

**Luke 19: "1 Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. 2 Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. 5 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." 6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. 7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." 8 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." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.""**

## ***"Eating & Drinking with Jesus"***

**Pastor Liberati has encouraged & challenged us these past few weeks with the importance of friendship. I was tempted to spend my time this morning sharing how six of our good friends made our recent trip so special, but any who are interested can look at some picture during lunch!**

- **Next I thought about talking about the related practice found in the command for us to be hospitable.**

**Again, far too much to cover in one message, so I would encourage any who are interested to pick up a copy of Pastor Wilkins book *Face to Face*. [mention copies]**

**In the end I decided to return to one of the most interesting encounters that Jesus had during His earthly ministry, and yes, as we often find Him, he is eating and drinking at someone's house!**

- **This encounter comes as Jesus is nearing the end of His ministry with the final journey to Jerusalem.**

**This encounter has an obvious parallel in the Old Testament! *Question for the kids: Can you remember another household being saved in the City of Jericho in the Old Testament?***

**That is right: Rahab!**

- **The story of Rahab comes as Joshua has entered the land to conquer the nations and his journey began at Jericho.**
- **Jesus is now coming as the new Joshua to establish His Kingdom that will fill the earth, bringing all the nations under His feet.**
- **Thus it should not surprise us to find Jesus traveling by way of Jericho & bringing salvation to a disreputable household of that city.**

**The story of Rahab is the story of God's gracious gift of salvation by faith coming to a woman and her household which we will see again with Zacchaeus! The writer to the Hebrews says that "By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace."**

**As the spies prepare to leave Rehab says to them, "I know that Jehovah has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.**

***We should note that fear is not the same as faith, only Rahab had faith!***

12 Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by Jehovah, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, 13 and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.”

The men tell Rahab they will spare her and her household if, when they come into the land, she binds a line of scarlet cord in her window...

- A scarlet thread to protect her household... Just like the blood on the doorposts during the Passover in Egypt!
- A beautiful story of salvation and God’s grace and so it should not surprise us to see it is repeated with the house of Zacchaeus!

With Zacchaeus we find someone even more despicable than Rahab the prostitute!

- 2: Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

Remember being a publican or tax collector was the bottom of the social food chain at that time in Israel... They not only collected the taxes for Rome but often used their powerful position to gather even more riches for themselves

- Zacchaeus was obviously very good at his trade because he had become the CHIEF tax collector and he was RICH!

Just before this encounter, Jesus had taught the Disciples that it is impossible for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God!

- Now God is about to do the impossible and as He does so, we should note that He uses very ordinary means!

3 “And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.”

- Zacchaeus was short and his shortness causes him to take some extraordinary steps to see Jesus!

We should remember that God often uses what we might perceive as faults or weakness to His ends... In this case: Zacchaeus’ shortness!

“So [Zacchaeus] ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see [Jesus]”

- Now this certainly places him where he needed to be for Jesus to stop and invite Himself over for dinner

BUT it also should remind us about “childlike faith!” Here is a rich powerful man scurrying ahead and scampering up a big tree like an excited child who wanted to see Jesus!

5 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."

- Jesus knew where Zacchaeus was, Jesus knew his name, and Jesus KNEW his heart!

We know from a systematic study of the Scriptures that there is a general order of salvation that has been revealed to us in the Scriptures...

**God has revealed His plan to save His people and there is NO other path to God! In the end we will ALL stand in the full righteousness of Jesus, having been called, regenerated, justified, sanctified and glorified by the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit!**

- **This is the Gospel that Paul says we are to proclaim, and if anyone proclaims any other, they are to be accursed.**

**Where we have to be careful is in thinking that we, from our human perspective, can see clearly how God works this out in each individual who is saved for all eternity:**

**Often the details of how God works out His gracious salvation get in the way of seeing the ‘story’ of salvation.**

**6 “So Zacchaeus made haste & came down, and received Him joyfully.”**

**This invites some questions...**

- **Did Zacchaeus get ‘saved’ in the tree?**
- **Was Zacchaeus saved when he had the desire to see Jesus?**
- **Will Zacchaeus be converted as Jesus shares the Gospel over dinner?**
- **Will Zacchaeus be saved by the good works he now promises to do?**

**Well, we know the answer to the last point is a resounding NO... but what about the others?**

**While we may not be able to explain all the details we do know that God is working in the heart of Zacchaeus and the repentance and willingness to change his ways are sure evidence of what has happened!**

- **We should join Zacchaeus in being joyful rather than over-thinking how it happened!**

**Then we see the crowd’s reaction: These crowds had just praised God when the blind man was healed on the same road where Zacchaeus sought to see Jesus, but when Jesus invites Himself to Zacchaeus’ house, it is a very different story...**

- **7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."**
- **We must be so careful that we are never the ones who become jealous of how God graciously deals with someone else as He advances His Kingdom!**

**With verse eight, we have the exciting proclamations that were made by Zacchaeus: Proclamations that would not likely have come at the beginning of the dinner.**

**Although we are not given details:**

- **I think we can safely assume that Zacchaeus properly welcomed Jesus into his home, unlike the Pharisee that did not wash his feet, anoint Him with oil or give Him a kiss.**
- **We can safely assume that Zacchaeus would have instructed the servants of his household to prepare a sumptuous feast for Jesus and the Disciples... A real celebration!**
- **AND we can safely assume that Jesus participated in some dinner discussion and taught as He always did... Perhaps explaining again how difficult it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom!**

**All benefits that flow from the command to be hospitable!**

So however God worked out the regeneration and justification of this man He had called from eternity past...

And whatever the discussion was about over dinner, we now clearly see the fruit of salvation and the beginning of sanctification in the life of this new believer!

8 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."

- We immediately see fruit in this man's life as he promised to make restitution and to be merciful.
- Note that Zacchaeus, like the soldiers who came to John the Baptist, is NOT told to leave his profession

Zacchaeus did not give away half his money to impress Jesus, trying to earn salvation or even to earn the Lord's favor...

- He is now a generous man because Jesus has given him a new heart and is sanctifying his life.

He kept the other half of his money, so we can understand that wealth is not a problem in and of itself as we have often seen:

- God loves to bless His people!

However, Zacchaeus does KNOW that HOW he got some of his money was a problem: He likely broke no laws...

But he knew that he had taken advantage of his position to take more than he should have, making "false accusations" like, 'if you don't give me an extra hundred dollars you may have a visit from the Roman Centurion.'

- Zacchaeus says he will restore fourfold, following the principles of restitution found in God's Law!

Exodus 22:1 "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep."

9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Jesus confirms that Zacchaeus has received the saving gift of faith by referring to him as a true son of Abraham, not via the flesh which even those wicked religious leaders could claim, but rather by faith as Paul explains in Galatians 3:5

"Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?-- 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

- The writer of Hebrews reminds us of how God's grace was poured out in the life of Rahab, with Joshua & Rahab being a great foreshadowing of this account of Jesus and Zacchaeus!
- We have seen how God has poured out His salvation on the house of Zacchaeus seeing the impact on his life and reminding us that Jesus has come to seek and save those who are lost.

### **So what does this mean for us today?**

- **Whether we were born children of the covenant or have been converted from a life of sin, we stand before God under the same gracious salvation.**
- **Whether we have walked faithfully all the days of our lives or have fallen away into grievous sins, Jesus has come to seek and to save those who are lost, and we stand under the same gracious salvation.**

**When we come to understand this, then we will have the same reaction as Zacchaeus – who remained a chief tax collector: BUT with new priorities!**

- **Like Zacchaeus, we are here to serve our Savior Jesus!**
- **We too must be generous & merciful with what God has given us.**
- **We must strive to have right relationships with those God brings into our lives, building friendships!**
- **Where we have wronged people we should do more than is required to make things right!**

**AND we must be those who practice hospitality, sharing the life Jesus has given us with others: Both those within the covenant and those without who need Jesus.**

**These are simple but profound steps that can and must be taken by all of God's people...**

- **Our individual actions in obedience to Jesus may seem like a drop in the ocean when we consider all the problems we have around us in this world today.**
- **But if ALL of God's people are faithful, these same simple actions become a tsunami of grace that can pour over any troubled land!**

### **Communion Meditation:**

**Genesis 18:2-8 “2So [Abraham] lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, 3and said, “My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. 4 Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant.”**

**They said, “Do as you have said.””**