

## **Luke 19:1-10 – "Seeking and Saving the Lost"**

**Text: Luke 19:1-10 (CSB)**

**1 He entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 There was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able because of the crowd, since he was a short man. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus, since he was about to pass that way. 5 When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today it is necessary for me to stay at your house." 6 So he quickly came down and welcomed him joyfully. 7 All who saw it began to complain, "He's gone to stay with a sinful man." 8 But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, I'll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord. And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I'll pay back four times as much." 9 "Today salvation has come to this house," Jesus told him, "because he too is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man has come to seek and save the lost."**

### **Key Background:**

- **Jericho:** A wealthy city located on major trade routes, making it an important center for tax collection. The city was about 15 miles from Jerusalem and a common stopping point for pilgrims traveling to religious festivals.
- **Chief Tax Collector:** Zacchaeus held a high position in the Roman tax system, overseeing other tax collectors in the region. This made him wealthy but despised by his fellow Jews as a collaborator with their oppressors.
- **Sycamore Tree:** These trees were common in Jericho, with large, sturdy branches that could easily support a person's weight. The tree would have provided excellent visibility over the crowd.
- **Social Disgrace:** For a wealthy, prominent man to run and climb a tree was highly undignified in ancient culture. Zacchaeus's actions showed his desperate desire to see Jesus despite social embarrassment.
- **Divine Necessity:** Jesus's statement that it was "necessary" for him to stay with Zacchaeus indicates this was part of God's plan, not a casual decision.
- **Restitution Laws:** Jewish law required fourfold restitution for theft (Exodus 22:1), and Roman law required only the original amount plus 20%. Zacchaeus's offer exceeded both legal requirements.
- **Son of Abraham:** This phrase indicated full membership in God's covenant people, something that would have been questioned due to Zacchaeus's profession and lifestyle.

### **Questions from the Story:**

- **What was Zacchaeus's occupation and social status (v. 2)? What does this tell us about his position in society and how others viewed him?**

- **What was Zacchaeus trying to do when Jesus came to Jericho (v. 3)? What does his desire to see Jesus reveal about his heart?**
- **What obstacles prevented Zacchaeus from seeing Jesus (v. 3)? How do these obstacles represent barriers that keep people from encountering Jesus today?**
- **What undignified action did Zacchaeus take to overcome his obstacles (v. 4)? What does his willingness to embarrass himself show about the depth of his desire?**
- **How did Jesus respond when he reached the place where Zacchaeus was (v. 5)? What does Jesus's knowledge of Zacchaeus's name reveal about God's personal knowledge of each individual?**
- **What did Jesus say was "necessary" about his visit to Zacchaeus's house (v. 5)? What does this tell us about God's intentional pursuit of the lost?**
- **How did Zacchaeus respond to Jesus's invitation (v. 6)? What does his joyful welcome show about his heart toward Jesus?**
- **How did the crowd react to Jesus going to stay with Zacchaeus (v. 7)? What does their complaint reveal about their attitude toward those they considered sinners?**
- **What spontaneous declaration did Zacchaeus make to Jesus (v. 8)? What do his promises about giving to the poor and making restitution reveal about the genuineness of his conversion?**
- **How did Zacchaeus's offer of fourfold restitution compare to what was legally required? What does this excessive generosity demonstrate about true repentance?**
- **What did Jesus declare had happened to Zacchaeus and his household (v. 9)? What does this tell us about the nature of salvation?**
- **Why did Jesus call Zacchaeus "a son of Abraham" (v. 9)? What does this reveal about how God views repentant sinners regardless of their past?**
- **What did Jesus say was his mission in coming to earth (v. 10)? How does this encounter with Zacchaeus perfectly illustrate Jesus's stated purpose?**
- **What does this story teach us about God's heart for those whom society rejects or considers beyond redemption?**
- **How does Zacchaeus's transformation demonstrate that genuine salvation produces visible changes in behavior and priorities?**
- **What can we learn from Jesus's approach to Zacchaeus about how we should reach out to those who are seeking but facing obstacles?**