

His Story, My Story - Session 5

Jesus Rescues Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

Group building question

Can you tell us about the earliest time in your life when you became aware of God, or began to think about God?

Story

I am going to tell you a story from the Bible three times. Although actually, the third time, you will tell it.

Introduction to the story

To understand this story, we need to know a little about Palestine in the First Century. It was a very religious nation. In their religion, some people rated highly. They were good, people thought. And God liked them. Other people rated low. God didn't like them much. That's how they thought.

The lowest Jews were the tax collectors. They were the scum, that's how people thought. They got a franchise from the foreign Romans to collect taxes for them. The Romans were not in the Jewish religion at all. They were not descended from Abraham. They were lower than low. But also, many tax collectors

overcharged. That way they got rich. They robbed their own people. That made them really low.

First time

One day Jesus was going through the city of Jericho. A man was there named Zacchaeus. He was the head tax collector and was very rich.

He was also very short. He wanted to see Jesus as he passed through the centre of town. But he could not see over the heads of the crowd.

So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road. That way he could see Jesus when he passed beneath him. Which is not something every man is prepared to do.

When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name! "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick! Come down! I am going to be a guest in your home today!"

Zacchaeus scrambled out of the tree, delighted to take Jesus home with him.

All the people saw this and began to complain, "Jesus is staying with a despicable sinner!"

But later in the day, maybe after the meal, Zacchaeus stood up. We don't know exactly when he did this. In front of his friends and family, he said to Jesus, "I will give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times more."

Jesus said to him, "This shows that salvation has come to this home today. This man was like a lost son of

Abraham. And I, the Son of Man, came to find lost people and save them.”

Second time

One day Jesus was going through the city of Jericho.

On this map can you see the Sea of Galilee up north? And down south Jerusalem. And north east of there, Jericho.



A man was there named Zacchaeus.



He was the head tax collector and was very rich. He was also very short. He wanted to see Jesus as he passed through the centre of town. But he could not see over the heads of the crowd.



So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road.



That way he could see Jesus when he passed beneath him.



When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name! “Zacchaeus!” he said. “Quick! Come down! I am going to be a guest in your home today!”



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Jesus said to him, "This shows that salvation has come to this home today. This man was like a lost son of Abraham. And I, the Son of Man, came to find lost people and save them."

Third time

OK this time you get to tell the story. Let's tell it together as a group.

Discussion

We are going to be answering six questions. I am not the only person who will ask the questions. We will take turns to do that. The rule is that everyone answers in a sentence or two.

Here are the questions.

1. What do you like about this story? Why?
2. What questions might someone have about this story?
3. What can we learn about people from the characters in this story? (sometimes I ask, what choices did the

person have? What do we learn about them from the choice they made?)

4. What can we learn about God/Jesus from this story?
5. This week, what do you want to change in your life because of this story? State your answer in the form "This week I want to..."
6. Who else needs to hear this story?



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