

Luke 19:1-10

Introduction: This is the last event before Passion Week begins for Jesus. Travelers usually stopped in Jericho to rest before they began the long climb up to Jerusalem.

- 1) Luke gives Theophilus the setting—19:1-4
 - a) Geographically—19:1 ¹ *And He entered Jericho and was passing through.*
 - i) But from the rest of the story we know Jesus plans to spend the night.
 - b) Individually—19:2-4 ² *And behold,*
 - i) His ironic name—19:2a *there was a man named Zacchaeus,*
 - (1) His name means “clean” or “innocent”
 - ii) His job—19:2b *and he* (emphatic) *was a chief tax collector,*
 - (1) He would organize the other tax collectors and collect healthy commissions. (NET Bible)
 - (2) He was like the manager/supervisor/executive/administrator to whom a tax collector like Matthew would have reported.
 - iii) His financial status—19:2c *and he* (emphatic) *was wealthy.*
 - iv) His spiritual curiosity and the limitations—19:3
 - (1) Limits on his enthusiasm—19:3 ³ *And he was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able to because of the crowd,*
 - (a) *because he was short in stature.*
 - (b) The crowd is large and he is short. Bad combination!
 - (2) His observant resourcefulness—19:4 ⁴ *And having run on ahead, he climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him,*
 - (a) *because He was about to pass through that way.*
 - (b) A sycamore tree would have large branches near the ground and would be fairly easy to climb. These trees reach a height of 30-40 feet.
 - (c) Zacchaeus is about to get far more than he intended.
- 2) Jesus chooses to interact with Zacchaeus—19:5-10
 - a) Jesus’s surprising move—19:5 ⁵ *And when Jesus came to the place, having looked up Jesus saw him and said to him,*
 - i) The urgent command—*“Zacchaeus, come down quickly,*
 - (1) How does He know his name?
 - ii) The surprising explanation—*because it is necessary for Me to stay in your house **today** (emphatic).”*
 - (1) Luke has already emphasized this in 5:31-32.
 - (2) The act of fellowship indicates acceptance. (NET Bible)
 - (3) Jesus rejected the homes of the priests who lived in Jericho, which was a Levitical city.
 - b) His joyful obedience—19:6 ⁶ *And he came down quickly and welcomed Him joyfully.*

- c) The not-so-surprising response—19:7 ⁷ *And when they saw it, they all began to complain, saying, “He has gone in to take-up-lodging with a man who is a sinner.”*
- i) “They” is unspecified but it is probably the crowd in general, who would have no great love for a man like Zacchaeus who had enriched himself many times over at their expense. (NET Bible)
 - ii) Some taught it was wrong to eat food with a person whose earnings were tainted. As someone has said, they like His miracles but not who He hangs out with.
 - iii) Luke has emphasized this before in 5:31-32; 7:37-50; and 15:1-2. They have already rejected God’s grace offered to themselves, yet they are unwilling that it should be given to others. (Geneva)
 - iv) They overlooked the fact that by coming into a world like ours, Jesus was limited exclusively to the homes of sinners. (MacDonald)
- d) Zacchaeus demonstrates genuine repentance—19:8 ⁸ *But Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, “Behold,*
- i) He demonstrates mercy—***half of my possessions*** (emphatic), *Lord, I will give to the destitute,*
 - (1) The Jews considered 20% as the maximum one should give away.
 - (2) This is what the young ruler refused to do (cf. 18:22).
 - ii) He demonstrates gracious justice—*and if I have cheated* (extorted, blackmailed) *anyone of anything* (and I have), *I will restore it four times as much.”*
 - (1) Zacchaeus assumes the harsher double penalty of the Law imposed on rustlers (cf. Ex. 22:1; 2nd Sam. 12:6) instead of the 20% restitution for extortion (cf. Lev. 5:16; Num. 5:7).
 - iii) In resolving to *give* half his *possessions* to the poor, Zacchaeus was not defending himself against the crowd’s charges and claiming to be righteous. Rather as a result of this meeting with Jesus, he was a changed individual. (NET Bible)
 - iv) His statement of repentance makes it possible for Jesus to eat with him without contamination. (Rogers and Rogers)
 - v) The transformation is from taking advantage of people to generously serving people.
- e) Luke emphasizes Jesus’s emphasis—19:9-10
- i) A public declaration of righteousness by faith—⁹ *Then Jesus said to him, “Today salvation came to this household,*
 - (1) ***because he*** (emphatic) *too is a son of Abraham.* (i.e. a Jewish man)
 - (a) It was a necessity that Zacchaeus be offered an opportunity to repent. (cf. Matt. 1:21; John 4:22)
 - (b) Don’t read teaching from the Epistles into the meaning of this phrase.
 - (2) Certainly the Savior (cf. 2:11) knows who is genuinely saved.

- ii) A public declaration of the mission God assigned to Jesus—¹⁰ *For the Son of Man* (the Messiah) *came* (to do two things) *to seek and to save/rescue the lost* (those in a state of lostness).”
 - (1) Unless Jesus rescues Zacchaeus, he will remain in a perpetual state of lostness.
 - iii) Zacchaeus demonstrates the truth Jesus taught in 18:29-30. He is one of those rich people who get through the eye of the needle (cf. 25) but only by God’s grace and power.
 - (1) He is unlike the rich foolish farmer (cf. 12:13-21)
 - (2) He is unlike the rich man who ignored the beggar Lazarus (cf. 16:19-31)
 - (3) He is unlike the rich ruler who turned away from Jesus (cf. 18:18-23)
- 3) Things for us to remember on this Resurrection Day:
- a) The Jews assumed sinners could not come to God. God says that it is only sinners who are welcome to come to Him.
 - b) Zacchaeus discovered how God can cancel his spiritual debt.
 - c) Genuine faith brings joy, forgiveness, humility, and transformation. What Jesus did for Zacchaeus, He can do for any other person who repents and places faith in Christ alone. This is a major part of the message of Resurrection Day. Have you experienced this transformation?