

LUKE | 8 Lessons from the Life of Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10

A rich man who made it through the eye of a needle —Bill Turner

1. **There was a lady who worked where Lisa worked at computer company in CA**
 - a. she was always wanting to talk about astrology/crystals/New Age beliefs...
 - b. Lisa wanted to talk to her about gospel but thought—no way would she be interested
 - c. Guess who showed up one day to church! Guess who was baptized! Guess who's husband was baptized and worshipped with us many years! we became good friends.
 2. **I know a man and woman who left SF to join a commune in Northern CA**
 - a. He had been a businessman in SF, but he left and met Nancy in a Commune in Hills
 - b. One day they show up and are sitting on the front steps of the church of Christ in Willits
 - c. My best friend growing up remembers seeing them in their dirty white commune robes
 - d. Guess who was Obeyed the gospel? Guess who was baptized? Guess who became a Bible student and later became the preacher of that very congregation!
 3. **Sometimes we pre-judge people where they ARE—rather than What They CAN BE!**
 - a. But God Knows the Heart—He Knows Your PAST—But He Also Knows Your POTENTIAL!
 - b. No one is expecting the life change they are about see in a rich man named Zacchaeus...
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I. 8 LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ZACCHAEUS

1) ZACCHAEUS WAS WEALTHY—BUT NOT HAPPY (v.1-2)

1. **Zacchaeus was a 'chief tax-collector' which means he was wealthy...**
 - a) Jericho was a prosperous city built on a trade route
 - b) It was famous for it's palm dates and balsam groves
 - c) The Romans carried its dates and balsam to worldwide trade and fame.
 - d) All This Made Jericho one of the riches taxation centers in Palestine (Barclay)
 - e) As Chief-Tax Collector he oversaw the collection of taxes over the entire region,
 - f) having tax collectors working under him and he worked directly w/ the Roman rulers
2. **So Zacchaeus was Wealthy—but he was Not Happy**
 - a) Although He had reached to top of his profession as Chief-Tax collector—it also made him the most hated man in Jericho.
 - b) By the World's Standards he had 'made it'
 - c) But deep down he was lonely because his position made him an outcast.
3. **We've All Believed (at some point) that Money Would Make Us Happy**
 - a) "Money cannot buy happiness, but it does pay for the illusion" (Derek Kinder)
 - b) The Things of the World Cannot Satisfy the True Longings of the Spirit
 - c) C.S Lewis: *"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."*
4. **Despised and hated by all, Zacchaeus was seeking after the love of God.**
 - a) He must've heard of Jesus who welcomed tax-collectors and sinners
 - b) Maybe he had heard of Mathew—a former tax collector who now followed Jesus.

2) ZACCHAEUS PUT ASIDE HIS PRIDE TO SEE JESUS (v.3-4)

1. Zacchaeus had to overcome some Barriers to see Jesus...

- **SOCIAL BARRIERS:**

- He was the chief tax-collector and the most hated man in Jericho

- **PHYSICAL BARRIERS:**

- He was too short to see over the crowd or even see how to get close to Jesus

- **PERSONAL BARRIERS:**

- He had to set aside His Pride and overcome the Obstacle of SELF.
- Even to the Point of Climbing a Tree Just to See Jesus!
- Imagine a Successful CEO climbing a tree in a 3 pc. suit so he could see Jesus!

2. Zacchaeus Had to Put Aside His Pride To See Jesus—and so do we!

We All Have Obstacles to overcome to Follow Jesus

- a) Maybe Our Family Rejects our faith—they don't understand our Devotion to the Lord
- b) Our Friends Think We're Weak or Weird for Reading our Bible, or Praying, or going to worship every Sunday

3. It Took Determination and Effort for Zacchaeus to Find Jesus— How Much Determination & Effort Will We Give to Follow Him?

“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.” (Jer. 29:13)

3) ZACCHAEUS OPENED HIS HEART & HOME TO JESUS (v.5-6)

1. Jesus calls Zacchaeus by name! —By NAME!

- a) God knows you personally by name...
- b) He Created You. He knows you more than you know yourself!
- c) And He Desires for You To Know Him!

2. Jesus Calls to Zacchaeus — and he receives Jesus with Joy!

- a) How sad that so much of our life is spent running from God!
- b) But there is a Joy When we Finally stop Running from God and Begin Seeking Him

3. IF a person is truly seeking Christ—Christ is Truly Seeking Him!

Revelation 3:20 “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

4) CHRIST IS COMPASSIONATE, EVEN TO THE POINT OF CRITICISM (v.7)

1. Zacchaeus Was Hated by Many People... He was a sinner & traitor to Israel

- a) But he must've heard of this Wonderful Teacher Who Ate w/ Tax-collectors & Sinners

2. Jesus is the good Shepherd who leaves the 99 to save the one!

- a) When a lost sheep is found it is usually dirty, ratty, covered in mud, bleeding
- b) The Shepherd brings the lost sheep home to clean it and heal the wounds
- c) It takes a while for that injured sheep to feel safe again

3. Jesus was criticized for seeking and saving the lost sheep...

But He is the Good Shepherd—and He knows what He is doing!

4. God Moved Heaven and Earth by Sending Jesus to the Cross

He Moved Heaven and Earth To Seek and Save the Lost! (Rom 8:31–34)

5) ZACCHAEUS HAD A HEART OF TRUE REPENTANCE (v.8)

- 1. Repentance Begins with a Realization — a point of Clarity...**
 - a) that Your Way is the Wrong Way—and God's Way is the Right Way.
 - b) It is Being APPALLED, HORRIFIED, NAUSEATED By Your Own Sin—
 - c) Repentance is Not Just WORDS... Not Just FEELING GUILTY...
- 2. It is Going Back To God Because You Know Your Headed for Judgement**
(Romans 2:3–6) [Half of social media is Judging Others to Justify Themselves]
 - a) True Repentance is NOT Moralizing on Others to Justify Yourself
 - b) But a True Change of Heart Within

Going Back to God is the Only Way You Can Go Forward with Forgiveness!

6) ONLY AN HONEST HEART OF FAITH WILL STEP OUT OF DENIAL INTO GOD'S GRACE (v.9)

- 1. Zacchaeus chose to listen to Jesus, instead of the crowd**
 - a) He could've taken offense to the crowds calling him out
 - b) Or He Could've been so Discouraged he gave up
 - c) Or just decided his life was comfortable, and didn't need to be disrupted
 - d) The Way We Get Stuck in Our Old Ways and Don't Want to Change
- 2. It Takes an Honest Faith to Step Out of Denial...**
 - a) Out of Our Comfort Zone... Against Peer Pressure of the World
 - b) Out of the Group-Think of the Culture
- 3. Jesus asks: What would it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?**
 - a) Not Only Do You Wear Yourself Out with a Lifetime of Selfish Ambition...
A lifetime of Striving for SELF...
 - b) In the End You Lose Your Soul for Eternity!
- 4. C.S Lewis: *"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."***

7) WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

- 1) Do You Remember when Jesus said: it is harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, Then for a rich man to enter into heaven.**
 - The disciples asked, Who then can be saved?
 - He said: 'With Man this is Impossible, but with God all things are possible'
- 2) With Man This is Impossible...**
 - a. Zacchaeus was so hated and despised that many of those standing there would've liked to have forced him through the eye of a needle as punishment
- 3) With Man This is Impossible—But With God All Things Are Possible...**
 - a. Zacchaeus is living proof No one is Beyond the Possibility of being saved in Christ!
 - b. If there is still air in the lungs, then there is still hope for their soul!

8) THIS IS WHY JESUS CAME TO EARTH... (v.10)

1. This was God's plan before time began...

This is Why the Word Became Flesh... To Seek and to Save Us!

- **Jesus Became Like Us — So We Could Become Like Him**
- **Jesus was born in the Flesh —So We Could be Born of the Spirit**
- **Jesus took our sin — So we could be clothed in His righteousness**
- **Jesus became a Curse — So We Could Become Blessed**
- **Jesus was put to Death — So We Could be Made Alive**
- **Jesus experienced unspeakable sorrow—so we could have unspeakable Joy**

CONCLUSION:

1. *“The most expensive purchase ever made in the entire universe was the price of grace.”*

2. That's How Much God Loves You!

3. You Don't Have to Strive Anymore—Jesus will give you rest!

(Matthew 11:28-30)

Because of Christ — Today is the Beginning of the Best Part of Your Life!