

MEMORY VERSE

LUKE 19:10

"... for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Activity - The Tax Collector and the Prize Vendor

Cut several small pieces of green paper to represent money. Pass out an equal amount of money to each child in your class. Appoint a child to be the tax collector and have him levy a tax of one "dollar" for every letter in the child's name. This will create inequity among the class. Appoint another child as the prize vendor. Have him distribute a small prize to each child in the class if they have enough money to pay for one. The children with long names in your class will not have enough to pay for their prize.

Explain to your class that today they will learn about a tax collector who collected taxes unfairly and made life very difficult for the people of Jericho. After making your point, distribute prizes to the children who were excluded earlier.

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LESSON TIME!

Today, our scripture will teach us how to make someone that is small very big. It does not take magic to do this or drinking some special potion. Our story will show how a "wee little man" becomes BIG in the eyes of God and in the eyes of a watching crowd. **Jesus changes lives.**

Lesson Goal:

Jesus changes lives.

LUKE 19: 1-4

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

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

So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.

We are introduced to Zacchaeus in these verses. It says, "He sought to see who Jesus was..." But as we will soon see it was not Zacchaeus seeking Jesus as much as it was Jesus seeking Zacchaeus. Jesus would not be surprised by what was about to happen. He knew it and had planned on it.

What do we learn about Zacchaeus?

The Bible tells us Zacchaeus was short in stature.

He could not see because of the crowd. He must have had a curious side to him because it tells us Zacchaeus ran. It was unusual to see a man run back in Bible times. We do not often see a professional man running along the sidewalk today!

Zacchaeus was afraid he was missing something. He saw a large crowd and knew they were surrounding someone special. He was curious. He was wondering "What's going on over there?" "Who are all the people following?" He had to see; so he ran ahead of the crowd. Then he climbed a tree! Imagine that! A grown man, so curious about what was happening that he ran to beat the crowd and climbed a tree so he could see.

Zacchaeus was a tax collector. And he was rich.

He had the job of collecting taxes from the people. That is not so bad. We pay taxes today too. That means if I bought a new jump rope that cost \$2. I would pay \$2 for the jump rope and then have to also pay taxes on the jump rope. Perhaps I would pay \$2.14 for the jump rope. The extra 14 cents would be the tax. The government in America demands that I pay that. The money goes to them to help run our country, build new roads, buy new police cars, clean the park, etc.

Zacchaeus was a man who collected the taxes people owed for living in Jericho. But things were different back then than they are today. The tax collectors would demand the money owed to the Roman government and add some more for themselves to live on. If they had only added a little bit, it would have been okay. This is how the Roman government allowed them to get their income. If they added the right amount they would not get rich, they would just have enough to live on comfortably.

Zacchaeus was rich. That means he demanded too much money of the people he collected taxes from. If they bought a jump rope for \$2.00 instead of adding 14 cents for Roman tax and a little bit more for his personal income, he added a lot more for himself. We also know this because he admits later to taking what was not his.

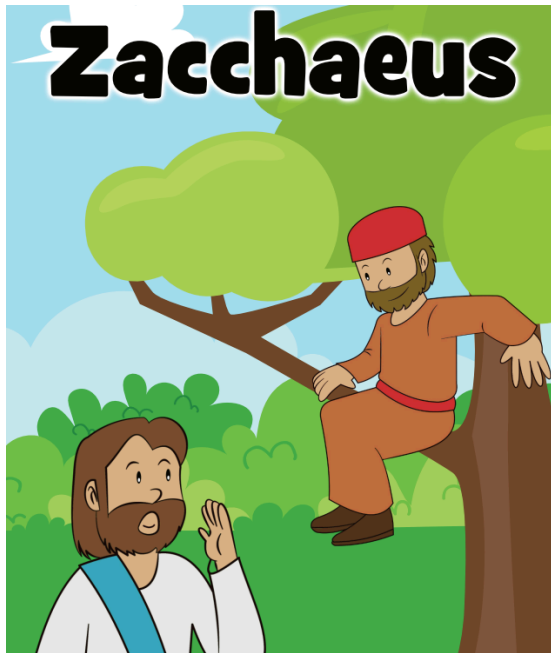
Doing that to all the people in his area made him very rich and made the people a lot poorer. He cheated them out of their hard-earned money with the power the Roman government had given him. The people did not respect or like wicked tax collectors like Zacchaeus.

LUKE 19: 5- 7

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."

So he made haste and came down and received Him joyfully.

But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, " He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."



This is a wonderful, supernatural part of our story. Zacchaeus was hoping to catch a glimpse of Jesus whom he had heard so much about. Jesus was moving toward the tree Zacchaeus is in, with the crowd following close behind, but Jesus stopped under the tree, looked up into Zacchaeus' face and called him by name. Wow! Only Jesus could have done that! He knew right where Zacchaeus was.

He knew who Zacchaeus was and what he was doing and thinking. The Bible tells us God knows every detail about us, every moment of every day. Nothing we do, say or think is lost to Him. He even keeps count of the very hairs on our heads! He knows our thoughts before we think them! He knew all about Zacchaeus. What was He going to do with this wicked, little man?

Activity - What's On The Inside?

Before class, prepare as many half sheets of paper as the number of children in your class with the shape of a man printed on the outside. Place a poster board cutout shape of a heart inside of the paper. Next, seal the edges of the folded sheet with the poster board cutout shape inside. Have the children place a piece of paper over the folded sheet and rub a crayon or pencil over their sheet. The poster board shape should make an image on the sheet of a heart (important, make sure the heart shape stays in one place while the student colors over it).

Explain to the children that Jesus sees what is inside each and every person, even when no one else can.

The Bible tells us that Jesus invited Himself over to Zacchaeus house! It is the only time ever recorded in the Bible that Jesus invited Himself to someone's home. **What did Zacchaeus do?** He jumped out of that tree, thrilled to take Jesus home with him! **That is a good response to have with Jesus.** Joyfully receiving Him allows Jesus to do in us what He came to do.

Jesus specifically called on Zacchaeus. He had a personal touch in mind for this little cheat. How could one little, wicked thief get Jesus' attention? Jesus loves everybody, no matter what sin, no

matter how wicked. We are all sinners. Jesus came to die and take away our sins on the cross; He died for Zacchaeus' sin, for your sin and for mine. He loves us. The Bible tells us He loved us even while we were His enemy, while we were sinning against Him.

Verse seven takes us back to the crowd traveling with Jesus. They were shocked to see Jesus invite himself to dinner at a sinner's house. The crowd complained that Jesus was going to a sinner's house, forgetting that they were all sinners too. Jesus just wanted to spend time with Zacchaeus.

We are all sinners and do not deserve God's attention. The story of Zacchaeus is a beautiful picture of what Jesus would one day do on the cross. On the cross, a righteous God would come to a sick and dying world to cleanse it from its disease of sin.

Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house, but we are not told what went on inside. We do are not told any of Jesus' conversation with Zacchaeus. Jesus always spoke the truth with grace. We know Zacchaeus heard the truth about himself, but he also heard of God's grace.

LUKE 19: 8- 9

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."

And Jesus said to him, " Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.

After Jesus' stay in Zacchaeus' house, he came out with Jesus. It says Zacchaeus "stood." That means he was going to say something publicly to the crowd. He spoke to Jesus in front of everyone. From what Zacchaeus said, we can tell that a transformation had taken place. Zacchaeus had changed. What had happened? Well, Jesus answers that for us in verse nine.

Jesus had changed him into a new creation. **Jesus changes lives.** Zacchaeus was no longer a lying tax collector; he was now full of the truth and grace that comes from Jesus!

Zacchaeus told Jesus in front of everyone that he would become a giver instead of a taker, and he would restore what he had taken in the past! Not only would he give back to the people what he had cheated out of them, but he would give them much more! Now Zacchaeus was a big man because he was doing right. Zacchaeus had trusted Jesus and obeyed Him. **Jesus changes lives.**

LUKE 19: 10

"... for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

This is a beautiful verse. In Zacchaeus' house Jesus had sought him, found him, and saved him. He is still seeking the lost and desiring to save them. Has He found you? Respond like Zacchaeus; receive Him with joy. You will see that **Jesus changes lives.**



PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of asking Jesus that we want to give you all our hearts.

Email to Parents

This week we learned about Zacchaeus. The theme was "Jesus Changes Lives." Zacchaeus is a wonderful story about a man who was living very well according to man's standards. After Zacchaeus heard about Jesus Christ his curiosity got the best of him. He traveled down the street and climbed in a tree to get a glimpse of Jesus. He wanted to see what Jesus was all about and if He had anything to offer. Zacchaeus found out that he was truly lost. And the status he held was insignificant. He found out that Jesus only could truly change a life. What a great story to reflect on this week. Pray and ask the Lord that others will see how your life has changed. Curiosity will surely stir up in others who have not seen or heard of Jesus a desire to find out more. The section of scripture that we studied was Luke 19:1-10

Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQChp5fCjSI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BjtbJFz2ug>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uL6FuAE2r4>