

Transcript - 20250725

We've been three weeks into this idea of reaching out into our community. The mission starts here,

and right under our title here, we have, you know, Haleyville, where we are. And, you know, it's so

important to remember and to think about, as Jesus was getting ready to leave, okay, as Jesus was

getting ready to leave, He gives the idea that you start in Jerusalem, you go to Judea, and you go to

all the world. And if you look at that idea, he's saying, guys, you start with where you are.

They were all going to be in Jerusalem for the foreseeable kind of next few months. And then

after the book, you read through the book of Acts, after everything kind of explodes church-wise,

then it kind of leads into the surrounding area, the Judea. That would be kind of like

our state or our region. And then from there it goes into all the world. And we do a lot of focus.

I think church has done a really good job of a lot of focus of into all the world and in missionaries

and mission trips and different things. And we almost forget sometimes that we're supposed to

have that same enthusiasm, that same excitement, that same focus where we are every day. Mission

a trip. Mission work and evangelism is something that we're called to it being part of our everyday

life. Our conversations are supposed to naturally lead in to moments of sharing our faith. I'm not

saying every conversation starts off with the idea of sharing your faith, but every conversation

can be a doorway into that conversation. I know a lot of you, hey, we're getting close to football

season. Can anybody tell me how many weeks it is until college football season starts? Anybody know?

Anybody know? I think it's like seven, eight, a couple of weeks ago. It's four weeks till it starts. Wyoming, I'm like, I'm way off. So Wyoming knows four weeks. Do what? Football boards you.

Yeah, we all, let's all stand and sing so Gary can come forward for a line.

We, and there's a lot of you that are just diehard football fans, right? And I know that

a lot of you that you may start a conversation that has nothing to do with football, and before

the end of it, you can make it about what? Football, okay? Or whatever it is that you love, you can

start a conversation, and you can work into that thing in which you love. And that is what evangelism

is for us, okay? We're supposed to have the ability that in any conversation that we're having,

If the door opens for us to bring up Jesus, to talk about our faith, we should be ready for that.

We should be looking for that. We should be excited about that. Listen, we might even be a little scared of it, and that's okay.

But the more you do it, the more comfortable you get, and the less that fear kind of rules, and the more natural it becomes, and really, like I said, the more you look forward to having those conversations.

But it starts right here, right now.

And I believe if you go with me to Luke chapter 19,

Luke chapter 19, we kind of get an idea of maybe what to look for,

how these conversations happen, what these conversations need to be a part of.

So let's go to Luke chapter 19.

We'll read this story of Zacchaeus together,

a story that you're all maybe very familiar with, the majority of you.

And then we'll break it down and talk about it within the context of reaching the lost.

So Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.

A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus.

He was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short, he could not see over the crowd.

So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore fig tree to see him.

since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said,

Zacchaeus, come down immediately.

I must stay at your house today.

So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter,

He is going to be the guest of a sinner.

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord,

Look, Lord, here and now, I give half of my possessions to the poor,

and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.

Jesus said to him, today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a son of Abraham.

For the son of man came to seek and save the lost. So a story that we all know, a song that we're

very familiar with. Think about that with me. Zacchaeus was a wee little man. That's something

that for a lot of us, that song is just stuck in our head. But I want you to think about some other

things. Along with Zacchaeus being a wee little man, Zacchaeus was a tax collector. He was looked

at as a traitor amongst his people, amongst his friends, amongst his family. He was a Israelite.

He was a Jew. He was a Hebrew working for those who had come in and taken over. And that was just

something that it just, it broke that bond of brotherhood in many ways. And not just that,

He was taking advantage of those people.

The idea behind the Roman tax collectors was this.

You've got to get X.

You've got to get this much.

This is what they owe us.

Anything you get over that, keep it.

That's your pay.

It's whatever you want to get.

And so they would come in the name of the Roman Empire with the power of the Roman Empire,

with the influence of the Roman Empire.

If you don't do what I tell you to do, you don't give what I tell you to give,

your life's fixing to get real complicated.

You're allowed to get really bad really quick.

And so he had used that to his advantage,

to hurt those that were his friends and his family.

And because of that, he had gotten rich.

So it's not just like he was well-off and wealthy.

He had gotten well-off and wealthy off of other people,

off of those that were supposed to be kind of on his side,

those that were supposed to be his friends and his family.

And because of that, he now is their enemy.

He is now overlooked.

No one really cares that much about Zacchaeus.

As a matter of fact, the phrase that they use to describe Zacchaeus,
they said Jesus has gone to eat with a what?

A sinner.

They didn't call him a brother.

They didn't call him a friend.

They looked at him as someone who was lost, someone who had no hope,
someone who was not a part of the promises of God anymore.

He was greatly overlooked, and not just because he was a wee little man.

And so, as I think about this story, and I think about the idea, okay, Jesus is on his
way to the cross.

That's the journey that Jesus is on.

And as he walks into Jericho, and is going to pass through Jericho, I want you to think
for just a moment about how many people Jesus probably walked past.

Jesus is walking through town. There are people just following. If you look back into
chapter 18,

as Jesus approached Jericho, it says in verse 35, a blind man was sitting by the roadside
begging.

When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. So there is this crowd
and buzz

that's kind of following around Jesus. So I can't help but think that Jesus walked by and
saw

and out of the corner of his eye and ahead of him and heard behind him so many people,
so many people.

And one of the things that we know about Jesus is we also know that Jesus has the ability
that if Jesus was standing here and he looks at Broughton, he doesn't know who
Broughton is,

or Broughton's maybe never introduced himself to Jesus.

Jesus would have the ability to know who Broughton is, to know what's in his heart, to know what Broughton's thinking.

Imagine that for a minute, that everybody you walk by, you know their heart and you know their thoughts.

You feel their needs.

You grasp and you understand where they are in their life, whether it be good or whether it be bad.

Wouldn't some of us have the urge to just want to help and stop and work with everybody?

I mean, everybody.

Jesus didn't stop and talk to everybody.

Although if he did that, he would have never gotten what he needed done, finished, and wrapped up.

But on this particular day, for some reason, he walks through Jericho, and of all the people that are there, he stops and he sees who?

He sees Zacchaeus.

And I think one of the reasons that he sees Zacchaeus is Zacchaeus isn't part of the crowd.

You know, there's a lot of people that probably follow Jesus.

Not probably.

We see this throughout Jesus' ministry.

There's a lot of people that followed Jesus and were a part of the crowd because it seemed like the cool thing to do, right?

Jesus would often stop and turn around to the crowd that's following him and go,

Hey, if you don't hate your mom and dad, you can't follow me.

If you consider yourself greater than all these people, you can't follow me.

You've got to be the least.

You want to follow me?

Well, hey, go let the dead bury the dead.

Don't concern yourself with that.

Either follow me or don't.

Jesus had this idea that following me is a commitment.

You've got to be willing to give it all up.

But I know there's still people that are following Jesus because everybody's following him.

A big crowd comes through.

It's excitement.

Hey, let's go see what's happening.

Let's go check this out.

It doesn't take a lot of effort to be part of the crowd, does it?

It doesn't take a lot of effort to be part of the crowd,

to get wrapped up in all the excitement and just trying to see what's going along or going on as

Jesus comes along. But Zacchaeus was different. Zacchaeus didn't just fall into the crowd, did he?

Because if he fell into the crowd, he would still just be unnoticed. He still would just kind of be

mixed up and no one would see him, no one would pay him attention. Zacchaeus came through and he

wanted to see Jesus. And so for him to see Jesus, he had to put some effort into that. He had to put

some effort into seeing Jesus. So as the crowd's coming, as everything's approaching, what does he

do? He takes the effort to climb a tree, to get above everybody else. Now, any adults in here

climbed a tree lately? Like on purpose, for fun? I know there's some people that that

might be your

thing, you know. Why do we not climb trees the older we get? Part of it's the fear of falling,

right? Climbing's not the hard part. The hard part's the ground that you fall on, right?

But there's just something maybe a little inappropriate about walking out. You walk outside and you see Dennis in the tree, which might not surprise some people. You're going to

wonder what's going on. Like, what's the problem? Like, what's the deal? What's happening?

Zacchaeus put forth the effort. And to me, I think that's one of the reasons that Jesus stopped

is that he looks over the crowd and he sees this individual.

And in seeing Zacchaeus, he knew Zacchaeus, he knew his heart,

he knew where he was, he knew the challenges, the good, the bad, the ugly.

But he also knew Zacchaeus had put forth the effort.

He's just not running with the crowd.

He knew there's something special coming.

I want to see Jesus and I'm going to do whatever it takes

to put myself in the position to see who Jesus is.

And because of that, he stops and he speaks to him.

Reaching the lost starts, I believe, with seeing the people that are often overlooked.

Think about that for a second.

Reaching the lost starts with seeing the people that are often overlooked.

The people that other people see and they don't pay them any attention.

The people that others look at and they go, hey, if you only knew what they were really struggling with,

like there's no way they would come to church.

There's no way that they would talk about Jesus.

There's no way that they would really be a part of this, okay?

That's who Jesus wants us to look for.

That's who Jesus looked for.

I also think that it goes back to that idea that we talked about in the first couple of weeks, that sometimes the challenge in reaching out to people, sometimes the challenge of starting here

is being uncomfortable. And I believe that the people that we're called maybe to minister to

and to reach out to and to evangelize to the most are maybe the people that make us feel the most uncomfortable because they are maybe different, because they are overlooked.

And so we have to look for those people that other people are really just not paying attention to.

So my question as we think about this idea is who is the Zacchaeus in your own world?

Who is the person that's maybe climbing the tree just to get a glimpse of something better,

something different than the life that they're in?

Who are the people that you might see struggling and they're struggling greatly,

But yet you also see in their heart, they're trying to find a way out.

They're trying to find a way to fix the problem that they're in,

although the problem might be overwhelming them.

Jesus says those are the people that you look at and you pay attention to

and you get ready to show the love of God.

So what does Jesus do?

Look back in verse 5 with me.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him,

Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today. Now in the song that we sing,

we always kind of have this idea of Jesus pointing, Zacchaeus, you come down from

there,

right? And it's almost like if Dennis had climbed up in the tree and we're like, Dennis, get down, you know? Dennis is going to sit somewhere else next week.

Like in the tree, yeah.

Okay.

But it's different.

It's not a point your finger, get out of the tree.

What he's doing is actually an invitation.

Zacchaeus, come down immediately and stand with who?

Stand with me.

Why?

Because I must stay at your house today.

And I love the phrase.

I love the way the sentence reads.

I what must stay at your house.

There's an urgency there, isn't there?

There's a sense of I can't do anything else until I stay where?

At your house.

I can't go any further until you and I spend some time together.

My mission is ahead of me.

The cross is ahead of me.

But before I ever get to the cross, I have to stay at your house and spend some time with you.

Man, what does that say about Jesus?

Jesus had the weight of the world on his shoulders.

I mean, it was heavy at the time.

But he also knew that this conversation, this moment,
this man was worth pausing his ultimate mission of the cross
for the personal mission of this God.

Jesus doesn't preach a sermon.

He simply extends an invitation.

If there was anybody worthy of a sermon in the moment,
it was Zacchaeus.

He could have, Jesus could have just fed him his rights.

He could have just gone off on him,
and it would have been warranted to some degree.

We see Jesus doing that to the Pharisees
and the teachers of the law throughout his,
he's not afraid, Alex,
he's not afraid of turning over tables, is he?

Jesus isn't afraid of the hard moments.

This could have been one of those moments,
and if it had been, it would have been justified.

It would have been holy.

It would have been righteous.

It would have been okay.

But that's not what it was.

He says, I'm going to offer you something, not condemn you of something.
I'm going to call you by name.

How many names do you think Zacchaeus had?

How many names in private conversation do you think he went by?

Names that probably weren't Christian names, weren't holy names, weren't righteous

names,

names of derogatory, names of aggravation, names of I'm just mad and I'm just going to talk about

this guy. He doesn't invite him to a synagogue. He doesn't invite him to the temple. He doesn't

take him somewhere for someone else to preach to him. Jesus invites himself into the life of

Zacchaeus. So when I think about the mission, I think about us moving forward, and we're looking

for people that are often overlooked, when we find those people, it's our job to invite ourselves in

to put ourselves in the middle of their mess, to put ourselves in the middle of their struggle.

So we invite ourselves into their life and into their struggle and into their difficulty

so that we can show them what Jesus has to offer,

so that we can show them the love that comes from that relationship.

What happens is when we're willing to build relationships with other people,

that then creates space for repentance and restoration.

Jesus didn't come into this situation and force Zacchaeus into repentance.

Because forced repentance, is it really repentance?

no there's nothing genuine behind it because you've been made to do it repentance and restoration

has to be something that you're willing to do on your own has to be something that that you make

the decision to do so we have to be willing to have those relationships and that leads us kind

of to that next point relationships that lead to repentance look at verse 6 through 8 again

It says, so he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

So he was excited to see Jesus.

He was excited to welcome him into his home.

In verse 7, all the people saw this and began to mutter, he has gone to be the guest of a sinner.

So they're aggravated.

They're frustrated.

They want something different from this encounter, I'm sure.

And when Zacchaeus hears this, this is where the repentance happens.

It says, but Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, look, Lord, here and now, I give half of my

possessions to the poor, and if I've cheated anyone out of anything, I will pay back four times the

amount. Did you have to do that? No. Now, under the old law, there's this idea of restitution,

that if you do something to someone, you don't just make it back like it was, you make it better.

He says, I'm going to do that, but I'm going to do that to the fullest extent.

I'm going to go further with this.

He could have come down and Jesus said, hey, you got to pay everybody back.

And he could have paid everybody back, but would it have been repentance?

Not necessarily.

The love that Jesus showed him transformed him, not the public pressure, but Jesus' presence.

His repentance was voluntary, not forced.

So, that leads us to kind of our last idea here.

Jesus defines his mission.

Look in verse 9 and 10.

Jesus said to him, today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a son of Abraham.

Now, that idea is kind of maybe passed by us a little bit because we're not from this nation.

We are not Israelites.

But being an Israelite meant I'm from the line.

I'm from the house.

I'm from the lineage of Abraham.

And Jesus is reminding him, despite what you've done, remember where you came from.

Remember whose name you carry.

You carry the name of the man that God came to and said, I'm going to make a covenant with you.

I'm going to make you a great people. And the stories that all come from that, the history that

comes from that. He says, wear that. That is who you are. You are a chosen one of God. Despite what

everyone else says about you, despite the fact that the people around you are giving you the title

sinner. He said, I'm reminding you that you carry the name child of God, son of Abraham. You belong

to something greater than anything this world has to offer. And then he says, for the son of man

came to seek and to save the lost. Now, we can relive this to a degree. We do not have the ability

to what? Save. We don't have the ability to save, but what do we have the ability to do? Seek.

You know, I think that we've had this idea for generations that if people want Jesus,

they need to come here, and they need to come to us. And I think that we went through a time

in our history as a church that evangelism happened that way. If you want Jesus, then come to church.

if you want Jesus, then you come here. And that worked for a while. I'm not saying that it

didn't

work. A lot of people were saved that way. A lot of people came to Jesus that way. But in the world

and culture that we're in now, that is happening less and less and less. It's just the dynamics of

where we are, which means we have to get back into seek mode. We have to be willing to go out and,

again, as we've talked about, get out of our comfort zone. Look for people that are hurting.

Look for people that are lost. Look for people that need Jesus and start those conversations,

start those relationships so that it opens the door for Jesus to do what only Jesus can do

in their life and eventually, hopefully bring them into part of this family. Jesus' mission

should be our mission as well. So where does that leave us? It leaves us with our challenge for the

week. This is your challenge for this week. It starts with prayer. It starts with prayer. I want

you to spend time this week asking God to put one person on your heart that is maybe overlooked by

everyone else, that is not noticed by anyone else, that one person that you, and maybe only you,

can reach, and can have a relationship with. And then when you figure out who they are,

who those people is, who that individual is, then reach out to them. Ask them to lunch. Ask them to

breakfast. Have those conversations. Don't necessarily make it about religion. It doesn't

have to start with church. It doesn't have to start with those conversations. It can just start

with relationships, but be willing to say, let me come into your world. Let me be a part of your

life. And then when you get there, be a light in that world with them. I don't know about you. I've

enjoyed the conversations and the lessons from this particular series. It's easy for us to get

comfortable with letting other people do the mission work. And we forget that the last thing

that Jesus said to us was to go, to go and make disciples. That's the last commandment that he

gave. That was his mission for us. And we need to take that personal, and we need to take that with

us every single day. So, I hope the last four weeks have given you some insight and some encouragement to live that mission out every day in your life.