

## **Luke 19:1-10 Encounter with Tax Man**

### **Overheads in Bold Print**

Introduction/End of Encounter series/Opening Prayer

**“He entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich. Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, because he was small in stature. So, he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way. When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly. When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, “He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner. Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, “behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:1-10**

I have probably used this scripture in jail more than any other. I confess there have been times I have not prepared a lesson, and have fallen back on this passage. But it always a great passage to build on the idea of a man who is hated by all, yet Christ calls him by name out of the crowd. Even though every else was against him, hated him, wrote him off, and had no friend in the world-Christ still calls him out of the tree. Obviously, this is a message that can touch the heart of inmates who have failed in such an extent that even their families have broken off contact and refuse any effort to do so. I have had the privilege of seeing God work in the hearts of men and women and discover His forgiveness and the new life He brings to their hearts.

This message is a great message on the forgiveness of Christ and the repentance that comes with true faith as well as works that result from that faith. Today I want to adapt it to complete our encounter series.

The Roman government ruled Palestine during the time of Christ. They would collect taxes from all those conquered lands and in the case of Israel, they would hire Jewish citizens to collect the taxes. The tax collectors had a reputation of skimming off the top to fill their own pockets and they were absolutely hated by fellow Jews. They were considered thieves and even traitors. “Tax collector” became one the lowest and most derogatory terms you could use to describe someone. Jesus understood this hatred for tax collectors and even uses this in His teaching on church discipline:

**If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Matthew 18:17**

Yet Jesus is seen again and again spending time with tax collectors and even chose one of them to be His disciple-Matthew. There are several references of Christ reaching out to these hated individuals.

**Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples.” Matthew 9:10**

Zaccheus was a chief tax collector, which meant he was overseer of other tax collectors and He was wealthy, whether or not he was dishonest the scripture does not say, yet here is a rich man who wants to see Jesus. We just saw what happened to the last rich man who came to see Jesus (Misspoke last week-actual encounter, not Parable).

Zaccheus wants to see Jesus.

First challenge for our encounters-- Are we sensitive to those people in our path, that are open to talking about spiritual things. Testimony with neighbor. Are we living intentional, as a disciple of Christ, not ready to pounce, but patiently ready and willing to proclaim His truths. Zaccheus wanted to see Jesus... Question for us for people in our path.

Do they want to see Jesus? Because they see Jesus in us?

Zaccheus runs into an obstacle. The crowd. His problem-short. No help from crowd. Two-fold lesson here. First, we need to be realistic in our description of the Christian Faith. It is not find Jesus, and everything will be wonderful. There will be obstacles, it will be a battle against the world and against our flesh meaning our desires verses God's will and His desires for our life. There will be difficulties and difficult people: (Faithfulness of Christ)

**These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage I am overcome the world. John 16:33**

**Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Matt. 7:13,14**

We need to be rightly proclaim the scriptures, especially the eternal benefits of Christ. Having a testimony prepared how Christ has changed your life will be effective tool in reaching others. God's tool box. It helps to describe how faith and hope in Christ gets you through difficult times, but in realistic and practical terms people can relate to.

Secondly, we need to make sure we are not the obstacle. Here the crowd sees Zaccheus and is not about to let him in a position to see Jesus. Self-righteousness, being legalistic, disdain for certain people, Obstacles. WE are called to be His Ambassadors.

**Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Cor. 5:20**

How are we doing as Ambassadors? How well do we represent the Lord Jesus? Shared last week. Fruits of Spirit. Increasing in our faith, growing in our faith, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ

**So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...Col. 3:12**

**Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5-8**

Great verses of personal inventory, look through them, lacking=ask, seek, knock=receive. Personal conviction-frustration F.D.-how they were thought off, personal challenge. Discipline Issue. Testimony-Accepting responsibility for mistakes.

Zaccheus is not deterred he finds a tree. (Been to Jericho, tour guides- know scripture, not Christ)

Encounters, be an encourager is those making the extra effort. Encourage participation at church, be willing to pick them up for church. books, best encouragement devote time for them (may require years)

Now it is time for Jesus to have an encounter with this tax man

**When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” Luke 19:5**

Jesus calls Zaccheus out of the tree. It is not an invitation, it is a command, but Jesus says it in such a way-Zaccheus can't refuse. How many of us can remember the time when God spoke to our heart and there was nothing that could stop us from responding to His call. I remember I needed to accept Christ even though I wasn't totally sure what that meant, but I knew I had to do that, there was no other options. I love Leroy's testimony. I am sure there are many others here. We won't get sidetracked in discussing the Doctrines of Grace and "Irresistible Grace" but this is a great biblical example of the grace of God working in the heart of a man. What is the lesson for us? We must trust God to do the work in the heart of those we share with. "Apart from Me you can do nothing." No Coercing, resist "Oh, just say this prayer"

This is God's work and only God's work, I think some of the modern church lost this understanding. Spurgeon-new birth-standing miracle. Supernatural work of Spirit, grace. We must live the gospel, proclaim the gospel, and never stop praying that God will grant them eyes to

see and ears to hear. EE training-testimony-lesson learned. We can use the scriptures to help them hear His command

- **Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. 11:28**
- **Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. Acts. 16:31**
- **Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. Rev. 3:20**

When God works in their heart there will be a brokenness over sin and a desire for Christ and His forgiveness. God has put us there to reaffirm what He has promised in His Word. We can help them understand how to pray and help lead them in prayer, but still trusting God to give them His new heart. We can also reaffirm how the love of Christ has moved in our own hearts and how we trust Him. Now we see the response to Christ's call.

**And he (Zaccheus) hurried and came down and received Him gladly. Luke 19:6**

Received Him Gladly-King James says "Joyfully." Word used here is to describe "joy as direct result of God's grace." There is such joy in seeing someone new in their faith. Lesson-- time for us to come along side and be the encourager, affirm them by the Word, demonstrating the love of Christ-forgiving, accepting, patiently helping them "sort out" the change Christ is bringing to their life. It is a teachable but also delicate time. But here come the obstacles again:

**When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be a guest of a man who is a sinner." Luke 19:7**

Once again, the fight against obstacles. Crowd problems. There are people that will continue to condemn but also speak out against Christ. How could Christ love such a man? How can that church accept him/her?

**Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! Matt. 18:7**

Once again, we need to be different from the "crowd", the world, called to be light, salt, demonstrate the true character of Christ. It will involve our time, our resources, our denying of and giving of self. Time to tend sheep!

Christ has done His work in the heart of Zaccheus, now comes Christ's results:

**Zaccheus, stopped and said to the Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much. Luke 19:8**

This is not to be seen as a message of find Christ--now give your money. This is a message about repentance, about the newness Christ brings to the life of the believer. Zac-not money, make right, restitution-making things right.

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 2 Cor. 5:17**

Without Christ-bent toward self/unrighteousness. With Christ-bent toward righteousness. Not perfection but change in direction. We must teach repentance, demonstrate repentance, encourage the new desires that Christ brings to the heart, following Christ means there will be change, disciple=follower. Now we see Zac's genuine faith

**Today, salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. Luke 19:9**

Christ has proclaimed Zaccheus salvation and remember His Words to Bartimaeus "your faith has made you well. In our encounters we need to reaffirm them that faith in Christ has given them salvation. Just as Christ proclaimed Zaccheus salvation, we need to reaffirm them with the Word of God. Caution-circumstances/emotion. Faith in what God has said. Grounded in Word, affirmed by Christ and Holy Spirit. Oaks Bible Church. Great verse:

**"...the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you." 1 Peter 5:10b**

Son of Abraham-Father of faith, believing God, faith, trust what He has done, believe in the Lord Jesus, faith results in change and works.

**Then he (Abraham) believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. Gen 14:6**

**But someone may well say, "you have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one, you do well, the demons also believe and shudder. James 2:18:19**

We must be able to explain the difference between intellectual faith, volitional faith, head vs. heart for Christ (Professor vs. Possessor)?? Faith is in Who Christ is and What He has accomplished. Works are result of faith, we are His workmanship, His life now in us. Living by faith-following Christ, living by Word.

**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. We are His workmanship, created in Christ for good works, which He has prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:8-10**

Jesus completes His encounter with the tax man

**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10**

Christ has added another to His kingdom. Has He not added us to His kingdom in the same way. He didn't call us out of a tree, but He has called us out of the world.

**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. I Peter 2:9**

Closing out encounter series- "proclaiming the excellencies of Christ." Review---Jesus Questions of last three weeks

- **Whom are you seeking? (God things or Christ)**
- **Do you love Me? (Do you agape Me?)**
- **What do you want Me to do for you? (Ask, seek, Knock.) (Wanting more fruit)**  
**(Puritan Prayer "Thou has always placed before me an infinite fullness, and I have not taken it")**

We are His workmanship-created for good works-which He has planned-that we should walk in them. Christ calls us:

**You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. John 15:16**

We are His sovereign choice, no merit. He chose us to bear fruit, Provide greatest need - More of Himself!!!!!!

Closing prayer-include unbeliever challenge- "Receive Him gladly?" Ambassadors.

Communion-silent during Bread. Song during cup... Final Song.

Final Song---End of service----Benediction below- (Prayer team.)

**You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem (SB), and in all Judea(Goleta) and Samaria(CA) and even the remotest part of the earth. (US and beyond) Acts. 1:8**