**PUT THIS MONEY TO WORK**

**Luke 19:1-27**

**Key Verse 19:13**

**"So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'"**

**Study Questions:**

1. Read verses 1-7. How is Zacchaeus described? Why was he not popular? Why did he want to see Jesus? What obstacles did he overcome in order to do so?

2. What was Jesus' invitation to him? Why? Why did the townspeople grumble? What does this tell us about Jesus? About the townspeople? Read verse 8. How did Zacchaeus respond? Why was he so ready to do this?

3. Read verses 9-10. Why did Jesus call him a son of Abraham? Why was Jesus so joyful about Zacchaeus' repentance?

4. Why did Jesus tell this parable? (11) In the parable, what did the man of noble birth do before leaving on his journey? (12-13) What was the purpose of his journey? What did he mean by "Put this money to work"?

5. What did each servant report? How did the king reward some? Why? Why did he call one servant wicked? How was he punished? What can we learn here about God? What does Jesus expect of his waiting disciples?

**There are two stories in this passage. The first is a story of the holy Son of God and Zacchae­us the tax col­lector. The second is the parable of the minas. Jesus teaches us the truth of God that we should be fruitful and creative people who know how to put money to work.**

**First, Jesus welcomed Zacchaeus (1-7).**

**Each gospel tells many stories about Jesus on his way to Jerusalem. All of these stories are sad, partly because many kinds of help­less people, such as ten lepers, a man born blind, a man of ill-repute, Zacchaeus, came to Jesus in defiance of the fact that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem to die on the cross as the Lamb of God. But they are all most beautiful stories which move people's hearts down through the genera­tions. In the stories, there is one story about Jesus and Zacchaeus at Jericho. Verse 1 says, "Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through." They say Jeri­cho was very wealthy, situated in the Jordan Valley and com­manding both the ap­proach to Jerusa­lem and the cross­ings of the Jordan River, giving it ac­cess to palm forests and balm groves. All this decor­ated the town with natural beauty and combined to make it one of the great­est cultural centers, and also one of the greatest centers of tax­ation in Palestine.**

**In Jericho, a man was there by the name of Zacchaeus, which meant upright or outstanding. Probably his parents named him Zacchaeus in the hope that he would be a great man in the sight of God. They must have done their best for him, sparing nothing in order to raise him as an upright person in the sight of God. But contrary to their wishes, he became a despic­able tax collector. Soon he was promoted to a chief tax collector. Then he became wealthy; then a man of ill-repute. Was he happy with his wealth? No, he was not happy because people call­ed him a public sin­ner. Man's desire for honor and recognition is indeed great. Zac­chaeus must have expected that his people would say of him, "He is an up­right person in the sight of God." To his surprise, people whispered be­hind his back, "You tax collec­tor!" a man of no national identity. In addition, Zacchaeus was not accepted any­where. Jews did not recog­nize him as a fellow Jew, and Romans did not accept him as a Roman, though he was a Roman puppet. He was living all by himself. What was worse, when he har­dened his heart and wanted to make mon­ey by any available means, demons crept into him until he be­came a Jewish demoniac.**

**But he found hope in Jesus. Look at verse 3a. "He wanted to see who Jesus was..." What made him want to see Jesus? He had al­­ready heard about the good news of Jesus, that he wel­comed sin­ners and tax collectors and ate with them. But there were sev­eral obstacles for him to overcome to come to Jesus. First, his hindrance was the crowd of people. Zacchaeus was too short com­pared with others. All the peo­ple were like football players, and he was like "Kermit the frog." When Zacchaeus wanted to come to Jesus, he was sunk into bigger peo­ple. Finally this small man was nudged, fell down and was trod­den over until his body was black and blue with bruises. At that moment, he saw a syca­more-fig tree ahead of him. That tree was a great inspir­ation to him. However, his big sto­m­ach hindered him from climbing up the tree. But where there is a will, there is a way. After a few moments, he could see Jesus.**

**When Jesus arrived at the spot, he looked up and saw Zac­chaeus hang­ing in the sycamore-fig tree. Jesus said to him, "Zac­chaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today" (5). Jesus wel­comed him as his own youngest son. We don't know how Jesus knew his name. Any­­way, Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately." Jesus knew that no one associated with him. Jesus knew he was suf­fering from a sense of dishonor. Jesus knew that he was as lonely as a widowed pi­geon. As soon as Jesus saw him, he welcomed him, saying, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately." It was precisely Jesus' voice. But it was an in­vi­tation of the holy God, and the moment of di­vine mercy to Zac­chaeus.**

**Jesus also invited him. Jesus was willing to invite Zac­chaeus. But Jesus did not have his own house. So Jesus in­vited himself to Zacchaeus' house. When Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus' house, he was inviting Zacchaeus to talk with him about the sec­rets of the glorious king­dom of God. Look at verse 6. "So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly." He immediately came down from the tree. Probably the seat of his pants was torn after being caught by a sharp point of a cut branch on the tree. But it did not mat­ter. What was the peo­ple's response? People there began to mut­ter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner'" (7b). Any­way, Jesus was going to Zac­chae­us' house de­spite people's devil­try and insult.**

**Second, Zacchaeus' repentance (8).**

**Though he looked like a man of no conscience, Zacchaeus had suffered most from his guilty conscience. When the heavenly sunshine shone in his heart through Jesus' one word, he came to the realiza­tion that he was a selfish man. So he said in verse 8, "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." Then Zacchaeus would have nothing left for himself. But it didn't mat­ter. He was happy. His guilty conscience was gone and he was over­whelmed with spiritual happiness. He had been a kind of men­tal pa­tient due to his selfishness. But when Zacchaeus met Je­sus, he became a happy man. For the first time, he cried many tears endlessly, partly because he was happy to see Jesus, and part­ly because he realized how he had wronged the helpless and the defense­less; how he had caused so many women to go to hell. When he re­pent­ed, his humanity was fully rehabil­i­tat­ed, and the image of God in him was fully re­stored.**

**Third, Jesus accepted him as a son of Abraham (9,10).**

**Look at verse 9. "Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.'" When he saw that Zacchaeus had repented, Jesus was happy. In the past, Zacchaeus was branded as a tax collector and as one who betrayed his suffering people. People looked down on him as a traitor of his poor people. But Jesus for­gave all his sins. Not only so, Jesus also highly exalted him, saying, "This man too is a son of Abra­ham." At that time, to be a son of Abraham, one of the chosen people, was indeed great to the people of Israel. Zacchaeus was branded a public sinner. But Jesus reinstated him as a chosen Jew. Though the world abandoned him, Jesus recognized him. Zacchaeus was now a heavenly prince. Zac­chaeus was now an heir of the kingdom of God. Jesus' joy was great to see Zac­chae­us' change and res­tora­tion to his sonship. In the past he was a heavy burden to his house­hold and his peo­ple. But now he was a blessing to all people. So Jesus said, "Salvation has come to this house." Look at verse 10, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." Zac­chae­us' com­ing to Jesus brought forth such a great result.**

**Fourth, put this money to work (11-17).**

**Zacchaeus knew he was smart. Even if he was a smart man, he became a social outcast. So in this part, Jesus tells how to use our abili­ties for our King Je­sus. Now Jesus was near Jer­usa­lem. The people thought that the kingdom of God was go­ing to ap­pear at once (11). The people of Jesus' time were most­ly fortune-seeking people due to their false hope. Most of them went secretly to magicians to hear something fantastic, such as becoming a rich man, or going to heaven without spiritual struggle. Of course, the hope of the Messiah had en­abled the Jews to endure all kinds of hardships and suffer­ings. But the Messiah they had ex­pect­ed was not the one based on Bible prophecies, but a pol­itical messiah who could satis­fy their fortune-seeking desires (1Co 1:22-23a). How about the disci­ples? They should have learned the deep meaning of his suf­fering, death and resurrection. But because of their sinful desires, their spiritual eyes were blind. They could not see God's plan of world sal­vation. They could not see God's love for all mankind.**

**Look at verse 12. "A man of noble birth went to a dis­tant country to have himself appointed king and then to re­turn." Here, "a man of noble birth" refers to Jesus; his going to a distant country, to his ascension, and his return, to his Second Coming. He went back to the heavenly kingdom so that he might come back to this world as King and Judge. Verse 13 says, "So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'un­til I come back.'" Here, "his servants" refers to his people. One mina is about three months' wages. He gave his servants the money and said, "Put this money to work." How nice it would have been if he had said, "Use the money pro­per­ly." "Mina" can be compared to many different gifts, such as man's life itself, free­dom of choice, talents, in­tellect, inspiration, im­agination, the hard-working spirit, leadership, courage, humbleness, and so on. Man's life is definitely limited within a cer­tain period. The life in a man is abun­dant and un­limited. The poten­tiality in man is limit­less in its scope.**

**Man's joy comes when he works hard to make his life fruitful (Jn 15:11). Therefore, each person is ob­liged to God to bear fruit 30 times, 60 times or 100 times. Life is comparable to mon­ey. Those who put their lives to work for the glory of God will have victori­ous lives (2Ti 4:7). What does it mean when Jesus said, "Put this money to work"? "Put this mon­ey to work" means "Work hard and gain some profit without fail." Our King Jesus does not want us to remain fruitless. He wants us to make things work out by devotion to the things he gave us. It's pos­sible for any­one who has heart. There is a saying, "Where there's a will, there's a way." For those who take the King's words abso­lutely, nothing is impos­sible. "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king'" (14). His subjects hated the king­ship of Jesus. Look at verse 15a. "He was made king, however, and return­ed home." Supposedly, people did not want him to be their king because he was not a permanent based king, but a temporal based king. But in reality, they did not like him because he comes again to make them give an account. Whether we want it to happen or not, Jesus will come again. When he comes again, he will ask each person to give an account (2 Co 5:10). Let's see what happens when there is accountability.**

**Look at verses 16,17. "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.'" This servant took his mas­ter at his word absolutely, put the money to work and earned a profit. What was his reward? "'Well done, my good ser­vant!' his master re­pli­ed." This was his reward. The Mas­ter's recognition, "Well done, my good ser­vant!" is the best re­ward all man­kind should as­pire for. The people of God don't want the recognition of people, who are the same sinners with us. Our Master's reward is very special. What is it? It is more work. Look at verse 17b. "Because you have been trust­worthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities." It meant, "You must work for me ten times more." What a reward! "The sec­ond came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' His master an­swered, 'You take charge of five cities'" (18,19). The master gave the se­cond servant the same reward as the first and assigned him five times more work to do as his reward. "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow'" (20,21). In short, he was too smart but lazy to put the money to work. "His master re­plied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked ser­vant!'" (22) The master rebuked his laziness of not put­ting his mina to work (22-24). The master said in verse 24b, "Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas." The mas­ter's deci­sion seemed too hard. So those standing there said, "He already has ten!" From a worldly point of view, the man who kept his or­iginal capital of one mina was a fairly good person, wasn't he? But to God he was a lazy person. God treats lazy people as the enemies of God. God does not for­give their laziness. Verse 27 says, "But those ene­mies of mine who did not want me to be king over them--bring them here and kill them in front of me."**

**In this passage we learn that we must live a victorious and fruit­ful life by being stewards of God's children.**