**Seek and Save the Lost**

Luke 19:1-10

Key Verse 10

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

**Introduction**

 In this passage a chief tax collector Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. It seems that Luke tells this story to give balance to the sad story of the rich young ruler in the previous passage. Zacchaeus wanted to come to Jesus, but he faced obstacles and limitations. The conventional way of coming to Jesus was not working for him mainly due to his short height. So he chose an unconventional way, that was to climb a sycamore-fig tree. Jesus recognized him and willingly stayed at his house. When Zacchaeus repented, Jesus proclaimed that he had received God’s salvation. Through this passage let us think about how we can meet Jesus and why Jesus came to this world.

1. Read verse 1-4. Where did Jesus enter? (1) Who was Zacchaeus? (2) What did he want and what obstacle did he have? (3) What did he do in order to see Jesus and what can we learn from him? (4)

1-1. Read verse 1-4.

 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

1-2. Where did Jesus enter? (1)



· Jericho – The “City of Palms” spreads out on the west side of the Jordan River at 825 feet below sea level.

· According to [Joshua 6:1-27](http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Joshua&verse=6:1-27&src=HE), under Joshua’s leadership, the walls of [Jericho](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jericho) fell afterthe Israelite army marched around the city blowing their [trumpets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shofar#In_the_Bible_and_rabbinic_literature).

· Jesus passed through Jericho where he healed one ([Mark 10:46](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10%3A46&version=ESV), [Luke 18:35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+18%3A35&version=ESV)) or two ([Matthew 20:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+20%3A29&version=ESV)) blind beggars.

. The road between Jerusalem and Jericho is the setting for the [Parable of the Good Samaritan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable_of_the_Good_Samaritan). In John Wesley’s New Testament Notes, on this section of [Luke's Gospel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Luke), it is said that "about twelve thousand priests and Levites dwelt there, who all attended the service of the temple".

1-3. Who was Zacchaeus? (2)

 ***A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.***

· Chief tax collector – Tax collectors were considered public sinners in Jewish society. They were despised because they worked for the Roman government and made money in a dishonest way.

· He was chief tax collector. It means he had long experience as a tax collector. He was able and loyal to Rome. He also might have been more dishonest than any other tax collector, exploiting people to make more money. The Jews probably despised and hated him more than any other tax collectors.

· He was wealthy – He made a lot of money by cheating other people. It was clear that he became a tax collector to make money. The purpose of his life was making a lot of money. Even though he was rich, his life was sinful before God and man.

1-4. What did he want and what obstacle did he have? (3)

 ***He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd.***

· He wanted to see who Jesus was - He had great interest in Jesus. He wanted to know who Jesus was.

· Why had he became interested in Jesus? We don’t know the exact reason but it’s obvious that he had desire to know Jesus and meet him.

· He had desire to make money but he had desire to know Jesus also. He seemed to be the last person who would be interested in Jesus, but in reality he had eager desire to know Jesus.

· It is true that the person who seems to have little desire for Jesus could be the one who has spiritual desire to know Jesus the most.

· He might have been impressed with Jesus who welcomed tax collectors when all other people rejected them. He might have wanted someone who could still love him even though he was tax collector.

· He might have wanted to meet Jesus, expecting that he could help him to change his life.

· He was short – He had a condition that made it difficult for him to see Jesus. He had desire to know Jesus but had an obstacle.

· People could have different types of obstacles that make it difficult for them to know Jesus.

· Because of their obstacles people often give up in trying to know Jesus. Many Bible students stop studying Bible when they have some issue that make it hard for them to continue bible study or believe in Jesus.

· Even many believers including us could give up making effort to know Jesus because of obstacles such as a busy work schedule or so on.

1-5. What did he do in order to see Jesus and what can we learn from him? (4)

 ***So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.***



· He climbed a sycamore - fig tree.

· He didn’t give up- Instead of being discouraged and giving up, he looked for a way to overcome the obstacles.

· He overcame the obstacles by making great effort and using all resources.

· He had an eager desire to meet Jesus- His desire was strong enough to overcome any obstacles.

· God blesses those who look for him to the end with eager desire, overcoming all obstacles until God blesses them.

· We cannot know God if we give up because of obstacles. We must make every effort. If we look for a way to overcome obstacles, there is the way.

· The real question is do we really have enough desire to know Jesus. God will provide a sycamore-fig tree that we can climb if we have eager desire to meet him.

2. Read verse 5-7. What did Jesus say to Zacchaeus? (5) How did Zacchaeus respond? (6) When people saw what Jesus had done, what did they say? (7)

2-1. Read verse 5-7.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.**7** All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

2-2. What did Jesus say to Zacchaeus? (5)

 ***When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”***

· Jesus recognized Zacchaeus – Jesus knew that Zacchaeus wanted to see him.

· Jesus recognizes us when we seek him with eager desire.

· Jesus knew Zacchaeus’ name. Jesus never met with him personally but he knew him already. God knows each of us by name and has known us even before we knew him.

· Jesus knew everything about Zacchaeus and what he wanted. Jesus is our good shepherd who knows each of us deeply.

· Jesus wanted to stay at Zacchaeus house – He wanted to have fellowship with Zacchaeus so that Zacchaeus might have chance to know him personally. He wanted to reveal himself to Zacchaeus.

· Jesus blessed Zacchaeus’ eager desire to know him.

· Jesus recognizes and blesses our eager desire to know him. When we make every effort to know him, he reveals himself to us and gives us great joy in knowing him· But if from **the**re you **seek** **the** **Lord** your God, you will find him if you **seek** him with all your heart and with all your soul. (Dt 4:29)

2-3. How did Zacchaeus respond? (6)

 ***So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.***

· He welcomed Jesus gladly. – He was so happy. It was the greatest joy he had ever experienced before in his life.

· He must have been deeply moved, for the Lord Jesus was coming to his humble house.

· It was such a great honor and blessing for him to have Jesus in his house.

· Jesus is willing to come to a humble heart.

· It is the biggest blessing to have fellowship with him and know him.

2-4. When people saw what Jesus had done, what did they say? (7)

 ***All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner***

· They could not understand Jesus who was willing to associate with a public sinner.

· They couldn’t understand God’s love and mercy for sinners.

· They were sinners too but when they didn’t acknowledge this truth about themselves, they lost the chance to meet Jesus as the Savior who came to save sinners.

· Jesus is willing to be the guest of sinners. Once we recognize ourselves as sinners and ask Jesus for help, he will be willing to be our guest.

3. Read verse 8-10. What did Zacchaeus say? (8) What did Jesus proclaim? (9). Why did Jesus come to this world? (10) What can we learn from this passage?

3-1. Read verse 8-10.

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

3-2. What did Zacchaeus say? (8)

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, ***“Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”***

. Some people think Jesus’ unconditional grace and forgiveness is cheap and really doesn’t change the sinful lifestyle of the sinner. But this is not true!

· Here he truly repented.

· First, he decided to share what he had with others, especially the poor. He had lived a selfish life. In the past, he had ignored the sufferings of the poor. But now he wanted to help needy people.

· Now he turned from his money-seeking life. Rather he wanted to help others, spending his money for them. Money was no longer his master, But God.

· Second, he stopped sinning or cheating people. He decided to cut off sin of his old ways, his sinful life.

· He took action to repent. His repentance was very real and practical.

· For repentance to be genuine, it must be practical. We must take practical action in keeping with repentance. He proved his repentance, making a very practical change.

· Faith that does not purify the heart and life is not faith at all. The man who confesses that he believes in Jesus but doesn’t make practical changes in his life, doesn’t have real faith.

· Those who know the grace of Jesus will naturally hate sin.

3-3. What did Jesus proclaim? (9).

 ***Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.***

· Jesus proclaimed that Zacchaeus was saved. Seeing his sincere repentance, Jesus proclaimed his salvation. Our sincere repentance with faith in Jesus leads us to the salvation

· This man, too, is a son of Abraham. – Jesus proclaimed Zacchaeus was a true member of God’s chosen people who will inherit the kingdom of God.

· People excluded him from their society thinking that he could not be a member of God’s chosen people.

· But Jesus restored him to belong to God’s chosen people and his children.

· Anyone, no matter how terribly they’ve sinned, can belong to God’s people and become a child of God. This can happen through repentance and faith.

3-4. Why did Jesus come to this world? (10)

***10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”***

· To seek and to save the lost.

· Jesus considered sinners like Zacchaeus as lost ones. All men are supposed to belong to God but because of their sin they are separated from God and were lost.

· ‘the lost’ implies that God wants to find them and restore them because of his compassionate heart.

· God’s intention toward sinners is not to destroy them but to save them and restore them.

· God is still seeking the lost ones.

· There are many lost one out there who are waiting for salvation.

3-5. What can we learn from this passage?

Personal application

**Conclusion**

 Jesus recognizes our desire to know him and helps us to know him when we make effort and have genuine spiritual desire. When we believe in Jesus and repent our sins we can be saved and restored to become children of God. Jesus came to this world to seek and to save the lost ones who are separated from God because of their sins. Jesus is still looking for the lost ones.

**One word: Save and Seek the Lost**