

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Share a time when you did something embarrassing or undignified. How did it feel?

## What the Text Says:

Read Luke 19:1-10. What details about Zacchaeus' character and actions stand out to you?

How does Jesus' response to Zacchaeus differ from the crowd's reaction?

## Understanding:

In what ways does our culture discourage "childlike faith"? How can we maintain wonder and openness to God?

Why do you think Jesus often showed more compassion to "sinners" than to religious people?

## Application:

What "trees" might we need to climb today to encounter Jesus? What might hold us back?

## Next Steps:

Identify an area of your life where you need to "take Jesus home." What might change if you allowed Him full access to your life?

## Missional Living:

What practical steps can we take to make Element more welcoming to those who might feel judged or excluded?

*Finally, what did this parable leave you to think about?*

OCTOBER 6, 2024

# PARABLES

## 4: TREE CLIMBING LUKE 19:1-10

### TODAY'S VERSES:

Luke 19:1-10

Matthew 11:21

Ezra 34

Genesis 6:8-9

Matthew 18:3



## 4: TREE CLIMBING LUKE 19:1-10

Last week we did a quick look through this passage about Zacchaeus. Today, we will take this real story and turn it into a parable for us and our life in the Kingdom of God.

In the 1st century, a person who collected taxes was called a *telones* (*tax or tribute collector*). To a God-fearing, Torah-following Jew, tax collectors were an affront because they took advantage of people, (which was a violation of the Torah.) Above all of the tax collectors sat the archa-telones (chief tax collector). This person was especially hated because they sat at the center of a world that was falling apart. This story starts with Jesus coming to town and meeting Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus' name meant "pure and righteous." Living as a tax collector, and traitor to his people, was not in line with Zacchaeus' parents' wishes in naming him Zacchaeus—yet that is where Jesus finds him.

**1) We have to climb up a tree just like Zacchaeus.** The largest barrier between our hearts and experiencing Christ's salvation is our pride. When Zacchaeus climbed a tree, he left his dignity behind. When Zacchaeus climbed a tree, he humbled himself, as tree climbing was something only a child would do. Following Jesus, to so many, compels us to swallow our pride and adopt the posture of a child. As followers of Jesus, we do not need to lose childlike wonder; we can cultivate it our entire life.

**2) We need a view that is higher than the crowd.** The crowd is what kept Zacchaeus from seeing Jesus. The crowd is mean, judgmental, and moralistic. They look at Zacchaeus and say, "You're a sinner!" We must stop looking at what the crowd does and look at who Jesus is! We need to do something Zacchaeus did, look at Jesus apart from the crowd. Zacchaeus changes his vantage point in order to get past the crowd and see Jesus directly.

**3) We have to take Jesus home.** The text uses the words *guest*, *welcome*, and *stay*. It means that Jesus came and stayed with Zacchaeus. Here you get a picture of **the order of grace**. Zacchaeus doesn't say, "I'm going to stop cheating people" and then Jesus says, "Oh, okay, now I'll come home with you," Zacchaeus hasn't even repented before Jesus seeks Him. **True grace will always change us.** Salvation is not about meeting with Jesus on a Sunday; it is about living with Him in every moment.