

- Maybe, like Zacchaeus, we feel that because of what we have done or who we are we cannot seek an audience with Jesus.
- Jesus loves it when we seek him and far from turning us away he delights to spend time with us irrespective of who we are and the things we have done: *'For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.'* (Luke 19:10)

2.3 What happened

- Zacchaeus must have got the shock of his life when *'Jesus reached the spot, looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."* (Luke 19:5)
- There he was trying to keep out of the way and now the very person he had come to see demands to stay at his house.
- Often when we meet Jesus we are confronted by a choice. A choice to continue with our lives the way they are or to go a different way, God's way. Was Zacchaeus in the tree secretly seeking a meeting with Jesus because deep down he knew that despite being one of the richest men in Jericho his riches couldn't purchase what he was created for, which was relationship with God.
- Zacchaeus is delighted that Jesus wanted to spend time with him: *'So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly'* (Luke 19:6). Do we like Zacchaeus delight in being in God's presence. When we spend time with God either daily or on a Sunday, do we do so out of delight or do we do so out of routine?
- *All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'* (Luke 19:7) The inhabitants of Jericho are appalled that of all the people Jesus could have spent time with, he chooses to spend time with one of the richest most despised men in Jericho. Can we too sometimes be like the inhabitants of Jericho, excluding from church or our friendship circles the marginalised in our society.

2.4 Changed lives

- Meetings with Jesus should result in change. When we come to church on Sunday or when we meet Jesus during the week are we expecting change? Zacchaeus was probably not expecting his life to change as radically as it did: *'Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.'* (Luke 19:8). Zacchaeus knows what he has done wrong and he determines to put things right.
- No wonder that Jesus declares: *'Today salvation has come to this house'* (Luke 19:9). Zacchaeus is free. Free from a slavery to sin. Zacchaeus' life has been changed forever.

2.5 Conclusion

- Something inside of Zacchaeus made him determined to see Jesus. Jesus is aware of this desire, he stops and spends time with Zacchaeus. The meeting is life changing for Zacchaeus.
- Are we equally hungry to meet Jesus, to delight in His presence and to be prepared for the change that will result.

3. Questions to consider at home

- 3.1 Why does Zacchaeus want to see Jesus? Why might you want to meet Jesus and delight being in his presence?
- 3.2 Why is Zacchaeus so despised? Who would the modern day Zacchaeus's be?
- 3.3 Why is Jesus' meal with Zacchaeus so explosive? Could you describe a modern equivalent?
- 3.4 Why does Zacchaeus gladly welcome Jesus?
- 3.5 What does Jesus want us personally and our churches to learn from this incident?

Matthew Street - 22nd July 2018



The Parish of Peasedown St John

Luke 19:1-10 - Zacchaeus

Passage, Talk Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these talk notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during this week to consider the questions below.

1. Talk Passage – Luke 19:1-10

1Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. 4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.5When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." 6So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.7All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"8But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."9Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

2. Talk Notes

2.1 Introduction

- **Who** would you most like to meet? Maybe a film or pop star, a politician, a famous writer or personality, or even a historical character.
- **Why** would you like to meet this person? Maybe so you can tell others that you have done so or because you would like to question them further about something they did in their lives or simply just to find out what it is like to be famous.
- **What** do you think might be the result of your meeting this person?
- Zacchaeus certainly wants to see a famous person namely Jesus: *'He wanted to see who Jesus was'* (Luke 19:3). Jesus gives Zacchaeus the choice of not just seeing him but meeting him and spending time with him: *Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."* (Luke 19:5). And for Zacchaeus this meeting was going to be life changing.

2.2 Who and Why

- By the time Jesus was walking through Jericho on his final journey to Jerusalem his fame had certainly gone before him. Many people were openly speculating as to whether he was the Messiah, the one who had come to redeem Israel. Everywhere Jesus went people were being healed and he also spoke with such authority.
- All we know is that Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus and we can only speculate about the reasons why he wanted to see him. Maybe Zacchaeus secretly wanted to meet Jesus but realised that his profession made such a meeting impossible, he was after all not just a tax collector but the *'chief tax collector.'* (Luke 19:2)
- Tax collectors were as unpopular then as they are today, after all no one likes to pay tax. Tax collectors were especially despised in Jesus' day because they worked with the Roman authorities to collect taxes that were ultimately sent to Rome. They were also notoriously corrupt because the Roman authorities turned a blind eye to local tax collectors raising more taxes than Rome demanded and keeping the extra taxes for themselves.
- Zacchaeus has clearly got rich at the expense of his fellow citizens and is probably one of the richest and most despised men in Jericho and yet he is still determined to **see** Jesus. Aware of the route that Jesus was likely to take, Zacchaeus who is a *'short man'* (Luke 19:3) was keen not to let the crowd block his view so he climbs into *'a sycamore-fig tree to see him'* (Luke 19:4).
- How many of us actively seek Jesus as Zacchaeus does? How many of us who come to church regularly, come with a Zacchaeus style determination to seek Jesus? How many of us seek Jesus on a daily basis?

- Maybe, like Zacchaeus, we feel that because of what we have done or who we are we cannot seek an audience with Jesus.
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