

Jesus and Zacchaeus | Jesus: The Series (Youth)

 www.pursuegod.org/jesus-and-zacchaeus-youth/

Zacchaeus was a guy that Jesus encountered in the New Testament. One of the only things people remember about Zacchaeus was the fact that he was short. But there's a few other things that we can learn from him.

Luke 19:1-2 *Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich.*

So, in this story Jesus is going from town to town to teach his people. He came into the town of Jericho and there were a bunch of people who wanted to hear what he had to say, and Zacchaeus was one of those people. But no one really liked Zacchaeus because he was a tax collector.

Tax collectors in Jesus' day were the lowest of the low. People really despised them, and for kind of good reason. They weren't really the most honest guys and set out to make profit. What they would do is charge people extra on their taxes and keep the money. For example, if you owed \$100 they would charge you \$125 and keep the extra \$25. So, it's pretty obvious why people didn't like Zacchaeus.

Luke 19:3-4 *He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.*

This is where the fact that Zacchaeus was short actually comes into play. Since he was short he wasn't able to see Jesus, so he climbed a tree.

Luke 19:5 *When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today."*

This was pretty surprising to Zacchaeus. People didn't like him and he didn't have a lot of friends, so it was pretty surprising that Jesus wanted to go to his house. And this teaches us the first life lesson from this story.

Jesus pursues us

Jesus is the one who pursues Zacchaeus, it's not the other way around. Jesus went out of his way to initiate this relationship with Zacchaeus. But, this doesn't only happen in the story of Zacchaeus. It happens all throughout the Bible. God is constantly pursuing us. He wants to be in relationship with us, regardless of where we are in life.

Jesus unleashes our potential

When Zacchaeus met Jesus it changed his life forever. If you take a look a little further on in [Luke 19](#) you can see this change.

Luke 19:8 *Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!"*

Even though Zacchaeus was known for being a bad guy, Jesus saw that he had potential. He knew that Zacchaeus could do great things in the name of God. And he sees the same things in you. He sees your potential and wants to meet you where you're at and build a relationship with you. He wants to transform your life and use you in powerful ways. And there's one last thing we can learn from this story.

Jesus came to help those who need it

Zacchaeus' life was transformed by Jesus because he knew who Jesus was and why he was here. Jesus took this opportunity to let everyone know why he came to earth.

| **Luke 19:10** *For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.*

Zacchaeus may have been rich and powerful, but he was still full of flaws. He had a serious need for Jesus, and so do we. No matter who you are or what you have going for you, you need Jesus. It doesn't matter if you're athletic, smart, popular, or tall. We all have a need for Jesus. The good news is that God is actively pursuing us and wants that relationship with us. So, we need to pursue him as well.

Discussion Questions:

1. *Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.*
2. *What is your initial reaction to this video? Do you disagree with any of it? What jumped out at you?*
3. *How would you summarize Jesus' mission on earth in one sentence?*
4. *Why did people hate Zacchaeus? Why do you think Jesus decided to come to his house?*
5. *Why is it necessary that God pursues us before we can pursue him?*
6. *Read [Luke 19:8](#). What evidence of transformation do we see in Zacchaeus' life?*
7. *How has God transformed your life since becoming a Christian?*
8. *Write a personal action step based on this conversation.*