

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"A TREE BEARS FRUIT" | LUKE 19: 1-10 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

Who's the most famous short person that first comes to mind?

"Zacchaeus the Seeker, Jesus the Sought" (Luke 19: 1-6)

Zacchaeus was a corrupt rich man among the large crowd who had been seeking Jesus when Jesus came to his town and asked to stay at His house. **What does that show about Jesus? What does that mean for people?**

"Jesus the Seeker, Zacchaeus the Sought" (Luke 19: 7-10)

The crowd grumbled at Jesus for staying with a chief tax collector, a person that took advantage of the community. **Why would the crowd grumble? What ways do people grumble today at Jesus for similar reasons?**

Zacchaeus not only receives Jesus with joy but commits to paying back quadruple what he took from people and giving half of his wealth to the poor. **Who is someone in your life that had a change of heart and lifestyle from meeting Jesus? What impact does that kind of change have on the people around them?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

This story ends in verse 10 with "The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." In our world today it can be hard to hold onto that hope when it seems so many are ignoring or turning away from Jesus. Many in Jesus' day would have never thought Zacchaeus would follow Jesus with all his wealth and corruption, and yet he was saved. **Who are the people who you feel are too lost? What are ways to pray and have hope for these people? Pray that they would recognize they are lost and that Jesus is asking to come into their life.**

A Tree Bears Fruit

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-9 Lar: Pantry. Vol Op. Feloship Nite. Men's. At Risk Film. Prep2Go. Holiday
- B. Slide10 Warrior Fest: this next school year will be our 30th anniversary. We invite you out to join us for Warrior Fest this Friday from 4-6:30pm, we will have food trucks, inflatable obstacle courses, a scavenger hunt, and free treat for students. All classrooms will be open for prospective families to visit, along with campus tours.
- C. Slide11 Camp Alandale: Tyler Bernheisel
- D. *Steven Cole (listening online) gets points for finding someone else that was named in a miracle besides *Bartimaeus* (Lazarus).
- E. Prayer:

II. Slide12a Intro: A Tree Bears Fruit

- A. There's a story about **Spurgeon**, who take his class out to *the Question Oak*. It was a large oak tree on Spurgeons property. The class would gather under that large tree.
- B. He would call on students with no advance notice to preach on a certain topic. He chose *one clever but bashful student*, and he took his place under the oak with the story of *Jesus and Zacchaeus*. He said I have 3 points:
 1. **Zacchaeus was of little stature**, and so am I.
 2. **Zacchaeus was up a tree**, and so am I.
 3. **Zacchaeus came down**, and so will I. [Spurgeon lead the class in applause]
- C. It's a cute & very popular **story** with the children. Remember the children's song?
"Zacchaeus was a wee little man, a wee little man was he."
 1. Slide12b **But** as we read the **story**, it encompasses **Jesus' mission statement**, the **key verse** in Luke's whole gospel. *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*

- a) Leaders in *companies and organizations* are taught, you need a mission statement. Jesus is very clear about His.
2. The Messianic mission of the Son of Man extends to **all people**.
3. He didn't come to make people *a little bit more moral*, or *environmentally sensitive*, or *to make us more religious*, but to seek and save, lost people.
- a) And we stand/sit here today, many of us who, *finally understanding our lostness, have been found*, proving Jesus has been successful in His mission!
- b) Like last week, it's another story of *Jericho Grace* (blind Bart).
- c) It's actually a story about **2 seekers**: the 1st *Zacchaeus*, and then we find out that **Jesus** is the primary seeker.

III. Slide13 **ZACCHAEUS THE SEEKER, JESUS THE SOUGHT (1-6) READ ALL**

A. Slide14 **ZACCHAEUS THE SINNER (1,2)**

B. **Jericho** - 17m. N/E of Jerusalem. It was a very traveled city (caravans).

1. It had a **Customs Station**. It was **wealthy, fertile, plenty of water** (a spring there, *desert*), it was an **oasis**, it had **balsam groves**, and Judges 3:13 called it *the city of Palms*. *Plenty of Bougie* features there.

C. (2) **Behold** - *i.e.* old way of sayin, *you'll never believe what happens next!*

1. It's pretty important that **Jesus** gets to Jerusalem, you know, *to die for humanity*, but **He stops** for *this wee little man*.

D. The crowds gather in Jericho as they heard Jesus was coming. **Would he pass right through? Would he stay for the night? What will he do while he's here, a miracle, share with us a parable?**

1. Luke is like, **behold** this is what Jesus is about to do. **Jesus** decides to hang with the most **hated guy** in all of Jericho.

E. **Tax collectors** - were hated, not because people didn't like paying taxes, but they were hated because they were **cheaters**, they were **corrupt**. Charging terrible interest. Oh, and he's a **Jew** himself ... working for **Rome**.

1. They were so immoral that in Mt.5 Jesus said, *For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?* Looking for a negative example, He picks *tax collectors*.
 2. So Jesus chooses to hang not only w/a tax collector, but a **chief tax collector**. The **Kingpin** of the *Jericho Tax Cartel*. He's not this cute little cuddly guy, he was *a real filthy guy*.
 3. Fredrick Buechner, He's a **sawed-off little social disaster** w/a big bank account and a crooked job, but Jesus welcomes him aboard anyway.
- F. He was rich - It's the perfect *location/location/location* for *farming & fleecing* taxes.
1. Zacchaeus had a lot of money, but didn't have a lot of friends.
- G. Slide15 ZACCHAEUS THE SEEKER (3,4)
- H. (3) We see the problem. He wants to see Jesus but he is *vertically challenged*.
1. *Small in stature* in a 1st century Jewish setting, meant he was probably under 5 foot tall. (Danny DeVito)
 2. He didn't let anything get in his way: not the crowd, not his reputation, not his wealth, not even his *little man condition*.
- I. (3) Seeking to see who Jesus was - he's been wanting this *for a time* (impf tense).
1. We don't know why. Maybe the story has been circulating in the tax collector community, about Jesus meeting and saving Levi/Mt the tax col.
- J. (4) **Sycamore tree** – *figus sycomorus* Fig-mulberry tree. (leaves like mulberry, fruit of a fig). And this tree was about to *bear fruit!*

K. Slide16a ZACCHAEUS THE CAUGHT (5,6)

- L. (5) But, why call Zacchaeus? There were *better men* in the city. Why him?
1. **Simply because** the call of God comes to *unworthy sinners*.
 2. There is **nothing** in an individual that can **deserve this call**, **nothing** in an individual can **invite it**.
 - a) So, the very question shows *we still think there is!*

M. Where was *your moment*? For **Zac** it was a up a tree. For the **prodigal** it was slopping hogs. For the **woman at the well** she realized how thirsty she's been all along. For **Saul** it was getting knocked on his back, w/a voice from heaven, *Saul, Saul why?* Where was your moment?

1. It's *the moment we come to ourselves*. A moment of **truth**, which is a moment of **grace**! **It's all of grace**.

N. Slide16b (5) The Initiative of Jesus:

1. The **Intimacy** of the Savior, calling him **by name**. Jesus seeks the **lost** not just **generally**, but **personally**.
 - a) He knows everything about Zacchaeus, **and still loves him**, still wants to go to his house. *Everyone wants to be known and loved*.
2. The **Authority** of His Calling. *I must stay at your house today*. [*dei* - you must be born again. Son of Man must be lifted up. He must rise from the dead]
3. The **Immediacy** of Jesus. *I must stay at your house Today*.

O. Together they traveled to Zacchaeus's home. We don't know their conversation, **but** he emerges *a changed man*.

P. (6) *So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully*.

Q. Slide16c So who found who? - Did Zac find Jesus, or Jesus find Zac? YES!

1. There was a man who had a hunting dog for that he loved dearly. One time while out hunting they were separated. No matter how loud the master whistled the dog would not come. The man had an appointment in town & needed to leave. **Would he ever see his best friend again?** **He did a trick an old trainer told him. He took off his coat & removed his tee-shirt & placed his shirt on the ground under some small branches of a bush.** The man returned the next day to find his dog cuddled up on the tee-shirt, with his nose under the sleeve.
 - a) **Who found who? The dog sniffed out the scent of the master & waited.** **But it was the Master** who returned *to seek & save the dog!*

R. 1st we had *ZACCHAEUS THE SEEKER, JESUS THE SOUGHT* (1-6)

IV. Slide17 **JESUS THE SEEKER, ZACCHAEUS THE SOUGHT (7-10)**

A. Slide18 **THE GRUMBLERS (7)**

B. (7) I almost don't want to ruin such a wonderful story with *these grumblers*. So *how could Jesus accept hospitality from this scoundrel?* Oh, He didn't accept it, He ask for it.

C. Did the grumblers ever stop for a minute & ask, *I wonder why He didn't want to come to my house?* Jesus found shelter within the gates of *a sinner*, to whom others had utterly given over and considered *hopeless*.

D. Slide19 **ZACCHAEUS THE SAVED (8)**

E. (8) His spontaneous act of repentance revealed *the work of grace in his heart*, & proved that he was now *a son of Abraham* (not just a seed).

1. It changed this man to the very core of his being.

2. Christianity should change **all** of our life. If we hold to *the Golden Rule* in all our **business**, we will once again be communicating *the Law of Love* in life.

F. He made **2 promises/resolves**: [1] To give ½ of his possessions to the poor.

[2] To pay back 4 x's in cases where he had defrauded someone. [Law was the orig amount + 1/5th. eg. If stole \$100, u owe \$120. Here he's giving \$400]

1. He **went in** mastered by *the passion to get*. He **came out swept by a compassion that gives**. [R.Y.R., I keep, I go - Zac, I give, I restore!]

a) John the Bap called this, *the fruit of repentance* (generosity). He didn't just admit he was *wrong w/God*, he tried to make things *right w/people*.

2. You could say this is the story of a rich man going through the eye of a needle. *He was a short camel, but he made it through* :)

G. Note this is Zac's **behold** statement (*you'll never believe what happens next!*).

1. We see in vs.8 he is saved *as witnessed by his own testimony*.

We see in vs.9,10 he is saved *as witness by Jesus' testimony*.

H. Slide20a JESUS' TESTIMONY OF ZACCHAEUS BEING SAVED (9,10)

I. (9) Listen to Jesus' testimony of Zacchaeus's being a saved man: *Today salvation has come to this house. He also is a son of Abraham.* [a spiritually true descendant of *the father of the faithful*]

1. This is the 2nd to last conversion recorded in Luke. (thief on cross)

J. (10) This verse is illustrated in the experience of Zacchaeus: *Jesus came to him, sought him, & saved him.*

1. The **whole gospel** is in this simple sentence (10) [and there's not a word that has even 2 syllables]

2. Slide20b Ezek.34:16 (context, God the True Shepherd) ***I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak.*** [sheep rescue]

K. Slide20c *Let's remember salvation is free, but discipleship is costly.*

1. Zaccheus not only illustrated *the power of faith in Jesus* to bring new life, but also introduced *the cost of discipleship.* And what did it cost him? ***Everything!***

L. It's as if Jesus said, *see this man Zacchaeus, he is a living illustration of My mission*

1. The Father didn't leave mankind to *grope in the dark* trying to *feel their way* toward God. No, he sent **Jesus** on *a rescue mission!*

M. **George Whitefield**, one of America's greatest evangelist, had a **brother** that was **backslidden**. One day he found himself sitting at tea with the Countess of **Huntingdon**. He said, *"I know what you have said is very proper, & I believe in the infinite mercy & goodness of God. But I do not believe in its application to me, for I am a lost man."* the Countess put down her tea & said, *"I am glad to hear it, Mr. Whitefield!"* "Madam," he said, *"I did not think you would rejoice & glory in a thing so terrible as that."* *"I am glad to hear you say you are lost Mr. Whitefield,"* she said, *"for it is written that Jesus Christ came to seek & to save that which was lost."* His eyes sparkled, & he said, *"I thank God for that text, & for the*

extraordinary power with which it has now come into my heart.” He died later that night. (Spurgeon #1863)

1. Until a man is lost he cannot be found.
2. Take your place as a sinner this morning, & trust Christ to save you & give you an abundant life.

N. Keywords: Zacchaeus, seek, save, lost, salvation.

O. Up A Tree. Out on a Limb. Trees of Grace.