

Luke 19:1-10**"To Seek and to Save the Lost"**

Imago Dei Church | 12/29/2019 | 2 Services | Sunday AM

[1] He entered Jericho and was passing through. [2] And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. [3] And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. [4] So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. [5] And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." [6] So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. [7] And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." [8] And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." [9] And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. [10] For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

INTRODUCTION

Over the next three weeks we're going to have a **brief series** in which we take the three words that encapsulate our core values as our theme: GOSPEL—COMMUNITY—MISSION.

Everything we do in this church is, *hopefully*, directly tied to these three values.

And they themselves are connected:

The **GOSPEL** is the foundation of everything.

It is the message that we have heard and believed and received and been transformed by.

It is the grounding of our faith because the gospel tells us what God has done and is doing through his Son to bring salvation and redemption to sinful people and a broken world.

In the gospel we receive the proclamation that God has sent his Son...

to live a perfect life,
to die a sacrificial death,
to be raised in victory over sin, death, and the Devil,
to ascend to God the Father's right hand,
and eventually to return to execute perfect justice for all his people and perfect judgment on all his enemies.

From the gospel flow the other two.

Through the gospel God is saving and redeeming sinful people and bringing them into his family,

creating a new **COMMUNITY** that testifies to his glory and grows into his likeness.

And that people is invited into God's **MISSION** of declaring to all creation the justice and mercy of God, and inviting all people to likewise place their faith in and submit to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

So next week we're going to look at community, and the next we'll talk about mission, but this week we're going to talk about the good news—GOSPEL.

And we're going to do so through this little story in Luke 19 about a strange little man named Zacchaeus.

If you haven't grown up around the church or the Bible, you might not know anything about Z.

He's not exactly a major character in the Bible. And we don't learn anything else about him in Scripture. This story isn't in any of the other Gospel accounts. We don't see him pop up later in church history like some of the apostles or early Christians. And he hasn't written any books that we still read today.

And yet, many of you who have grown up around the church are familiar with his story. Kids sing ...
"Zacchaeus was a wee little man, and a wee little man was he..."

This is a **beloved character** and a **beloved story**, I think in part because of how relatable and simple it is. There's not a lot that's complicated here.

It's a simple story about a big sinner that's loved and redeemed by an amazing Savior.

And that's why I think it's the perfect text for us to use as we reflect on the gospel. I really only have one point for you today, and it's not even really a point. It's a verse—verse 10.

Main Idea: The gospel is the good news that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost.

In this story, Z is clearly lost. He's a wicked man. A traitor [explain]. And we are meant to identify with him. He's us, and we are him. But this story gives us hope. It shows us a savior that knows we are lost and yet comes to save us.

(APP) You may feel lost this morning.

(APP) You may feel unloved and unlovable.

(APP) You may feel small and insignificant.

(APP) If you're a Christian, you may be bored with your salvation.

Rather than trying to structure the text in a few sections, I'd like to spend the rest of our time just making a few observations/reflections about how the gospel is presented to us in this story.

6 Observations:

(1) NOTICE THAT THE GOSPEL IS GOOD NEWS *EVEN* FOR THE WORST OF SINNERS AND THE MOST DIFFICULT TO SAVE. (2)

[2] And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.

Z has 2 strikes against him: tax collector & rich

Tax collectors:

[Explain]

Repeatedly presented as simultaneously the worst of the worst & yet still within the grasp of Jesus' salvation.

Cf. Luke 5:27-32 (Levi; Luke 5:31–32: “[31] And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. [32] I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”)

Cf. Luke 18:9ff

Rich:

Cf. Luke 18:18-27, esp vv.23-24

(APP)

(2) NOTICE THAT THE GOSPEL COMES TO US PRIMARILY AS AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE LORD JESUS. (3-5)

[3] And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. [4] So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. [5] And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”

Z was content with distance.

Jesus wanted to know Z.

(ILL) Donnie v. Shane ordering at a restaurant

(APP) We can't just know about Jesus. We have to engage the person.

(APP) Evangelism: we present Christ!

(APP) Spirituality: we continue to walk with a person!

(3) NOTICE WHO IS SEEKING WHOM.

(3-4, 10)

[3] And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. [4] So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.

[10] For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

In the gospel we become the object of God's great seeking mission.

(ILL) NOT "National Treasure" but "Saving Private Ryan"

The gospel is the great rescue mission.

Z thought he was the one doing the seeking, but Jesus was the one sent to seek and save.

(APP)

(4) NOTICE THE UGLINESS OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.**(7)**

[7] And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

Repeated theme in Luke's gospel. (Luke 5; 15)

They have an allergy to grace.

(APP) Prevents us from receiving the gospel.

Prevents us from extending the gospel.

Prevents us from discipling in the gospel.

Z receives salvation by coming down, but these onlookers refuse to come off their high horses, and consequently they remain on the outside looking in on this gospel story.

(5) NOTICE THE RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL: FAITH, OBEDIENCE, REPENTANCE.**(5-6, 8)**

[5] And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." [6] So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.

[8] And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."

Faith is implicit.

Obedience is explicit.

Repentance is visible (but not meritorious)

(6) NOTICE THE EFFECT OF THE GOSPEL: JOY.

(6)

[6] So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.

CONCLUSION: THE GOSPEL FOR US AND FOR THE WORLD

(9)

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

Z was eligible for salvation because of the scope of Jesus' earthly mission: the Jews. Jesus came as a Jewish Messiah.

Jesus is mighty to save those he sets out to save.

And at the cross, the scope of his ministry expands out to include the whole world.

Because Jesus passed through Jericho and continued on to Jerusalem, you and I are extended the same grace that Jesus extended to Z.

LORD'S SUPPER

We receive the LS as a reminder of how much it cost Christ to seek and save the lost. In taking the bread and the cup, we express our faith that his sacrifice was *for me*, and my only hope of salvation is in his work on my behalf.

Because taking the LS is an expression of faith, it is meant for Christians. In a second, the elements are going to be passed (or be up front in the overflow room). If you're a follower of Jesus and a faithful member of this or another local church, we invite you to take one of each and hold them as you reflect on this Christ.

I'll come back up after we sing to lead us in taking them together.

If you are not a Christian, I want to invite you instead to let these elements pass by you and ask yourself what holds you back from receiving the grace that Jesus holds out to you. TODAY, RIGHT NOW, you could experience the same freedom and joy that Z did.

I and others will be in the prayer room after the service and would love to talk with you. Anyone else with

other burdens is also welcome to come and receive prayer.

[Stand]

Luke 15:1–5

[1] Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. [2] And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

[3] So he told them this parable: [4] "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? [5] And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. (ESV)

[Take bread]

Luke 15:8–9

[8] "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? [9] And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' (ESV)