

***Overcoming Obstacles and Embracing  
Opportunities  
Luke 18:35 – 19:10***

*We all have a deep longing ...*

*There's gotta be more!*

*We try to get by, but know something is missing*

*So we try to fill that longing with anything that will bring  
some satisfaction, but not fulfillment*

*Today we are going to meet the last two people Jesus  
interacted with before going to Jerusalem and the Cross...*

*They couldn't be anymore opposite*

*Bartimaeus & Zacchaeus...*

***The OPPORTUNITY of a LIFETIME only lasts the  
LIFETIME of the OPPORTUNITY.***

*We are going to meet two men today who were wrestling  
with different yet similar questions...*

*One was consigned to a life of poverty...*

*The other lived in total luxury...*

*One had never seen the light of day...*

*The other had everything he wanted...*

*One had been let down by a religion without miracles...*

*The other had rejected the dead formalism of religion he  
grew up in and instead chased after wealth*

*They both knew there was so much more...*

*One believed in the hope of Israel... that Messiah would  
come and make right every wrong...*

*The other found that great wealth didn't quench the  
gnawing in his heart...*

*They both believed in God, but rejected the religious  
system of his day...*

*On this particular day these two opposites heard that Jesus  
was passing through town*

*They had heard many amazing things about Jesus...*

- *How he healed many people*
- *How he cast out demons*
- *How He taught about God in a completely different  
way than the religious system he had rejected...*
- *How MANY were saying Jesus was the Messiah, the  
Son of God who had come!...*
- *How Jesus made the religious leaders mad*

***But Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus had to OVERCOME FOUR  
OBSTACLES to have their questions answered...***

***These FOUR OBSTACLES are the same ones each of us  
face...***

***And each barrier has to be OVERCOME if we want to truly  
know the truth...***

***The opportunity of a lifetime only lasts the lifetime of the opportunity.***

The 1<sup>st</sup> Obstacle...

## ***1. Overcome your LIMITATION through DETERMINATION***

→ ***Bartimaeus***

***Luke 18:35–38 (ESV) — As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” And he cried out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”***

→ ***Zacchaeus***

***Luke 19:1–3a (ESV) — He entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was ...***

***They both had limitations...***

***Neither could see Jesus, but both wanted to...***

***The thing they both had in common was a determination to not allow their limitations to hinder them from Jesus!***

***Jesus was passing by!***

***What is the limitation that has been keeping you from Jesus?***

→ ***JACKY HUNT***

- ***On April 30, 2022, Jacky Hunt, 46 year old mother of two, broke the Guinness World record for most consecutive days of running a marathon...***
- ***She ran a marathon every day for 104 consecutive days!***
- ***This is remarkable in and of itself***
- ***But what makes it even more remarkable is that Jacky has only one leg!***



***When Jacky was in her 20's she was diagnosed with a rare bone cancer.***

***As a result, she had to have her leg amputated below the knee***

***What are your limitations?***

***Limitations are those things in our lives that are keeping us from seeing Jesus.***

***Limitations are the things we use as excuses.***

***“I can't see Jesus because...”***

***I have many limitations in my life.***

***To be DETERMINED is to have your mind made up.***

***Who is making up your mind today?***

***Have you made up your mind that no matter what your LIMITATION you are going to see Jesus or has someone else made up your mind for you to stay right where you are?***

***Proverbs 15:15a (NLT) — 15 For the despondent, every day brings trouble ...***

***The opportunity of a lifetime only lasts the lifetime of the opportunity.***

***1. Overcome your LIMITATION through DETERMINATION***

***The 2<sup>nd</sup> Obstacle...***

***2. Overcome your INTIMIDATION through DESPERATION***

***→ Bartimaeus***

***Luke 18:39 (ESV) — 39 And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”***

***Bartimaeus was desperate!***

***He didn’t care what others thought...***

***What will it cost me?***

***Matthew 10:32–33 (ESV) — So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.***

***→ Zacchaeus***

***Luke 19:3–4 (ESV) — 3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. 4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.***

***He was short.***

***“Zacchaeus was a wee little man and a wee little man was he...”***

***But Zacchaeus was desperate!***

***Notice that he not only RAN, but he also CLIMBED a tree.***

***Have you positioned yourself to see Jesus?***

***The funny thing about coming to Jesus is that He wants us to throw aside our intimidations, not worry about our limitations, and come like children.***

***Luke 18:17 (ESV) — Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”***

***The funny thing about children is that they haven’t yet learned “good manners”...***

***Have you ever seen a parent in a store when their child is throwing a fit?***

- **The child is scream and the parent is overcome with embarrassment**
- **“I’m so sorry... Little Johnny is not normally like this...”**

**The parent is embarrassed (they have a reputation), but the child doesn’t care (they just want the toy, candy, whatever).**

**Granted, the child needs to learn better manners...**

**But Jesus uses their lack of worry about what others think...**

**The opportunity of a lifetime only lasts the lifetime of the opportunity.**

**1. Overcome your LIMITATION through DETERMINATION**

**2. Overcome your INTIMIDATION through DESPERATION**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Obstacle...**

**3. Overcome your REPUTATION through INVITATION**

**→ *Bartimaeus***

**Luke 18:40 (ESV) — And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him.**

**Mark 10:50 (ESV) — And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.**

**→ *Zacchaeus***

**Luke 19:5–7 (ESV) — 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”**

**Zacchaeus had a reputation.**

**ON THE ONE HAND, he had a reputation of being wealthy and powerful.**

**ON THE OTHER HAND, he had a reputation of being a greedy thief who sold out his family.**

**ON THE ONE HAND, he had a reputation with his friends who were as sinful as he was...**

**ON THE OTHER HAND, he had a searching heart wanting to know the truth**

**Is your REPUTATION getting in the way of you coming to Jesus?**

**What will my friends think?**

**What will my family think?**

**Romans 3:23 (ESV) — for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

**Jesus loves sinners, but hates sin!**

**The third obstacle Zacchaeus had to overcome was his reputation.**

**Zacchaeus was too intimidated to approach Jesus personally...**

**I mean, he was a notorious tax collector**

**He was satisfied to simply be a bystander**

**So how did Zacchaeus overcome this obstacle?**

**Luke 19:5–6 (ESV) — And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.**

### ***The Place of the Invitation.***

**“When Jesus came to the place...”**

**This was a divine appointment!**

**Zacchaeus thought he was trying to see Jesus, but in reality, Jesus was trying to see him!!!**

### ***The Person of the Invitation.***

**“... Zacchaeus, hurry and come down ...”**

**Jesus knew Zacchaeus by name!**

**Jesus saw Zacchaeus’ DESPERATE DETERMINATION...**

**Jesus knew Zacchaeus was ready...**

### ***The Pronouncement of the Invitation.***

**“... I must stay at your house today...”**

**Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus’ house.**

**Here’s the problem: Zacchaeus wasn’t ready for the invitation.**

**In Zacchaeus’ mind, his past decisions had sealed his fate...**

**He was hoping to just catch a glimpse of Jesus...**

**But Jesus was looking at his heart and longing...**

**It is in this place of DETERMINED DESPERATION that Jesus gives the INVITATION!**

**You’ve never gone too far or sinned too great!**

**The thief on the cross:**

**Luke 23:43 (ESV) — And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”**

**Zacchaeus could have stayed in the tree!**

**He could have come up with hundreds of excuses...**

**But he didn’t!!!**

**Luke 19:6 (ESV) — So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.**

***Until the pain to remain the same becomes greater than the pain to change, you will never change.***

Today, if you find yourself far from God, but **DESPERATE** for truth...

Jesus gives you an invitation to come down for He wants to go home with you today

***The opportunity of a lifetime only lasts the lifetime of the opportunity.***

***1. Overcome your LIMITATION through DETERMINATION***

***2. Overcome your INTIMIDATION through DESPERATION***

***3. Overcome your REPUTATION through INVITATION***

The 4<sup>th</sup> Obstacle...

***4. Overcome your IDENTIFICATION through TRANSFORMATION***

→ ***Bartimaeus***

Luke 18:41–43 (ESV) — “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, let me recover my sight.” And Jesus said to him, “Recover your sight; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

→ ***Zacchaeus***

Luke 19:8–10 (ESV) — 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” 9 And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Transformation is **NOT** found in words alone.

Our **ACTIONS** will expose our hearts

1 John 3:18 (ESV) — Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

It’s the **LIFECCHANGE** that follows where we see genuine transformation!

Bartimaeus followed Jesus

Zacchaeus gave back all he had stolen

**Overcoming Obstacles and Embracing  
Opportunities  
Luke 18:35 – 19:10**

The \_\_\_\_\_ of a \_\_\_\_\_ only lasts the  
\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Overcome your \_\_\_\_\_ through  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Overcome your \_\_\_\_\_ through  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Overcome your \_\_\_\_\_ through  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Overcome your \_\_\_\_\_ through  
\_\_\_\_\_