

## Parent Bible Study

### Jesus and Zacchaeus

Bible Passage: Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus lived in the town of Jericho. He was a chief tax collector. Zacchaeus's job was to collect money from the Jews for the Roman government. Many people knew Zacchaeus, and many did not like him.

The Bible says that Zacchaeus was rich. Tax collectors often collected more money than necessary and kept the surplus for themselves. His greed and dishonesty led Zacchaeus to being looked down upon as a "sinner." But Zacchaeus treasured his wealth more than his reputation.

Zacchaeus probably never imagined that his entire life would change in a single day. When Jesus came through Jericho, Zacchaeus wanted to see him. He couldn't see over the crowds, so he climbed a sycamore tree and watched Jesus from a distance.

Imagine the crowd's surprise when Jesus approached the tree and called out to Zacchaeus, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today I must stay at your house."

Of all the people in Jericho, Jesus chose to visit Zacchaeus! The other people complained. What was Jesus thinking, going to stay with a sinner like Zacchaeus?

The story reveals that Zacchaeus's encounter with Jesus changed him. He offered to give half of his possessions to the poor and to pay back four times what he had cheated from others. Zacchaeus no longer treasured his wealth. He realized that Jesus offered something so much better. Jesus confirmed this evidence of a changed heart: "Today salvation has come to this house."

People who encounter Jesus do not walk away unchanged. Pray that the kids you teach would encounter the real Jesus, the One who came into the world because we needed Him. Jesus came to seek and save the lost—people like Zacchaeus and people like us. "I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17). When we repent and trust in Jesus, He changes us.