

Lesson #3-27

Zacchaeus

Luke 18:31–19:10



Key Verse:

For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.
Luke 19:10

The Point:

Jesus brings salvation to outsiders who receive him with faith and joy.



Introduction

We begin today's story with Jesus' third prediction of his death, but, once again, the disciples do not understand. As Jesus reaches Jericho, a man who is blind disturbs the crowd with loud cries. He begs for Jesus to have mercy on him. Jesus responds with compassion, restoring his sight.

In Jericho, a despised tax collector named Zacchaeus makes a desperate effort to see Jesus. He is surprisingly rewarded with Jesus visiting his own house and promising salvation. Even though Zacchaeus is hated by the others in his town, Jesus wants to dine with him and restore him to his community.

The Point

Jesus brings salvation to outsiders who receive him with faith and joy. Even as he faces down his own death, Jesus continues to be met by those on the edges and to radically transform their lives. Their outsider status may have pushed them to the edges of their communities, but they still meet with and are changed by Jesus. In the same way, Jesus seeks us out and invites us to join him at the margins where people desperately need him.

Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Introduction

NewLifeAllAround

Share stories of new life in the world.

10 min.

† None

Learning the Story

TheLookofSalvation

Tell today's stories with dramatic flair.

10 min.

† Bibles

† Activity Sheet #3-27.A

Activities

JesusIsComing

What did they know about Jesus?

10 min.

† Paper

† Pens or pencils

FuturePresent

Explore Zacchaeus' generosity.

10 min.

† None

Prayer

God's Story @ Home



Introduction (10 minutes)

New Life All Around

Share stories of new life in the world.

Supplies:

† None

Instructions:

1. Begin by discussing the following questions together:
 - **Where do we see new life in the world around us?**
 - **Where do we see signs of hope, growth, and change?**
 - **Where do we see renewal, reunion, and reconciliation?**
 - **What do we think God might be up to in all these things?**
2. In today's story, we hear of radical change in the lives of two very different men. Change and transformation can come to us in very different ways, but when we encounter Jesus, that change is often for powerful good.

Learning the Story (10 minutes)

The Look of Salvation

Tell today's stories with a dramatic flair.

Supplies:

- † Bibles
- † Activity Sheet #3-27.A

Preparation:

1. Make copies of Activity Sheet #3-27.A for each person.

Instructions:

1. Begin by reading today's stories from Luke 18:31–19:10.
2. **Now let's hear the story in a different way.** Assign the roles needed for this script: Narrator, Jesus, Blind man, and Zacchaeus. If you have more people in your family, they can be: Religious leaders, Disciples, or the Crowd. With fewer people, the same actor can play multiple parts. Actors can use different voices or similar to differentiate characters.
3. Perform the skit.
4. Close the activity by discussing the following questions:
 - **How did you like playing the role you had? Did it suit your personality and seem natural to you, or was it unlike how you would normally hope to act?**
 - **How would you have felt if you were Zacchaeus? The Blind man? The Religious leaders? The Disciples?**



Activity (10 minutes)

Jesus Is Coming

What did they know about Jesus?

Supplies:

- † Paper
- † Pens and pencils

Instructions:

1. **We have been telling many stories about Jesus' life and ministry in the past few weeks. What might have inspired the blind man and Zacchaeus to want to see Jesus? Take time to remember and retell some of the stories from past weeks, and make a list of the reasons that someone might have been excited to see Jesus.**
2. **Zacchaeus and the blind man were in incredibly different circumstances, with a lot of different possible reasons to want to see Jesus. But in the end, both men were saved and healed. In the same way, Jesus offers salvation and healing to us every day.**

Activity (10 minutes)

Future Present

Explore Zacchaeus' generosity.

Supplies:

† None

Instructions:

1. In the original Greek language of the story, when Zacchaeus says, "Half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor," he uses the present tense, meaning the action is happening right now. Some translations write this as "I will give to the poor," suggesting that this is a change Zacchaeus intends to make in the future. Others say, "I am right now giving to the poor," saying that Zacchaeus has started handing out the money that very moment. Still other translators believe Zacchaeus may already have been giving to the poor, and the townsfolk have been unfairly characterizing him as a greedy tax collector.
2. Consider the following discussion questions:
 - If you have heard this story before, what have you heard about Zacchaeus? Is he an greedy tax collector with a change of heart, or a righteous man unfairly treated by his neighbors?
 - When have you made a big change in your way of life? What prompted the change? How did you feel afterwards?
 - When have other people unfairly accused you? What was happening? How did you feel? What was the outcome?

Prayer

Before ending, make a point to come together to pray. Use the following or say your own prayer.

Invite your family members to stand in a circle, holding hands. Respond to prayer prompts with: **Jesus, son of David, have mercy on us.**

Leader: **As we go from here, may we ask:**

All: Jesus, son of David, have mercy on us.

Leader: **May we remember to care for the suffering.**

All: Jesus, son of David, have mercy on us.

Leader: **May we welcome the outsider with faith and joy.**

All: Jesus, son of David, have mercy on us.

Leader: **Today salvation has come to this house, for the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.**

All: Amen.

If you have the “Living the Word: Sharing God’s Story @ Home” sheet, remember to use it throughout the week as a part of your family devotions!

The Look of Salvation

Tell today's stories with a dramatic flair

Narrator: Then Jesus took the 12 disciples aside and said to them,

Jesus: See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. After they have flogged him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again.

Disciples: What? What are you saying? We do not understand this at all.

Narrator: As he approached Jericho, a man who could not see was sitting by the roadside, begging.

Crowd: Do you see him? Can you see him? Move over!

Religious leaders: Hush!

Blind man: What is it? What is happening?

Religious leaders: Hush! It is nothing.

Crowd: It is not nothing at all! It is Jesus of Nazareth! He is passing this way!

Blind man: Jesus! Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Crowd: Be quiet! Do not shout! You are embarrassing!

Religious leaders: This kind of thing happens everywhere Jesus goes. Always a crowd, always a cast of characters. We do not like this one bit.

Blind man: Jesus! Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Jesus: Bring him to me.

Disciples: What? The beggar? You want to meet the filthy beggar?

Crowd: What is he going to do?

The Look of Salvation

Tell today's stories with a dramatic flair

Religious leaders: Here he goes again.

Jesus: What do you want me to do for you?

Blind man: Lord, let me see again.

Crowd: Can he do that?

Disciples: What? Of course he can. Well, we are pretty sure.

Jesus: Receive your sight; your faith has saved you.

Blind man: I can see! I can see again! Praise God!

Crowd: Praise God! Praise God!

Disciples: Told you he could do it!

Religious leaders: This is *not* how we wanted this day to go.

Narrator: Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it.

Crowd: Hooray for Jesus! Hooray for Jesus!

Zacchaeus: Jesus of Nazareth? Who is that?

Crowd: Ugh! Go away, Zacchaeus. Jesus does not want anything to do with a filthy tax collector.

Narrator: He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way.

Jesus: Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.

Crowd: Are you kidding us? With a tax collector? This just beats all.

The Look of Salvation

Tell today's stories with a dramatic flair

Disciples: What? A tax collector? I thought we did not associate with that kind of riffraff.

Zacchaeus: I would be glad to welcome you, Lord.

Crowd: Great. He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.

Religious leaders: Not very righteous, if you ask us.

Zacchaeus: Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor; and if I have cheated anyone of anything, I pay back four times as much.

Crowd: What?

Religious leaders: What?

Disciples: What?

Zacchaeus: Yes!

Jesus: Today salvation has come to this house, because Zacchaeus too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.

Crowd: What?

Religious leaders: What?

Disciples: What? What are you saying? We do not understand this at all.