

# WEEKLY CHRISTIAN FOCUS

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## ZACCHAEUS AND JESUS. A CHANGED MAN.

Number 80



SCRIPTURE  
BASED  
OUTLOOK ON  
A VARIETY OF  
TOPICS



**The story of Zacchaeus greatly appeals to me as I am sure it does to many of you. I'd like to share it as thoughts about what we can learn from Bible people and how Jesus handled them.** We wrote an edition on Mary and Martha a few weeks back and I have another really exciting one I hope to write very soon by God's grace.

I take comfort and joy from Zacchaeus. Because, for one, like me, he was a short individual. Being physically short has seemingly few advantages in the human realm, but God can compensate in other ways. Man looks on the outward appearance so much, I feel we are all guilty of that. However, you don't need to be short to learn many things from this text of scripture! Let's look at the actual fantastic text in the Amplified Bible here and see what God shows you as we go along. I will comment at the end. This is the Gospel of Luke chapter 19.

19 And [Jesus] entered Jericho and was passing through it.

2 And there was a man called Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, and [he was] rich.

3 And he was trying to see Jesus, which One He was, but he could

not on account of the crowd, because he was small in stature.

4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus reached the place, He looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.

6 So he hurried and came down, and he received and welcomed Him joyfully.

7 And when the people saw it, they all muttered among themselves and indignantly complained\*, He has gone in to be the guest of and lodge with a man who is devoted to sin and preeminently a sinner.

8 So then Zacchaeus stood up and solemnly declared to the Lord, See, Lord, the half of my goods I [now] give [by way of restoration] to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone out of anything, I [now] restore four times as much.

9 And Jesus said to him, Today is [Messianic and spiritual] salvation come to [all the members of] this household, since Zacchaeus too is a [real spiritual] son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.



Zacchaeus was rich. Now that might appeal to a lot of you, and at times it does appeal to me! But he was in fact very rich. Zacchaeus was a Jew, and somehow ended up with a job in the financial sector, collecting money and taxes for the Roman occupying power. He must have known how to handle money, cheat people and wheel and deal in the time warp where they lived in Israel at

that time. In other words, he was a survivor\*\* and a good one.

Jesus was on a mission. Jesus actually was commissioned to preach the Gospel to the Jews first as a people, as they were Children of Abraham under the promises of God to be blessed. However not everyone is really a child of Abraham at all, and it all depends on whether you are a spiritual child or not as you see in verse 9.



Jesus knew everyone he met, He knew their names, and He had the ability to know exactly what was in their hearts and minds. All this classified information was only available to Jesus and not the people around Him. Consider these appropriate verses from John chapter 1:

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the

angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

All that about Jesus knowing everything and everyone would make a good study in itself.

So little Zachaeus had a big desire to see Jesus but couldn't get through the massive crowd there in Jericho. So, we all know he climbed a sycamore tree. All he wanted to do was really get a glimpse of the great man. **Yet we can say that it was Jesus' goal to actually be there in Jericho primarily to meet Zacchaeus.** Jesus already knew that Zacchaeus was quite desperate, not only to see him from a tree, but to make a major change in his life. **NOW was the time**, and Jesus had no trouble inviting Himself into Zacchaeus' house! Normally that would be considered bad manners or presumptuous or arrogant, but Jesus just outright told him; **'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down;** for I must stay at your house today.' Zacchaeus received Jesus joyfully. We don't know if he had a wife or kids, but we could easily presume that. **We also see that Zacchaeus obeyed and hurried down from the tree immediately!**

However, we can see from the verses that Zacchaeus didn't wait around to say what was in his heart! It seems that while he was still out there in the public eye he boldly proclaimed:

8 So then Zacchaeus stood up and solemnly declared to the Lord, See, Lord, the half of my goods I [now] give [by way of restoration] to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone out of anything, I [now] restore four times as much.

This type of public declaration of the desire to follow the Word of God, as Zacchaeus was now doing, is and was a great testimony.

He had already been prepared by God to repent of all his cheating and shenanigans of his past and was totally prepared to repent

and change his behaviour right there and then. For this reason, Jesus stopped by Jericho that day and told Zacchaeus, 'I need to spend more time in **your** house. Let's talk about all the things God has been showing you, Zacchaeus and let's begin a new life together, because you are one of God's chosen seed also.'

**That was a truly divine encounter, and it was a divine encounter, ONLY** because Zacchaeus' heart was inclined by the Lord to repent and restore what he had cheated people of and restore unto them according to the laws of Moses.

Have you cheated anybody in the past? Do you still owe people anything from anytime previously? **NOW** is the right time to make amends to them and yourself before the New Year begins. Get right with God. **Pay back what you owe to anyone at this Christmas time.** If you **genuinely** can't afford it, at least apologise to them, and seek their forgiveness and thank them [profusely] for their kindness and help in times past. **God will therefore restore to you the peace of mind and joy that Zacchaeus and his entire family felt that day when Jesus visited him.** Jesus not only visited him but made that His priority to visit Jericho that day! Wow! After all, let's remember Jesus didn't just visit anybody!

 Do you want Jesus to visit you this Christmas and in the coming year?



Then PAY what you owe, repent of your selfishness, and vow to God that you will make restitution if you possibly, humanly and financially can in the future.

Believe me, when you do that your Christmas and New Year right now will see the blessings of GOD that you could have never imagined, one of which will be that Jesus will visit you in that day when you make your heart right with Him, just like dear Zacchaeus! Praise the Lord.

To you righteous people who may be reading, and to whom people owe you money, services or other things; may I ask you to pray for these people that they will find the grace of God to repay you and to also have a positive change in their lives at this important time of Christmas and a New Year. You don't have to take matters into your own hands; but you should pray that God will undertake on your behalf. Leave it with Him and He will work all things out for your good as He has always promised. Amen. (Romans 8:28)



[Zacchaeus Lessons From His Life - Billy Graham - YouTube](#)

This is an audio which really covers some deep points.

[DA Chapter 61 Zacchaeus.MP3 - YouTube](#)

A very suitable audio of 12 minutes good for adults and older children. Lovely web site I feel.

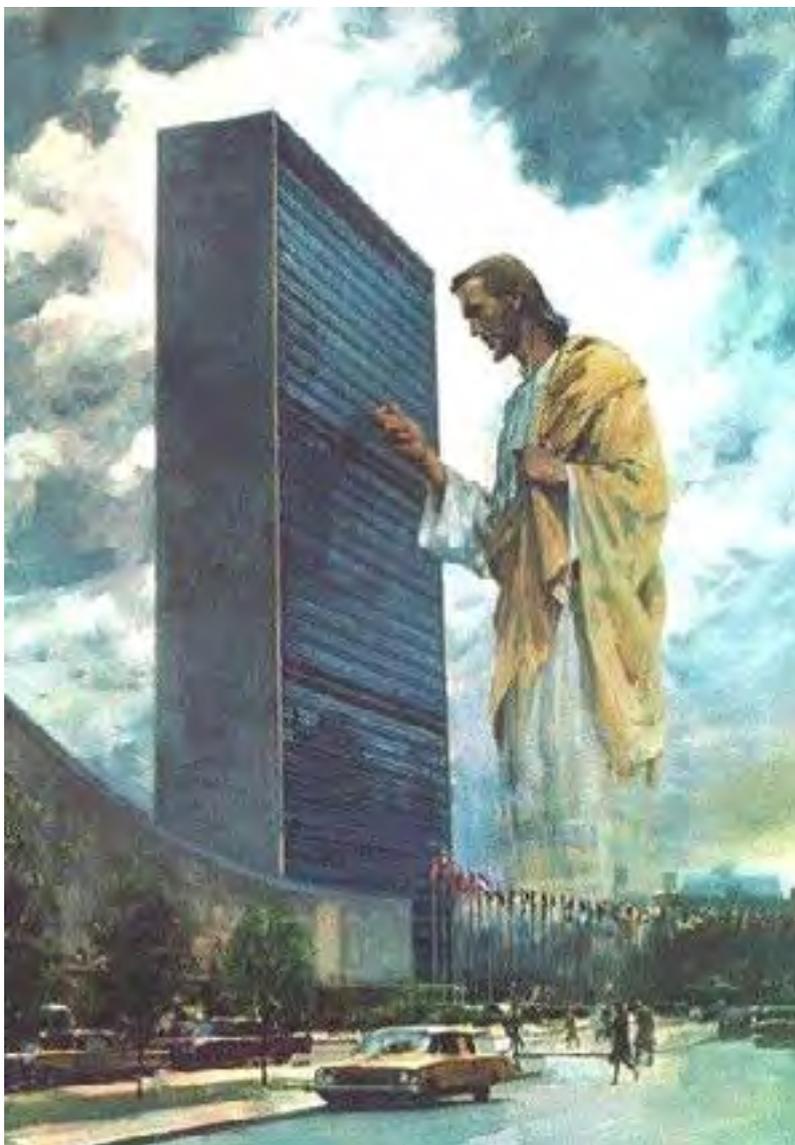
[What does Zacchaeus teach us?](#)

[Psephizo](#) This article shares other lessons from the text.

\*Today we often use the word 'Outrageous' which seems so ubiquitous today.

\*\*[Zach Williams - Survivor \(Live from Harding Prison\) - YouTube](#)

You will love it, and I hope you will pray for ALL the prison ministries around the world.



Art by [Harry Anderson](#)

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