

The Seeker is Sought and Saved

Text: Luke 19:1-10

Introduction:

1. Luke is the only Gospel that includes this account of Zacchaeus' salvation. It presents a wonderful example of how a sinner can be saved. Jesus Christ is the same today as He was then and he can seek and save us as guilty sinners, just as he did with Zacchaeus.
2. The account before us takes place in Jericho. Christ healed blind Bartimaeus on the outskirts of Jericho (Lk. 18:35-43). He now comes into contact with Zacchaeus within the city of Jericho itself. Jericho was known as the "city of palm trees" (Deut. 34:3; Judg. 1:16). It was located about six miles (9.6 km) and about 18 miles (29 km) from Jerusalem. John Phillips notes that "it was a prosperous center of commerce, a military outpost, and close enough to Jerusalem to be the last stopping place for pilgrims on their way to the Holy City."
3. The key verse in this account is verse 10. At first glance, it appears that Zacchaeus is the primary seeker but in reality, Christ is the primary seeker in this story.
4. We will divide this account of Zacchaeus' conversion into four sections for our study. As we study this true story, remember The Lord Jesus never changes. What He did for the man Zacchaeus, He is able and willing to do for any one of ourselves.

I. THE CONDITION BEFORE ZACCHAEUS' CONVERSION (VS. 1-4)

Zacchaeus was:

A. A Sinful Man (Vs. 1-2)

1. He was an Exploiter – the tax collectors of those days would inflate the tax rate and pocket the excess (See Luke 3:13). He used his position of power to his own selfish advantage. Before he was saved, he likely exploited the poor under his rule (See Vs. 8). The tax collectors invented taxes for just about everything "such as on axles, wheels, pack animals, pedestrians, roads, highways; on admission to markets; on carriers, bridges, ships and quays; on crossing rivers, on dams, on licenses – in short, on such a variety of objects that even the research of modern scholars has not been able to identify all the names." (Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus). Proverbs 28:15 "As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people."
2. He was an Extortioner – he would use "false accusation" (Vs. 8) to extort money from people. Given his position as "chief publican" he

would have had leverage with the Roman authorities. He could easily trump up accusations against people then demand hush money in order to not put them in to the Roman authorities. 1 Corinthians 6:10 says that “extortioners” will not inherit the kingdom of God.

3. To summarize, Zaccheus was a cruel, covetous, corrupt man. His name meant ‘righteous’ or ‘pure’ but he was living up to the meaning of his name. He was exhibiting the sin nature that we all have (Rom. 3:10, 23; 5:12).

B. A Seeking Man (Vs. 3-4)

1. The hand behind his seeking.
 - a. Man in his natural, sinful state does not seek God. Romans 3:11 “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”
 - b. God was the One moving his heart to seek Christ. Christ was seeking Zacchaeus!
2. The hunger behind his seeking.
 - a. Zaccheus had wealth, position and power and yet these had not satisfied the deepest longings of his heart. Zaccheus was rich materially, but bankrupt spiritually. He had everything the world could offer but nothing that would last for eternity.
 - b. Illustration: Chasing the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow.
3. The heart of his seeking.
 - a. He was seeking to “see Jesus **who** he was”. Zacchaeus wanted to find out who Christ was. This is vital for salvation. Salvation involves not just an acceptance of the reality of what Christ did but the reality of who Christ is. “...for if ye believe not that **I am** he, ye shall die in your sins.” (John 8:24)
 - b. Who is Christ? He is the Son of God and God the Son. He is 100% God and 100% man. He is God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16), the Creator of all and the Redeemer. He is the sinless and spotless Lamb of God.
 - c. Who is Christ?

He is the Ancient of Days, Adam the second, the Anointed, the Author of our faith, Author of Eternal Salvation, the Amen, the Almighty, the Alpha, and our Advocate.

He is the Beginning, the Begotten, the Beloved Son, the Branch, the Bread of life, the Bridegroom, the Bright and Morning Star, the Brightness of the Father’s glory.

He is our Captain, our Consolation, the Chief Cornerstone, the Creator, the Counsellor, the Chosen of God, the Chief Shepherd, and the Christ.

He is the Deliverer, the Daystar, the Dayspring, the Door, and the Desire of all nations.

He is the Elect of God, the End, the Everlasting Father and Emmanuel.

He is the Finisher of the faith, Friend, Friend of sinners, First Fruits, the First and Last, First Begotten, Forerunner, Faithful Witness, Fountain of life and the Fairest among ten thousand.

He is God, the Gift of God, Governor, Guide, the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd, the Gate, the Glory of the Lord, Governor, Great High Priest, Greater than Jonah, Greater than Solomon, and Glorious Lord.

He is Help, Hope, Horn of Salvation, Head of the Church, Heir of all things, High Priest, the Holy One – Holy One of God, Holy One of Israel & Horn of Salvation.

He is the I AM, Inheritance, & Image of God.

He is the Just One, the Judge, Jehovah and Jesus.

He is the King – King of the Ages, King of Eternity, King of Glory, King everlasting, King of the Jews, King of Israel, & King of kings.

He is the Leader, the Life, Light of the world, Love, Lily of the valleys, Lion of the tribe of Judah, Lamb of God, Lawgiver, the Living Stone, the Lord - the Lord of glory, the Lord our Righteousness & Lord of lords.

He is the Man of Sorrows, Morning Star, Messiah, Mediator, Master, Mighty One and the Mighty God.

He is the Nazarene.

He is the Offspring of David, Offering and Offerer, Omega & Only Begotten Son.

He is Priest, Passover, Potentate, Prophet, Propitiation, Prince of life, Prince of peace, Physician.

He is the Righteous, Rabbi, Ransom, Rest, Root of Jesse, Rose of Sharon, Root of David, Refiner, Refuge, Resurrection, Ruler, Redeemer and the Rock of ages.

He is the Son - Son of David, Son of Abraham, Sun of Righteousness, Son of man, Son of the Blessed, Son of the Highest, Son of God, Shield, Servant, Shiloh, Stone, Shepherd, Seed of the woman, Sufferer, Saviour, Sinless Sacrifice the Same yesterday, today and forever.

He is Teacher, the Truth, Tabernacle, Testator, Treasurer, Tree of Life, the True Vine & True Light.

He is Witness, the Word of God, the Way the Wisdom of God, the Wonderful.

4. The hindrance to his seeking.

- a. He came short physically – “he was little of stature”. He was a “come-shorter”!
- b. He came short spiritually – “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).
- c. Spiritually speaking we are all “little of stature” for we have all sinned. None of us measure up to God’s high standards. We are all too little to enter into heaven.

II. THE CALL OF ZACCHAEUS' CONVERSION (VS. 5-7)

A. The Reach of Christ's Invitation (Vs. 5)

1. The graciousness of it (Vs. 5a)
 - a. Zacchaeus was totally underserving and unworthy of Christ's intervention in his life. Zacchaeus reminds us that no one is too bad to be saved or beyond the power of God's saving grace. We are reminded that salvation is only by grace (Eph. 2:8-9, Titus 3:4).
 - b. Christ, the Son of God, stops at the tree where Zacchaeus was. Think of it! The Son of God paused for a despicable sinner like Zacchaeus. What **love!** What **grace!** He came to where Zacchaeus was! A lost lamb was about to be found by the Good Shepherd (Lk. 15:1-7).
2. The Omniscience of it (Vs. 5b). This was the first time Zacchaeus saw Christ but Christ already knew his name. Imagine what it must have been like for Zacchaeus when he heard Christ call his name. Omniscience is an attribute of Deity. Christ is God and knows all things!
3. The Urgency of it (Vs. 5c)
 - a. Christ urged Zacchaeus to "make haste". The time for Zacchaeus to respond to Christ's invitation was right away! There was **no guarantee** of another opportunity.
 - b. 2 Cor. 6:2 "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation.)" Our message to you is "receive Christ now!"
4. The humility required by it (Vs. 5d)
 - a. Zacchaeus was commanded to "come down". In order to be saved He could not stay where he was. He needed to go from hovering above Christ's head to kneeling at His feet.
 - b. Humility is required for salvation. You have to be prepared to admit:
 - i. You are a sinner.
 - ii. You can do nothing to save yourself.
5. The Personal nature of it (Vs. 5e). Christ would come to Zacchaeus house. He would meet with Zacchaeus personally. Not only would Christ come to visit Zacchaeus' house but most importantly, He would make His home in his heart. He now had a choice to either receive or reject Christ. You must do business with Christ as an individual. You must receive him personally as your Saviour and Lord. Will you let Christ in? (Rev. 3:20)

B. The Response to Christ's Invitation (Vs. 6-7)

1. Zacchaeus' response (Vs. 6)

He responded:

- a. Obediently (Vs. 6a). Salvation involves submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This does not mean that the sinner has to exercise the mature submission of someone who has been saved for many years but on a basic level, there has to be a yielding to Christ as Lord. Romans 14:9 “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be **Lord** both of the dead and living.” Those who refuse to “**obey** the Gospel” will experience “everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. 1:8-9).
 - b. Joyfully (Vs. 6b). Joy is one of the key words in Luke. It is found over twenty times in one form or another. Receiving Christ will bring joy to your life like you have never known! There was no reluctance here. Zacchaeus was delighted to have Christ come to his house. The rich man of the previous chapter went away “sorrowful” rather than “joyful”. The key to happiness is receiving Christ as Saviour. Hell is a place of weeping (Matt. 8:12) but heaven is a place of rejoicing.
2. The crowd’s response (Vs. 7)
Zacchaeus responded joyfully; the crowd responded negatively.
- a. Their attitude about themselves was wrong. They were self-righteous, calling Zacchaeus a “sinner” while failing to admit their own sinful condition.
 - b. Their attitude about Christ was wrong. They considered it beneath Christ’s dignity to show an interest in and spend time with such a wicked man as Zacchaeus. They failed to realise that Christ came for sinners! Jesus said, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mk. 2:17; Lk. 5:32). Christ was not going to Zacchaeus’ house to endorse his sinful lifestyle. He was going to Zacchaeus’ house to rescue him from his sinful lifestyle!

III. THE CHANGE AFTER ZACCHAEUS’ CONVERSION (VS. 8)

Look at the transformation of Zacchaeus. There is clear evidence of salvation. 2 Cor. 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” You don’t change yourself in order to get saved but if you get truly saved your life will change by the power of God! For Zacchaeus there was now:

A. A Recognition of Christ’s Lordship (Vs. 8a)

1. “Behold, Lord” = a clear recognition of the Lordship of Christ. He had a new master!
2. Up until now, Zacchaeus had been on the throne of his life, now it was King Jesus.

B. A Release of horded riches (Vs. 8b)

For Zacchaeus this represented:

1. A new attitude towards wealth. His values had been radically altered. Before he was saved, money was everything, now it meant little. Material wealth for the Christian should never be the grand pursuit of our lives. It is a means to an end but it is not the consuming passion of our lives!
2. A new attitude towards the needy. Do you see what has happened because of Christ? A cruel, corrupt, covetous man has been made compassionate; a greedy man has been transformed into a giving man.
3. Only Christ can so radically change people! Christ can make drunkards sober, wife beaters wife lovers and the immoral pure.

C. A Restitution for past wrongs (Vs. 8c)

1. Repentance led to making restitution. He would seek to make the wrongs right for the people he had unjustly exploited in the past.
2. His restitution would be generous. He would restore “fourfold”. That means if he had unjustly extorted a talent, he would restore the man four talents. If he had taken 10 pennies, he would restore 40 pennies.

IV. THE CONFIRMATION OF ZACCHAEUS’ CONVERSION (VS. 9-10)

Not only do we see the evidence of a change life in Zacchaeus but most importantly, Christ put his own stamp of confirmation on what had taken place in his heart and life. He had Christ’s assurance that he had in fact been saved. The promises of God in the Bible are the basis of our assurance. Christ gave Zacchaeus assurance concerning:

A. The Position of his Salvation (Vs. 9)

He now had:

1. A new freedom – “This day is salvation come to this house”.
 - a. The timing – “This day”. Salvation is not a process; it is a moment in time experience. There is a process that leads up to that point and a process of sanctification that follows after it but salvation takes place in a moment in time when the sinner turns to Christ in repentance and faith. The day you received Christ as your Saviour was the most important day of your life. It was the day you passed from death unto life, the day you were transferred from the kingdom of darkness to Christ’s kingdom of light, love and life. It was the day you were cleansed by Christ’s blood and clothed in His righteousness. It was the day you were redeemed (bought back) from sin and Satan. It was the day you were justified, made right with God. It was the day you left the broad road to destruction and began to walk the narrow path

that leads to eternal life. It was the day you exchanged hell for heaven, eternal death for eternal life and rags of self-righteousness for robes of imputed righteousness. What a glorious day! **Will you make today such a day in your life?**

- b. The rescue – “salvation”. He had been rescued/delivered from sin and the misery and bondage that goes with it. John 8:32, 36
“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (36) If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”
2. A new family – “forsomuch as he is also a son of Abraham”.
 - a. Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham by natural birth as a Jew but now he was a son of Abraham by spiritual birth. Abraham had been justified by faith (Gen. 15:6) and now Zacchaeus had been justified by faith. We can become Abraham’s spiritual children also by faith. (See Gal. 3:7, 9; Rom. 4:12).
 - b. He was now a part of the family of God. He had been an outcast in his society but now he found himself a part of a family with bonds that run much deeper than natural ties. The only way to enter a family is by birth. You need the new birth Christ spoke of in John 3 in order to enter God’s family.

B. The Person of his Salvation (Vs. 10)

Here we get to the heart of it all. Zacchaeus could be assured that he had been saved because it had all been accomplished by the power of the Son of man. Christ states his grand mission in coming to earth in this verse. He came to:

1. Seek the Lost – Christ did not sit around and wait for sinners to come and find him. He went out in search of lost souls. We need to follow His example and actively seek to bring the good news of salvation to lost souls.
2. Save the Lost – the word lost comes from the Greek word ‘perish’ or ‘destroy’. Christ came to rescue the perishing!

Conclusion:

1. Christ came to seek and to save the lost. That means he came to save YOU. Will you receive Christ as your personal Saviour today as Zacchaeus did all those years ago?
2. Will you follow the Saviour’s example and seek the lost to bring them the message of salvation?