

The Salvation of Zacchaeus

Lu 19:1-10

Introduction:

1. This wonderful story is only recorded by Luke and does not appear in the other three gospels
2. Jesus was on His way to that Cross when He passed through a very famous town named Jericho.
 - a. People lined the street hoping to see Jesus passing by
 - b. They all saw Jesus with their own eyes, but only one man came “face to Face” with Jesus.
 - c. His life was never the same again.
3. This man’s name was Zacchaeus. And he reached out to Jesus by literally "going out on as limb" for Him.
4. Remember the little song we learned written by Elsie Leslie.

Zacchaeus was a wee little man,
A wee little man was he,
He climbed up in a sycamore tree
For the Lord he wanted to see;

And as the Savior passed that way,
He looked up in the tree,
And He said, “Zacchaeus, you come down,
For I’m going to your house today,
For I’m going to your house today.

I. The Searching Sinner – vs 1-4

A. His Place – vs 1

1 And [Jesus] entered and passed through Jericho.

1. Zacchaeus lived in the city of Jericho
2. Jericho was under a divine curse because of wickedness
 - a) *Though beautiful outwardly, it was corrupt inwardly*
 - b) *What a picture of the lost sinner - full of corruption, under the curse of God*
3. When Christ comes on the scene, He can change the curse into a blessing
 - a) *Jesus healed blind Bartimaeus in Jericho*
 - b) *Jesus saved Zacchaeus, the tax collector*

B. His Person – vs 2a

2 And, behold, [there was] a man named Zacchaeus...

1. Zacchaeus means "righteous one" or "pure" but he was not living up to his name
2. Probably no one called him by his name - he wasn't pure
3. They probably had their own names for him
4. Jesus called to him in the tree and Jesus used his name
5. Though Zacchaeus was a renegade in the eyes of the Jews, he was a precious lost sinner in the eyes of Jesus

C. His Position – vs 2b

2 And, behold, [there was] a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

1. Zacchaeus was a supervisor of tax collectors
2. He worked for the Romans and was considered a traitor to his own people
3. He had become wealthy by collecting extra taxes and keeping the money and was despised by the people

D. His Possessions – vs 2 – “he was rich”

1. When we read the confession of Zacchaeus it is evident that he gained, some, if not all, of his wealth through unscrupulous ways
2. People probably walked in fear of this little man

E. His Purpose – vs 3a

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was...

1. Zacchaeus must be an awakened sinner
 - a) *No one seeks Christ until the Lord first opens his heart*
2. **Ro 3:10** As it is written, "There is no one righteous. No, not one. **11** There is no one who understands. There is no one who seeks after God.
3. Spurgeon said, "Christ does not leave it to ourselves to seek him, or else it would be left indeed, for so vile is our human nature that although heaven be offered, and though hell thunder in our ears, yet there never was, and there never will be, any man who, unconstrained by sovereign grace, will run in the way of salvation, and so escape from hell and flee to heaven."

F. His Problems – vs 3

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

1. The Crowd – “he could not for the press”
 - a) *Many were following Jesus to witness a miracle*
 - b) *Many were pilgrims going to Jerusalem for Passover*
2. He Was Short – “little of stature”
 - a) *It was not Zacchaeus' fault that he was "little of stature" and could not see over the crowd.*
 - b) *He did what he could to overcome his handicap by putting aside his dignity and climbing a tree.*
 - c) *Everyone falls short of God's standard - Rom. 3:23*

G. His Plan – vs 4

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that [way].

1. **He Ran**
 - a) *In this culture it was unusual for a man to run, especially a wealthy official*
 - b) *Yet Zacchaeus ran down the street like a little boy following a parade*
 - c) *If you are here today and you don't know Christ as Savior, then I urge you to run to him for salvation.*
2. **He Climbed**
 - a) *For a wealthy man to climb a tree is certainly unusual.*
 - b) *This is more than curiosity*
 - c) *Was he wondering, “Why such a big crowd?”*
 - d) *Who is this Jesus everyone is talking about?*
 - e) *What am I missing?*
 - f) *The crowd chuckled watching the little tax collector*
 - g) *Zacchaeus didn't let anything get in his way*
 - (1) Not the crowd
 - (2) Not his reputation
 - (3) Not his wealth
 - (4) Not even his small stature
 - h) *Had Zacchaeus heard of Bartimaeus whose sight was restored earlier that day?*
 - i) *Was Zacchaeus a miserable, lonely man who, knew that something was missing from his life?*
 - j) *Something was going on in his heart / life*

II. The Seeking Savior – vs 5

A. A Gracious Call – vs 5

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

1. Zacchaeus thought he was seeking Jesus, but Jesus was seeking him! (Luke 19:10)
2. By nature, the lost do not seek the Saviour - Rom 3:10-11
10 As it is written, "There is no one righteous. No, not one. **11** There is no one who understands. There is no one who seeks after God.
3. When our first parents sinned, they hid from God, but God came and sought them (Gen. 3:1-10).
4. There was no merit whatever in Zacchaeus
5. He was a sinner who only deserved condemnation
6. All calls to salvation are gracious, for none deserve it
7. Out of all the people in the great crowd that day, the Savior zeroed in on just one little man.
8. Jesus does not call the mass of humanity to Himself, hoping against hope that somehow, somewhere, someone will respond and come to Him. Rather, he calls individuals by name and that call is effective and effectual - it accomplishes its purpose.

B. An Urgent Call – “Make haste and come down”

1. The gospel is always an urgent matter
2. Now is the time to be saved - 2Cor 6:2b
2 ... behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.
3. Today is the day of salvation - Heb 4:7
7b ... To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

C. A Humbling Call – “Come down”

1. Salvation is humbling
2. The person must acknowledge that he is a sinner and he must confess that Jesus is Lord

D. A Personal Call – “Zacchaeus”

1. Jesus dealt personally with Zacchaeus
2. Salvation is a personal matter
3. No one is saved by proxy
4. To be saved, one must personally accept Christ

III. The Spectacular Salvation – vs 6-10

A. The Compliance – vs 6

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

1. **Earnestness - And he made haste, and came down...**
 - a) *There was earnestness in Zacchaeus' obedience*
 - b) *As soon as the Master spoke to Zacchaeus, he scrambled down from the tree quickly*
 - c) *This is the second time we see speed - In vs 4 he ran out ahead of the crowd*
 - d) *There was submissiveness in Zacchaeus' obedience*
 - e) *Christ had ordered him to come down and he obeyed*
 - f) *Obedience honors the Lord and Zacchaeus learned that the Lord honors our obedience*
 - g) *There was no debating - no questioning*
2. **Joyfulness -and received him joyfully.**
 - a) *There was joyfulness in Zacchaeus' obedience*
 - b) *The key to having joy in your life is to know Christ*
 - c) *The world tries a myriad of ways to find happiness, but it always fails since it leaves out Christ*
 - d) *Hell is a place of weeping (Mat 8:12) because Christ is not there and heaven is a place where there are no more tears because that is where Christ is*

B. The Criticism – vs 7

7 And when they saw [it], they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

1. This criticism was predictable
 - a) *When one trusts Christ the enemy will be upset*
 - b) *No success in the Lord's work pleases Satan*
2. This criticism was plentiful - "all murmured"
3. This criticism was perverted - "he has gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner"

- a) *The critics implied that by going to the house of Zacchaeus, Christ was condoning his sin*
- b) *The critics will try to pervert every good work into evil*

C. The Changes

8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore [him] fourfold.

- Here we see the changes in Zacchaeus after salvation
- When a sinner is converted there will be changes in his life
- **2Co 5:17** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.
- When we do not see changes in one who claims to be saved, then we can question the salvation experience
 1. He became pious – Jesus is now "Lord"
 - a) *Before conversion, Zacchaeus had little to do with God*
 - b) *He trampled on his laws in unholy living*
 - c) *Now Zacchaeus addressed Christ with great respect*
 - d) *Conversion changes a profane man into a pious man*
 2. He became generous – “I give to the poor”
 - a) *Zacchaeus was a tax collector and before he was saved he would extort money from people*
 - b) *Now, a believer, he is going to give money to charity*
 - c) *This was a generous % of giving - not just a quarter thrown into the Salvation Army kettle at Christmas*
 - d) *When people receive the gift of eternal life, then they give a lot better than they did before*
 - e) *His life had been built around money - his goals, his purposes, his very identity as a person were built on wealth and material success but that all changed*
 3. He became compassionate – “give to the poor”
 - a) *Instead of cheating people out of their money, he is now a compassionate man giving to help others*
 - b) *He is concerned about the poor*
 4. He became honest – “restored fourfold”
 - a) *This does not suggest that Zacchaeus is not sure if he cheated anyone*

- b) *This is admission that he cheated others and there will be restitution*
- c) *When one receives Christ, who is the truth, then there will be truth in his life - Jn 14:6*

D. The Confirmation – vs 9

9 And Jesus said unto him, **This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.**

1. The people thought Zacchaeus was a wealthy man...
 - a) *But actually he was only a bankrupt sinner who needed to receive God's gift of eternal life, the most expensive gift in the world.*
2. This is the only instance in the four Gospels of Jesus inviting Himself to someone's home
3. This illustrates the words of Revelation 3:20

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with me.
4. Zacchaeus was probably low on people's list of those who probably would be saved
 - a) *This encourages us to pray and believe that God can and will save the lost*
 - b) *He became a son of Abraham - not just a seed of Abraham*

IV. The Summary Statement – vs 9-10

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

1. Jesus always kept in view His purpose for coming to earth
 - a) *He states his purpose in response to the crowd grumbling that He would be the guest of a tax collector*
 - b) *Jesus is going to the house of a man who is a sinner because that is the reason that he came to the earth*
2. Here is the most valuable, the most glorious and the most important truth ever revealed in Scripture.
 - a) *This is why we are saved*
 - b) *God is a seeker and saver of the lost*
 - c) *From the garden of Eden, God has been seeking the lost*

3. In our sinfulness, in our fallenness, in our blindness, in our ignorance, in our association to the kingdom of darkness and under the power of Satan, we cannot seek after God, we do not seek after God.

Conclusion:

1. Human thinking concluded that Zacchaeus was the least likely person to be saved
2. Such also is the story of Mitsuo Fuchida, the man who led the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Mitsuo not only helped to plan the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor he also led the strike force of pilots who carried out the mission. It was Mitsuo who uttered the words still remembered from that attack, "Tora, Tora, Tora." The war ended with Mitsuo still convinced of the justness of the Japanese cause. But two things were a witness to him. He heard the story of Peggy Covell, who had ministered to Japanese POW's, he learned that her parents had been missionaries in Japan, but persecution broke out and they were executed. He could not understand how this woman could help those responsible for her parents' death. And then on another occasion he was handed a tract written by Jacob Deshaze. Jacob had been a member of the Doolittle raid on Japan and had been captured. At the end of the war he returned to Japan as a missionary. Mitsuo was touched by the power of Christ that compelled these people to love those who had hurt them. Mitsuo sought out and found a Bible and there in the crucifixion story found in Luke 23 he gave his heart and life to Jesus. He spent the remainder of his life as a witness to the power of Jesus to transform a life. His was a sudden and dramatic conversion. [Story gleaned from "Pearl Harbor Remembered: The Miracle of a New Birth." Stephen Rost. Baptist Bible Tribune (Dec 4, 1991)]