

## Is Jesus The One For Me?

Scripture: Luke 19: 1-10  
Date: January 12, 2020

### **CURIOUS ABOUT JESUS**

#### ***DESIRES TO SEE JESUS***

Zacchaeus lives in Jericho – a major hub city where commerce and travel meet. There is lots of busyness as people moved through Jericho towards Jerusalem and there is lots of business as people paid for the rights to travel and also to purchase supplies for travels

Jesus is passing through adding to the crowds and chaos. But Zacchaeus lives there – as a chief tax collector – and all the other tax collectors in the region were under his realm. Meaning he was a man who has lots of money and lots of power. So why was he interested / curious in seeing this Jesus. Text doesn't indicate why – but again questions often lead us into clarity.

#### ***DETERMINATION TO SEE JESUS***

Nevertheless – Zacchaeus is on the move to see Jesus. Yet - in all likelihood it's like a parade – people lining the streets – even intermingling on the walkways. It's busy / noisy / chaotic. Zacchaeus might have been wealthy enough to get a front row view but instead – because he's short – he tries to find another option. He decides where Jesus will go and runs ahead, climbs a tree (a Sycamore tree – tall but with long, low horizontal branches)

### **CALLED BY JESUS**

#### ***BY NAME***

Jesus and the crowds come along the way and Jesus stops right under the tree and looks up at Zacchaeus and calls him by name. Interestingly Zacchaeus' name means innocent or righteous - but as a tax collector his role was more of a robber. Jesus calling Zacchaeus by name is more an identification of who Zacchaeus is than what Zacchaeus does. This is the beginnings of God's grace to Zacchaeus – the beginnings of an invitation that override expectations

#### ***BY URGENCY***

This text in Luke is filled with energy. There are loads of descriptions of people – adjectives and there are loads of descriptions of actions – adverbs. While Zacchaeus has done much of the work so far with his determination Jesus now acts decisively following his invitation of grace.

Jesus speaks to Zacchaeus with direction – with purpose. Zacchaeus is to come down IMMEDIATELY. Jesus declares that He MUST stay at Zacchaeus's house TODAY. The Greek word for must also carries a sense of *It is necessary*. In other words, this isn't optional. There is no debate from Jesus.

Come Down

Now

I must be with you

Today

**BY DESTINATION**

Clearly the plans have changed as Jesus who was “passing through” (vs. 1) now desires to stay at Zacchaeus’ house. Jesus is not just spending time with Zacchaeus but is entering into Zacchaeus’ life. Invited to spend time in one’s home is a greater intimacy of the relationship. But it’s also a revelation of how one lives their life. How it’s laid out, how it’s furnished, how it’s decorated reveal attitudes and priorities etc.

**CHANGED FOR JESUS****WITH JOY**

At these commands / invitation Zacchaeus is filled with joy and he responds with joy. He comes down out of the tree – at once – and welcomed Jesus gladly into his house – and most likely into his heart

The calling by Zacchaeus’ name begins the grace and the invitation offers the grace and now there is a living out of the grace by Zacchaeus.

**WITH GENEROSITY**

Once Zacchaeus and Jesus connected - the muttering began. Not by the religious leaders – the Pharisees or the Sadducees – rather it’s the ‘people’. Everyday people who had seen Zacchaeus in and around Jericho. Zacchaeus’ home was in all likelihood a great house – a rich house – that was created on the backs and the wallets of the many Jewish tax payers in the area! The people grumbled because while they liked Jesus’ miracles – they didn’t like Jesus’ manners

Zacchaeus responds to these criticisms – not Jesus!! He promised to pay back 400% of what he cheated from people AND he promised to sell 50% of his estate to give to the poor. Normal restitution was 20% to those who were cheated. This lavish generous act was much more than the rich young ruler in Luke who walked away.

The joy of Zacchaeus is evident by his generosity. A generosity given - even to those who doubted or even denied the grace given to him by Jesus

**JESUS**

Jesus speaks in verse 10 that salvation has come to the house. Jesus declares – perhaps the key verse for Luke in his entire gospel – that the Son of Man has come to seek the lost and to save the lost.

Zacchaeus was lost to God’s grace and was – mysteriously – seeking this Jesus. Only to be seen by Jesus when he was hiding in a tree !!

Zacchaeus was a part of the covenant through Abraham by birth yet was living outside of that grace. However, God’s grace was still extended to him – inviting Him to invited God into all parts of his life and home. And THIS changed Zacchaeus with so much joy that a lavish generosity to those around him emerged.

## CHALLENGED

### ***EPIPHANY 2020***

If 2020 vision is seeing clearly - then Zacchaeus is now seeing clearly! Who Jesus really is and who Zacchaeus really is – and how to live for Jesus. Often questions spring or leverage the clarity in our vision and a story – like that of Zacchaeus – is so identifiable. That his questions are often the ones we have as well

If Zacchaeus mysterious why – in going to see Jesus – was the question

Are you the one?

At the Sychamore tree – surely that question grew to

Are you the one for me ?

God who – through His Spirit – makes us curious to seek Him and know Him. Even though we have been created by God we have lost our way.

Yet God – by His grace – sent Jesus to seek and save the lost. While we think we are looking for God – God has already found us and seeks us to join Him.

This God also calls us – even challenges us – to invite Him into the fabric of our homes (our hearts). So that we – filled with His joy may find His grace and His generosity changing US into a people who lives generously for others.