

Zacchaeus, the Tax Collector

(Luke 19:1-10)

Jesus was passing through Jericho. 2 And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but he could not because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see Him, for Jesus was about to pass that way.

5 When Jesus reached that place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house." 6 So he quickly came down and welcomed Him joyfully. 7 Seeing this, all the people began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." 8 But Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone unjustly, I will repay four times as much." 9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

He Wanted to See Jesus (*Luke 19:3*)

When a person desires to see Jesus, their life begins to change—just as Zacchaeus' life started to change. However, Zacchaeus had no idea what was about to happen to him that day. But because he had a sincere desire to see and know Jesus, his salvation was assured.

But He Could Not Because of the Crowd (*Luke 19:3*)

The crowd consisted of people who had arrived before Zacchaeus to see Jesus. If Zacchaeus had come a little earlier, he might have had a better view. The same happens in our lives—the more we delay, the bigger the crowd becomes, and obstacles named "crowd" come between us and Jesus.

Because He Was Short in Stature (*Luke 19:3*)

It is not written that Jesus was far from Zacchaeus, but that Zacchaeus was short. This means the problem was not the distance of Jesus but Zacchaeus' own limitations. Similarly, sometimes we are spiritually "short"—whether in faith, holiness, obedience, or devotion. Because of this spiritual "shortness," we fail to see Jesus clearly.

So He Ran Ahead and Climbed a Sycamore Tree (*Luke 19:4*)

Zacchaeus made an effort to see Jesus, not just to show Him to others. Many people today do a lot to display Jesus to others but do not have a personal longing to see Him. If you only try to show Jesus to others, you will miss seeing Him yourself.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8)

He Ran Ahead, Not Backward (*Luke 19:4*)

To see Jesus, Zacchaeus moved forward, not backward. Spiritually, we can only see Jesus when we leave behind our sins, hesitation, and past life. Turning back can take us further away from Him, but moving forward draws us closer.

"No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

He Ran, Not Walked (*Luke 19:4*)

Zacchaeus did not just walk leisurely; he ran toward Jesus. If we seek Jesus slowly and comfortably on our own terms, we may never truly find Him. Spiritual life requires urgency, passion, and effort.

"Now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2)

He Was a Chief Tax Collector and Rich

It was undignified for a man of his status to climb a tree, yet Zacchaeus abandoned his pride to see Jesus. Likewise, we must be willing to lay aside concerns about our status, reputation, and what people think if we truly desire to encounter Jesus.

"Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it." (Matthew 16:25)

Because Jesus Was About to Pass That Way (*Luke 19:4*)

The Bible teaches that Jesus does not stay in one place for long; He keeps moving forward. Zacchaeus positioned himself on the right path, ensuring he could see Jesus. Similarly, our efforts and spiritual pursuits will only be fruitful when we stand in the right place—the path of faith, obedience, and God's Word.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6)

When Jesus Reached That Spot (*Luke 19:5*)

It took Jesus some time to reach Zacchaeus because He was surrounded by the crowd. Zacchaeus had to wait patiently; he did not give up and climb down early.

Likewise, Jesus may take time to reach us, but we must be patient and remain steadfast in our faith. If we lose faith too soon, we might miss His presence.

"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him." (Psalm 37:7)

Jesus Looked Up and Spoke to Him (*Luke 19:5*)

Zacchaeus never expected Jesus to notice him. He had climbed the tree just to see Jesus, but his sincere effort led to something even greater—Jesus saw him and called him personally.

This teaches us that when we seek Jesus wholeheartedly, He not only sees us but also responds to us.

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13)

"Zacchaeus, Hurry and Come Down!" (*Luke 19:5*)

Jesus did not say, "Be careful while coming down" or "Take your time." He said, "Hurry!" This urgency shows that Jesus was eager to meet Zacchaeus, just as Zacchaeus was eager to see Him.

When we truly desire to meet Jesus, He is more than willing to meet us.

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in." (Revelation 3:20)

"For Today I Must Stay at Your House" (Luke 19:5)

Whenever someone sincerely desires to see Jesus, Jesus does not only appear to them; He desires to dwell with them.

Jesus does not want to be just an occasional visitor in our lives—He wants to reside in our hearts permanently.

"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them." (John 14:23)

Zacchaeus Joyfully Welcomed Jesus (Luke 19:6)

Zacchaeus did not hesitate; he immediately welcomed Jesus into his home. When Jesus calls, we should respond with the same eagerness and joy.

True transformation happens when we not only acknowledge Jesus but also invite Him wholeheartedly into our lives.

"Rejoice in the Lord always." (Philippians 4:4)

The People Murmured (Luke 19:7)

When Zacchaeus obeyed Jesus, people began to criticize. It is striking that they did not call him a sinner when he was cheating people, but when he chose to follow Jesus, they labeled him one.

This reveals that the world often resists spiritual transformation.

Lessons to Learn:

1. **Do not be swayed by public opinion.** If Zacchaeus had listened to the crowd, he would have missed salvation.
2. **Expect criticism when you choose the right path.** The world may not oppose you when you do wrong, but when you turn to Jesus, expect resistance.
3. **Jesus seeks sinners to save them.** He did not come only for the outwardly righteous but for those who recognize their need for Him.

"I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:32)

Zacchaeus Stood and Spoke to the Lord (Luke 19:8)

Notice that Zacchaeus **stood up and spoke**—this is very significant. Because of his position as **chief tax collector**, people were always standing before him, while he sat comfortably. But as soon as he encountered Jesus, his heart changed. He no longer saw himself as great but as a humble servant before God. That's why he **stood up**—to honor the Lord and demonstrate his **genuine humility**.

"Look, Lord! I give half of my possessions to the poor." (Luke 19:8)

The word "**Look**" is very important here. Zacchaeus did not just say, "I will give half of my possessions," but by saying "**Look**", he proved that he was putting his words into action **immediately** without any delay. If he had only said, "I will give," without actually doing it, he would not have had the courage to say "Look" before God.

Lessons to Learn:

1. **Actions speak louder than words** – Just speaking is not enough; we must prove our sincerity to God through our deeds.
2. **Standing before God** – When Jesus enters our lives, we should humble ourselves before Him, just as Zacchaeus did.
3. **True repentance is visible** – Zacchaeus' actions prove that true repentance is not just spoken but demonstrated through a transformed life.

"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

Zacchaeus Not Only Gave Half His Wealth but Also Restored Fourfold

Zacchaeus went beyond just giving to the poor. He also declared, **"If I have taken anything unjustly, I will return it fourfold."**

Why didn't he just return what he had taken?

When Jesus comes into one's life, **greed disappears**. When a person truly meets God, wealth, possessions, and status no longer matter. Their sole purpose becomes **pleasing God and blessing others**.

Repentance is more than just correcting a mistake—it is going beyond it. If Zacchaeus had only returned what he took, it would have been just a basic correction. But returning **four times as much** was proof that his heart had **completely changed** and was no longer controlled by greed.

Love goes beyond justice.

Justice says, **"Give back what you took."** But love says, **"I bless you by giving you even more than what I took."** This is what Jesus taught us—not just to do the bare minimum, but to give generously.

Lessons to Learn:

1. **When Jesus comes into a life, selfishness is replaced with generosity.**
2. **Repentance is more than fixing mistakes—it is about glorifying God through our actions.**
3. **True love goes beyond justice—we should not only return but also bless.**

"Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you." (Matthew 5:42)

"Today Salvation Has Come to This House." (Luke 19:9)

Jesus is the Savior, and when someone **truly** receives Him, salvation follows. But notice that Jesus said this **only after** Zacchaeus demonstrated his genuine repentance through actions.

Why didn't Jesus declare salvation as soon as He entered the house?

If just the **presence** of Jesus was enough for salvation, He could have said, **"You are saved"** the moment He entered Zacchaeus' house. But He waited until **Zacchaeus repented and changed his ways**.

This means that **salvation is not just about inviting Jesus in—it requires true repentance and transformation.**

Lessons to Learn:

1. **Jesus enters our lives, but we must take steps to change.**
2. **Receiving Jesus is not enough; true repentance must follow.**
3. **True repentance is not just spoken; it must be demonstrated through actions.**
4. **Jesus wants us to abandon our selfish ways and live a life of love and kindness.**

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

"Because He Too Is a Son of Abraham." (Luke 19:9)

Jesus said this to make it clear that **Zacchaeus also belonged to God's people**, even though he was considered a sinner.

What does this mean?

1. **Salvation is for everyone.** Zacchaeus was not an outsider—he was a son of Abraham, yet he had lost his way. Similarly, many people today are God's children but are still far from salvation.
2. **There is hope for every sinner.** Some people think they have sinned too much to be saved. But Jesus shows that **anyone** can return to Him, no matter their past.
3. **Jesus came to save the lost.** Zacchaeus' story is a message to all who are still far from God—Jesus came to bring them back.

Lessons to Learn:

1. **We should not reject sinners but pray for their salvation.**
2. **Anyone can come back to God, no matter how far they have strayed.**
3. **If we are living like Zacchaeus, we must repent immediately and accept Jesus.**

"The Son of Man Came to Seek and Save the Lost." (Luke 19:10)

This statement is the **heart of the Gospel**—salvation is not about human effort, but about God's grace and love.

What does it mean to "seek the lost"?

Zacchaeus thought he was looking for Jesus, but in reality, **Jesus was looking for him.**

- Jesus did not come only for good people; He came for **those who are lost, broken, and trapped in sin.**
- When we feel drawn to God, it is not a coincidence—it is **His divine plan.**
- No matter how lost we are, **Jesus finds us where we are and offers us salvation.**

Lessons for Our Lives:

1. **If you feel lost, know that Jesus is looking for you.**
2. **If you are trapped in sin, Jesus can lift you up.**
3. **If you have an encounter with Jesus, it is not an accident—it is part of His salvation plan.**

Blessed is Our God, and Blessed is His Love

Led by the Holy Spirit, Guided by Faith and Scripture

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I sincerely thank my respected Pastor, Rev. Sahadev Nanda, for teaching this topic so profoundly and clearly. His guidance has been a great blessing, enriching both my knowledge and faith. May God continue to bless him abundantly.

With gratitude,
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