his city.

How can we determine if we are experiencing a "necessary" encounter with someone for the sake of the gospel?



PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 19:6-10

JESUS OFFERS SALVATION TO THOSE WHO ARE LOST AND WANT TO BE FOUND.

Underline the response of the crowd, and circle Zacchaeus's response.

6 So he quickly came down and welcomed him joyfully. **7** All who saw it began to complain, "He's gone to stay with a sinful man." **8** But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, I'll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord. And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I'll pay back four times as much." **9** "Today salvation has come to this house," Jesus told him, "because he too is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost."

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

REPENTANCE: Repentance is a response to God's gracious call to salvation. It includes a genuine sorrow for one's sin (Luke 5:1-11), a turning away from one's sin toward Christ (Acts 26:15-20), and a life that reflects lasting change and transformation (Psalm 119:57-60). It is the human counterpart to God's work of regeneration; in other words, the human side of our conversion.

Key Concept: Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

Grace is scandalous. It is unfair, and that bothers us, especially when we see someone getting something good that we think they don't deserve. The crowd in Jericho the day Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree struggled with what they saw when Jesus met and talked to that sinful man. They complained because a tax collector like Zacchaeus should not have received the benefit of salvation coming to His house. Of all the people in the city that day, why would Jesus focus on perhaps the most sinful and despised person? Didn't others deserve it more? Well, that's the problem with grace. It's not dependent on what we deserve. Jesus came to seek and save the lost. No wonder He found Zacchaeus.

Do you find yourself identifying with the complainers or with Zacchaeus in this passage? Why?

While the crowd complained, Zacchaeus rejoiced. Meeting Jesus was the greatest moment of his life. His heart longed to meet Jesus, even if he didn't realize how earnestly until Jesus came to him and invited Himself to his house. His life was now changing, and the change would become evident to all. That's what grace does. It comes to an undeserving soul, changes it entirely, and new works flow

out. We can struggle to hold this order clear in our minds, but we cannot obey into salvation; rather, obedience flows from salvation. The truly changed life can only flow from a truly changed heart.

The evidence of Zacchaeus's repentance is shocking. We must not forget his status. He was rich. He had a certain lifestyle he was used to. And there is no indication that he struggled with his occupation before he met Jesus. Yet when he met Jesus, he gave it all up immediately. He repented on the spot—perhaps even before Jesus came to his house.² The encounter with Jesus was grace enough to move Zacchaeus to give sacrificially to the poor and to vow to repay what he had extorted—four times as much. The rich man was willing to become poor to have Jesus.

How have you seen the grace of Jesus produce true change in your own life?

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus's ministry and mission was to bring salvation to those who are lost and looking to be found.

SALVATION HAS COME TO THIS HOUSE

Read Luke 19:1-10. In the diagram below, write in each section the steps Zacchaeus and Jesus took to reach the point of Zacchaeus's salvation.

ZACCHAEUS		JESUS
	S	
	A	
	L	
	V	
	A	
	T	
	I	
	O	
	N	

What is our response, knowing Jesus seeks to fellowship with us?

How might Zacchaeus's salvation story compare to your own testimony?

Key Concept: Jesus came to seek and save the lost.



HEAD

What does Zacchaeus's story teach us about the transforming power of meeting Jesus?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

✕ Read Psalm 49. This is a wisdom song, calling us to lay aside earthly treasures for heavenly ones. As you read, pray that God would do the same work in your heart that He did in the psalmist's. ✕

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HEART

What might joyful repentance look like in your own life as Jesus calls you into deeper intimacy with Him?



HANDS

What will it look like for you to lay aside self-focused desires and follow Jesus with joy wherever He leads?

