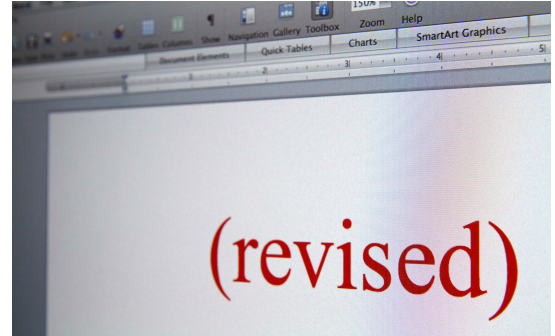


onechurch bigIdea

Whether you're a thrill-seeker or someone who minimizes risks, we all long for a great story. A great romance. A great adventure. A great mystery. And it could be that the reason we yearn for something so big, is because God made us that way. Believe it or not, a big story is unfolding around us, a story God is telling that started long before us and will continue to unfold long after we are gone. The things that draw us, that captivate us, that pull us in are the things that make God's story great. The question is, are we a part of that story? Are we telling His story? In other words, are our lives reflecting something bigger?



BIG IDEA: To experience change, Jesus does not offer correction but a relationship.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Tell of your favorite movie or book. Why do you like it so much? What about the story grips you?
2. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read and discuss Luke 19:1-10.* How does Zacchaeus compare with the rich young ruler? (Luke 18:18-30)
3. What impresses you about Zacchaeus?
 - a. his wealth
 - b. his agility
 - c. his curiosity
 - d. his flexibility
 - e. his change of heart
4. *Read Luke 19:1-4.* How would you have felt if Jesus was coming to your town but you discovered that he was only going to pass through and not stay?
5. If you were there among the crowds, what thoughts would you have had when seeing Zacchaeus running and climbing a sycamore-fig tree?
6. Zacchaeus seems determined to see Jesus. What kind of risk(s) was he taking?
7. *Read Luke 19:5-10.* Jesus originally was going to pass through Jericho, yet Jesus extended grace in reaching out to Zacchaeus to stay at his home. How do you think this impacted the community?
8. What was it about Zacchaeus that Jesus singled out?
 - a. the worst sinner in town
 - b. sold out to Romans
 - c. guilty of fraud and thievery
 - d. hungry for something more in life
 - e. he was so short
9. Imagine how Zacchaeus must have felt when hearing Jesus' words. If you were Zacchaeus, what would be your first thought in climbing down the tree into the crowd that despised you?
10. Why does Jesus dine with Zacchaeus? Why does this bother others?
11. What do you think that Zacchaeus and Jesus talk about over dinner?
12. Do you think Jesus' words in Luke 19:9-10 stopped the crowd's muttering? Why or why not?
13. During those early Biblical times, food was scarce and everyone depended on each other. With Zacchaeus' response to Jesus' invitation, how might the community have been changed like after Jesus left?



14. Reflect on this: Circle each kind of person you might feel uneasy or uncomfortable striking up a conversation with. Feel free to write new categories that come to your mind. Ask God to show you why you feel this way and why these categories could limit His work through you:

A drug addict	A lesbian	A liberal
A Muslim	A Hindu	A Buddhist
A vocal Christian	A gay couple	A convicted felon
A Wiccan	A stripper	A convicted molester
A vocal atheist	A different culture or ethnicity	A successful person
A beautiful person	A person in a wheelchair	A troubles person

15. Where did Jesus first find you? (Up a tree? Out on a limb?) How did He get you to join Him: with coaxing? Big Scare? An invitation you couldn't refuse?
16. Where is your story headed? What type of story are you living? Does your life story need to be *(revised)*?
17. Ask the Lord to show you the Zacchaeus' in your work place, your neighborhood and your community. Consider what steps you can take to show them God's grace.

MOVING FORWARD

Try this: Look for people to interact with this week who make you feel uncomfortable or seem very different from you. Again, ask questions about what they like to do or what was the most fun they've had recently. If they say something shocking or maybe hurtful, pray, "God, show me the priceless value you created in this person." Offer a relationship—not correction.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. When do you remember your story colliding with God's story? How did this encounter shape and influence the person you are now?
2. What encounter with Jesus described in the Gospel speaks to you the most? What did that encounter teach you about the heart of God?
3. *Read Proverbs 16:9.* How does the presence of Christ impact the way you respond to your circumstances?
4. Is a collision with God's truth taking place in an area of your life right now? How is this collision affecting you? Where are you meeting resistance?
5. *Have someone read Romans 12:1-2.* What do you believe the author means when he urges us to be "transformed by the renewing of your mind"? How does exposing our thoughts to God's truth influence what we see with our eyes?
6. What parts of your life are you hesitant towards allowing God to form your heart and change your perspective? What drives this hesitancy to give up control?
7. How does one notice when their character is being replaced by God's character? What kind of markers should appear in this process?
8. *Read Colossians 2:6-7.* How does the imagery found in this passage encourage you and provide comfort that change can occur as a result of colliding with God's truth? How can you begin to affect positive change in your heart? How will you be able to tell if your heart is softening toward this change?
9. Read *Reaching Out* by Henri Nouwen. Especially the part on reaching out to strangers.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

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." Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. Luke 19:5-6

(revised)