

11. Jesus Loves a Short, Bad Man

Luke 19



Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

Luke 19:10

Jesus Loves a Short, Bad Man

Most people in Jericho hated Zacchaeus. He was in charge of the tax collectors. He took more money than he should have. Jesus walked into Jericho. Happy crowds followed him.

Zacchaeus tried to see Jesus. But he could not see over the people. Zacchaeus was a short man. He jumped. Still, he could not see. He got a plan. Zacchaeus ran to a tree. He climbed up. Now, he could see Jesus as he walked past. Jesus stopped. He looked up and saw Zacchaeus.

Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down. Today, I must stay at your house."

Zacchaeus could not believe it! His selfish heart became soft. He climbed down the tree quickly. "Jesus at my house?" he thought with joy.

The people grumbled, "Jesus is going to the house of a sinner."

Zacchaeus said, "Lord, I will give half of all I own to the poor. If I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times as much." He was very rich.

Jesus said, "Today, this lost man is saved. For I have come to seek and save the lost."

Questions

1. What kind of man was Zaccheaus?
2. How did Jesus change him?
3. Jesus takes time for people who are without friends. Who is without a friend in your life? Can you try to become friends with him or her?
4. What did Zaccheaus do to show that his heart had been changed? What can you do?

Pray this Prayer:

Dear Jesus,
You became a friend to those whom others hated. You are a heart changer. Please change my heart too. Help me to love the lost, the hated, the hurting. Help me to show my love for you by becoming a giver.
Amen

Write some of the words Zaccheaus said after his heart had been changed.



Show students where the story is in the Bible. Use the Bible references above the illustration.

Before you read:

Activate Prior Knowledge

- a) Do you know anyone who has a lot of enemies? Why is he hated?
- b) Have you ever become friends with a person like that? What did you discover?
- c) If you had \$100, what would you spend it on? How does that show what is in your heart?

After you read:

Follow the Money

How we spend our money shows what is in our hearts. Cut out two hearts from red paper. On one heart write: "This little secret never fails. Follow the treasure; follow the trail. Your spent money will lead us to...what truly is important to you." On the other heart write from Matthew 6:21: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will also be." Lay pennies on the floor to form a path to each heart from a starting point across the room. Teams of two can race. As you pick up each penny, tell how you can spend them to show that you love God.

Love Changes Everything

Jesus knew every greedy time that Zaccheaus cheated a poor person out of money. And yet, Jesus loved him thoroughly, with so much forgiveness that this hardened tax collector's heart melted right away. Love is what wins others to Jesus. Who do you know that might have a "hard" outside? Draw a big tree with branches on a marker board. On an index card, write that person's name (or a fake name). On the other side of the card, write down ways that you can stop and befriend him or her, like Jesus did. Use putty to attach the cards to the tree. Pray, and go make a friend for Jesus.

Mix-Up Book

Cut out the illustrations and word boxes on pages 5 and 6. Glue them with correct, corresponding captions onto two sheets of folded paper to make a simple book. Create a cover for it.



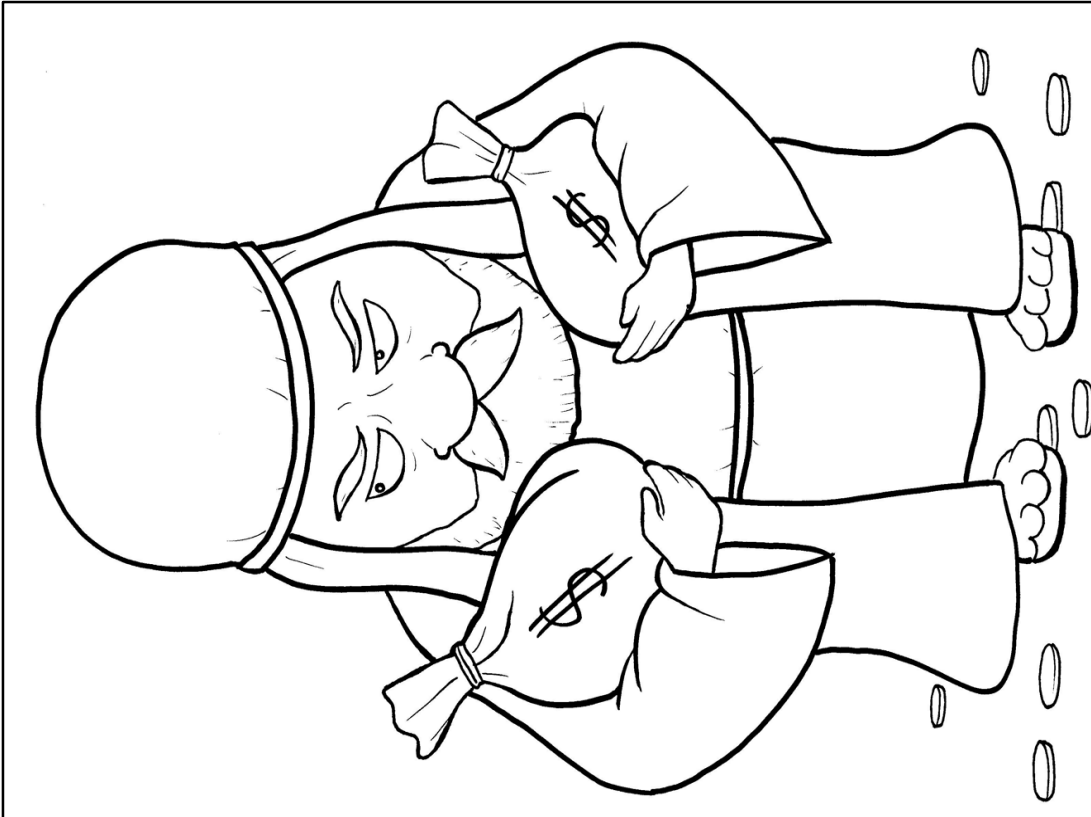
4. and gave away all his gold.



1. Zacchaeus cheated, lied, and stole...



2. to grab all the money he could hold.



3. But he met Jesus we are told.