

6.3.22 am

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Date: 06 March 2022

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service. Welcome to those who are here and those who are online as well that you can't see. And a special welcome to those who are visiting with us today. There's some from Stornoway who are staying over in Scalladale.
- I see other faces as well who are not strangers but who are visiting with us today as well. So it's good to see you and it's good for us to be able to come together and to worship God.
- The intimations have been on the screen before the service began and you have a chance to go through them I guess. Just to highlight a few things, tea and coffee after the service, lunch for you guys so we will get the chance to have fellowship afterwards if we're able to stay.
- Evening service at 6 and in the course of the week there's another Slavic Gospel Association prayer meeting tomorrow night. Some went last week, I think there was almost 700 people on that prayer meeting last week.
- So again it's repeated and if you want details you have to email that address there, office at slabsga.org.uk and you'll be given a Zoom code.
- [1 : 1 2] Ladies Fellowship, Monday night Little Fish is on Tuesday as usual. Road to Recovery on Tuesday as usual as well and on Wednesday evening we'll have the prayer meeting here and again on Zoom for those who can't be here.
- We're not going to have the clubs jam and connect and rooted this week. It's just too much of a rush between the clubs and the communion services. So there'll be no jam and connect and rooted this week.
- But your communion services you can see on the screen Friday through to Sunday. Thomas Davis is taking the Gaelic service on Friday at 12 noon and then John Lachey will take the services on Friday night and Saturday and Sunday.
- So please note the details of that there. And for those who have come to trust the Lord and have not yet come forward to the table, I say this season after season.
- And I know there are some who have been many years following the Lord but haven't yet come forward. Be encouraged to come forward. It's the command of Jesus, do this, remember my death he says.
- [2 : 2 5] Take the bread, take the wine. So be encouraged to do so. So you can come and speak to me or one of the elders in advance or come forward on the nights when the services are scheduled.
- Two more things. Communion Sunday evening. We'll have a fellowship and there's a sheet at the door there for those who can maybe do tributes and various things. You can fill that in if you're able.
- Team 1 is on duty. Hospitality Team 1 is on duty. So I'm sure you know who you are. And the last thing is the creche rota. We prayed for babies and we were thankful to see the Lord answer that prayer for babies.

And we have people in our creche, a lot of ones in our creche. Sometimes we struggle to get enough people to actually look after them. So we could do with a few more in the creche rota.

So if you're able to, please leave your name on the list at the door. And I think these are all the notices. So let's worship God and let's sing to his praise.

[3 : 31] We sing from Psalm 84. Psalm 84 verses 1 to verse 9. How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me.

How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me.

The tavern knuckles of thy grace, O Lord of hosts, to me. How pleasant more may be.

My thirsty soul longs vehemently, Yet vince thy courts to see.

My very heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee.

[4 : 35] Behold the sparrow findeth thou an house where it's to rest.

The swaddled also for herself, at purchase head and rest.

In night on waters where she'd save, her young ones for fame may.

O thou almighty Lord of hosts, who art my God and King.

Blessed are they in thy house that dwell, they ever give thee praise.

[5 : 35] Blessed is the man whose strength of heart, in whose heart are thy ways.

Who passing thought obeyed God's veil, that in New-Dingham wells.

God so the rain that falleth down, the bulls with water fills.

So they from strength and weary go, still forward unto strength.

Until in Zion they appear, before the Lord of land.

[6 : 34] Lord God of hosts, my great idea, O Jacob's God give ear. See God our shield, look on the face of thine anointed ear.

Let's unite their hearts in prayer. Let's pray. Our heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day.

We thank you for this place that we can gather together in the name of Jesus. We thank you that we gather so today with a sense of peace, a sense of confidence even.

Lord, we have no fear that there is going to be a disruption to this meeting. There's no one we expect will come in and tell us to leave the building.

We don't hear the sound of planes overhead. We are a privileged people. And we thank you that we are able to meet in this place, in a time of peace, with the freedom to worship.

[7 : 58] And we pray that we would do so. That we would be in the spirit on the Lord's day. And that our minds and our hearts would be tuned to sing your praise and to listen for your voice.

We pray, Lord, that you would meet with us in this hour. That just as we read of Zacchaeus, who met with Jesus on that day, we pray that we would know the reality of meeting with Jesus in this place.

And we thank you that we can expect to because we have the promise that where we gather, in the name of Jesus, you will be here with us. So we pray that we would not only know that in our minds and believe that in our heads, but we pray that we would experience that in our hearts.

Just as those who on the Emmaus Road, as Jesus drew near, their hearts burned within them. We pray that we would know something of that as we gather around your word and as we listen for the voice of Jesus.

So receive us, Lord, we pray, as we come and worship. We recognize, Lord, and we confess that we are sinners. We fall and we fail.

[9 : 09] The good that we want to do, we so often leave undone. And the evil that we want to turn away from, we so often find ourselves back in. We are people who are sinners.

And, Lord, as we look back over past days and weeks and months even, we confess, Lord, the sin that so easily sticks to us. With the psalmist, we say, against thee, against you, Lord, and you only have we sinned.

And we pray for that forgiveness, for that forgiveness that comes through the blood of Jesus. There's no other way, there's no other name through which we can be saved.

There's no other route through which we can find forgiveness, saved through the cross of Christ. And, Lord, we thank you for that cross. We thank you for the death of Jesus, your son.

We thank you that he is our saviour. We thank you that he is the one who calls us to look unto him and to be saved. And we pray that today, and we pray that over this forthcoming week, as we approach the Lord's table, that our focus would be on Christ, that we would be near to the cross.

[10 : 19] And, Lord, that each of us would be found at the foot of the cross, seeking that salvation, seeking that forgiveness, and seeking that satisfaction that comes only from knowing Jesus.

We've sang in the psalm of our fainting souls, our thirsting souls. And, Lord, we thank you that you've told us that we can find satisfaction, that we can find quenching for the thirst of our souls in no place but in you.

Our hearts are restless until we find rest in thee. So we ask, Lord, that you would give us that peace, that you would give us that salvation, that you would look upon us in grace, that you would cleanse us from our sin, that you would fix our eyes upon Jesus as we gather in the name of Jesus.

We pray for anyone here today who hasn't yet trusted in Christ. We ask that in the power of the Holy Spirit, you would be moving to show each of us our sin, to show each of us Jesus as Savior.

And we pray for that faith that would cause us to take hold of the grace of Jesus that is so freely offered. So be at work, Lord, we pray, in the hearts, especially of those who are still lost.

[11 : 38] And be at work in the hearts of those who are found, those who are saved, but who have not yet come out and said that Jesus is Lord. We pray that as we approach the Lord's table and as we are called to take our stand and to sit with your people, we pray that if there's anyone who hasn't yet come forward but yet who has been forgiven, we ask that you would give them the courage to be obedient to the call, to the command of Jesus.

We pray, Lord, for us and our need. We think of the situation in the world at this time and we see horror as we watch the news and as we read stories of what's going on.

We see the reality of the fact that the heart is wicked, the heart is deceitful. We see man's inhumanity to man. And we ask, Lord, have mercy upon us, we pray.

We pray that you would bring peace with us as war. We pray that you would thwart the power and influence of those who would seek to, for their own pride and the satisfaction of their own pride, seek to inflict such violence on those who get in their way.

We pray against, Lord, this campaign of Putin. We pray, Lord, for Ukraine. We pray for those who are suffering. We struggle to know what to pray.

[13 : 06] But we ask, Lord, that you would intervene and that you would bring peace. You are able to do far more than we can ask or think. And so, Lord, we commit this whole situation to you as we think about how close it really is to us and the effect we are feeling it has on us already.

Lord, be active, we pray, for your glory and for the good of your people. So we pray for these things distant from us. We pray for these things which trouble us in our own lives.

Those who are sick and those who are recovering. Those who are grieving. Those who are anxious. Those who are battling with addictions. You know our hearts, Lord. And we pray that you would meet each of us at the point of our need.

So hear our prayers. Bless the young ones in Scalladale over the weekend. We pray that the word that was shared would find root in the hearts of each person. And we thank you, Lord, for the freedom to be able to come together after such a long time where we were kept at a distance.

So be amongst them. Be amongst us, Lord, we pray. Hear our prayers. Take away our sin. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please?

[14 : 34] How are you all today? Coming? Yeah. Take a seat there, Finley. Have you had a good week? Yeah.

Good stuff. One thing I should have said actually yesterday, well, I should have said in the notices, is thank you. Because if you look around in the church today and if you look outside the church and if you look at the back of the church and around the side, there was a whole lot of people yesterday who were helping to do jobs just to tidy the place up.

So I've got a few pictures on the screen, I think, of some of the volunteers. What does that say?

There we go. Michael didn't know this was coming. For once, he's silent. So there's the boss there with Janangas standing beside him.

Janangas was the boss. Yeah, he was the boss for yesterday. But there was lots of people doing all kinds of different jobs. Do you know what kind of jobs were being done? Do you remember, Michael?

[15 : 40] Cutting hedges. Cutting hedges. Getting rid of all that bracken at the back. Some of us have got cut hands. The gutters. The gutters, yep. Cleaning out the gutters.

Then inside there was leaf removal and there was cupboards that were being tidied and the kitchen was being given a once over and this place was tidied up.

The lamps were getting dusted. The lamps were getting dusted, were they? Yes. Lamps were getting dusted. So there was all kinds of things going on and it was good to have everyone involved.

But the thing I wanted to show you today, especially, is what Michael's wearing. So let's flick through the photographs again and let's look at Michael's fashion for the day.

There you go. That was a different day. And then there's yesterday. Can anyone tell me, what's special about the clothes that he's wearing?

[16 : 44] John Rory? No, high-vis. Yeah, what were you going to say, Henry? Yeah, you were going to say the same thing. It was high-vis. What does that mean? What does it mean?

What does it mean, high-vis? Lois? So when the lights shine on it, it goes really bright. Why do you need that? Henry? For safety, yeah.

Nighttime. And nighttime. And what colour? It wasn't brown or grey or green or anything that Michael was wearing, but what colours were the jackets and the waistcoats or the vests?

John Rory? Yellow. Yellow was one. It was red. The other one was red. Bright colours. And so, whether it's nighttime or whether it's daytime, it's high-vis.

So, even though the team that was working here yesterday wasn't the coolest team in the world to be part of. They were. Well. I mean, there was one or two cool characters, but it's not the coolest thing to be in a team with a minister for the morning on Saturday.

[17 : 51] But even though it wasn't the coolest team or every member wasn't the coolest, Michael wasn't ashamed to be there. People walking past, looking, what's going on in there?

There's Michael. High-vis jacket. Red vest. The other day, not ashamed to tell people that he was a high-vis worker. High-vis member of the team.

And, um, when we're trusting Jesus, how do you think he wants us to be for Christians? Henry?

Safe. Safe, yeah. What was? Not ashamed. We're to be high-vis Christians. If we're part of Jesus' team, if we're following him, people should see us.

They should hear us. We shouldn't be hiding away, hoping nobody will see us. We shouldn't be ashamed for people to know that we're following Jesus.

[18 : 57] In the sermon today, you guys won't hear it, but I'm sure in the afternoon you catch up in the sermons. But in the sermon in the afternoon, in the morning today, we're going to hear a story about a man called Zacchaeus.

Do you know anything about Zacchaeus? Do you want to know? He was short. He was short. Yep. Katie? He climbed a sycamore tree.

Why? Why? Why did he climb a sycamore tree? Anyone else? Who's behind that? Can't see. Ailey? To see God.

To see Jesus. And he was kind of in this tree and he was probably hoping nobody would notice him up this tree.

And then what happened? Jesus saw him. And Jesus said, Zacchaeus, down from the tree, you and me are going to talk.

[19 : 59] I'm coming to your house today. And that's what Jesus says to us. Sometimes we might be hiding, not in trees, but we're hoping maybe people don't know that we're in church and we're hoping that people maybe don't know that we're Christians.

Because sometimes people might laugh or point and Jesus says, stop hiding. Get your high-vis gear on. Don't be ashamed to tell people that I'm your Savior and your Lord.

And you know, next weekend, when it's communion, what do we do at communion? Do you remember? John Rory? We have the bread, we have the wine.

And what are we doing when we have the bread and the wine? What does it mean? Henry? We're remembering Jesus' death.

And when we take the bread and we take the wine, everyone can see us. And what we're really saying, as we remember Jesus and the death of Jesus, we're saying to the people who are watching, I'm not ashamed to sit at the Lord's table.

[21 : 19] I'm not ashamed to be one of his people. And that's what he wants us to do. So, if you're one of the Lord's people, whether you're young or whether you're old, don't be hiding up sycamore trees.

Don't be ashamed. Get your high-vis gear on. Tell people that you're trusting in Jesus. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you love us.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, that you died on the cross to save us from our sin. And we thank you that next weekend, if we're well and if we're able to be here, that we'll be able to remember your death, Jesus, and tell people that we are your children, that we are trusting in you.

So we pray, Lord, that you would give us courage for that. And if we are your children, give us courage to step forward. And if we're not your children, and if we still have our sin and we're carrying our own sin still, help us, Lord, we pray, to come to you and say, please forgive my sin.

Please take it away. Wash me in your blood and make me clean. And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing now the words on the screen.

[22 : 33] I'm not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend his cause. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Have a Pins listener, Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. My God, I know his name, his name is all my trust.

Nor will he put my soul to share, nor let my hope be lost.

[23 : 41] Where was his throne his promised land, and he got well secure.

What I've known is into his hands, till the days I survive.

Then will he hold my worthlessly before his Father's face.

And in the new Jerusalem appoint my soul a place.

Okay boys and girls, younger ones today only are going to Sunday school. And the older ones are staying in.

[24 : 46] So it's good to have you, and I've got a specially long service for you this morning. Nice try Alistair, he's just been put back in.

We're going to turn to Luke's Gospel, chapter 19. Luke chapter 19.

Luke chapter 19. And we'll read from verse 1 to verse 10.

This is God's word. Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man, he could not because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed the sycamore fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

[26 : 05] When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today. So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter, He has gone to be the guest of a sinner. 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. Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham.

For the son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

We're going to sing again the last three stanzas of Psalm 84 in Gaelic. I'll read the verses in English. For in thy courts one day excels a thousand rather in.

[27 : 09] In my God's house will I keep a door than dwell in tents of sin. For God the Lord's a sun and shield, he'll grace and glory give, And will withhold no good from them that uprightly do live.

O thou that art the Lord of hosts, that man is truly blessed, Who by assured confidence on thee alone doth rest. These three stanzas of the psalm.

And we will remain seated to sing in Gaelic. Thank you very much.

Good night.

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

[29 : 10] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS Thank you.

Thank you.

If you could turn back in your Bible's place to Luke chapter 19. Luke chapter 19.

We've been going through Luke now for quite a lot of months and we've come to Luke 19 this morning. So let's pray as we go back there.

[32 : 33] Heavenly Father we thank you for your word and we pray that you would give us understanding now. As we look at this encounter we pray that we too would encounter Jesus.

That you would give us all that we need to be able to understand, to see, to hear and to respond to the call of Jesus. So we pray Lord that you would help us.

We pray for the children as we hear them through the wall. That you would be near to them. That you would help them in their early years to know that Jesus loves them. To remember their creator.

To come to faith in Christ. And we pray for the congregations connected with us as well. And the congregations around us. The different denominations.

Wherever Christ crucified is preached. Lord we pray that you would be working. Building your church. And we pray all these things in Jesus name. Amen. One of the things in this world that is unavoidable is travel.

[33 : 40] We have to travel to get to places. When we go and visit friends. When we go on holiday. When you go on a youth weekend. When you're even coming to church.

We've travelled various distances. Some for 15-20 minutes. Some just across the road. But when we need to be in a place. We don't just click our fingers.

We have to travel. And as Luke 19 begins. We're just going to step through the verses this morning. We see that Jesus.

He's travelling. Luke reminds us that Jesus is on a journey. He's travelling. It says in verse 1. Jesus entered Jericho. And was passing through. So there's that sense of movement.

Now when we think about travel time. We tend to think about travel time as wasted time. I hope to be in the ferry tomorrow. And when you're sitting on the ferry.

[34 : 36] You're not thinking this is valuable time. You're often thinking. I wish I could get off this ferry. To actually get on with things. We don't expect much to happen. When we travel.

But as Jesus travels. Amazing things happen. And to find the beginning of this phase of the journey. You have to go back to Luke 9 verse 51.

It tells us there. That Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. That's when the journey began. He sees Jerusalem as the destination. He knows he's going to the cross.

And so he determines at that point. He's going there. But if you glance back over the last 10 chapters. We're not going to do that. You can relax.

We can see. If we were to just skip through the chapters. We see that so much goes on around Jesus. As he travels.

- [35 : 33] People who are beyond medical help. Are healed supernaturally. Hearts that were dead. Souls that were sleeping.
- They wake up. They're brought to life. People who are lost. They're saved.
- As Jesus travels. And last week. As we were looking at. The previous section. We see. As Jesus approached Jericho.
- That's our verse 35. Of Luke 18. A blind man's eyes are opened. As Jesus is traveling. We see this blind man.
- And he shouts. And he screams. Until Jesus comes to him. When he's brought to Jesus actually. And to cut a longer story short. His eyes are opened.
- [36 : 35] And his heart is opened. He's saved. Jesus says to him. Your faith has saved you. And all this is happening on the journey. And this week.
- We see that as Jesus enters Jericho. And as he's passing through Jericho. He meets. And he spends time with.
- And he saves. And he saves. One of the most unlikely characters. In that place. Probably public enemy number one. Probably the most hated man. In the.
- The town of Jericho. Was saved. As Jesus is traveling. And all this is happening on the journey. And it makes us think.
- If all this is happening on the journey. As Jesus. Heads to the point of his destination. What's going to happen. When he gets to his destination. If all these people. Are being saved.
- [37 : 29] As Jesus is on the move. How many people will be saved. When Jesus gets to Jerusalem. And you know. The surprising answer to that question.
- Is. As far as I can see. Only one. One. One. A dying thief.
- Hanging on a cross. Is saved in Jerusalem. No one else. So actually.
- This is the last conversion. This is the last testimony. This is the last question. Who becomes a Christian. That we read of. Before. Jesus goes.
- To the cross. And look. Now he's going to zoom in. On this man. Zacchaeus. Whom Jesus seeks. And he saves. Before the camera.
- [38 : 28] Zooms in on Zacchaeus. I think we should just take a moment. And look around. In our mind's eye.
- At all these people. Who crowded around Jesus. And never trusted him. There are hundreds of people.
- On the road here. Crowding around Jesus. And soon they're going to be cheering. And waving branches. And they never trust him.
- And we might shake our heads. As we look from a distance. And say. You know. How could. How could these people. Be so close to Jesus. And miss out on this chance. To be.
- To be saved. But the reality is. That likely. There are some here. Who week by week. Form part of a crowd. Some here.
- [39 : 32] Some in other churches. And you. You form part of the crowd. That gathers around Jesus.
- There'll be some here. And you. You sing the songs. You watch from a distance. You hear the voice of Jesus.
- But so far. You haven't trusted him. You know. The serious fact is.
- That for this crowd. This was their last chance. To trust Jesus. They didn't know that. But this was their last chance.

And as far as we know. Only one person. Took the chance. Salvation. We're told.

[40 : 37] Comes. To only one house. That's. The house of Zacchaeus. So we're going to look at. His testimony. In the next.

15 or 20 minutes. And we're going to look at. This story of how. How Zacchaeus. Becomes a Christian. There's three points. Point number one. The seeking of Zacchaeus. Point number two.

The seeking of Zacchaeus. And point number three. The salvation. Of Zacchaeus. So. First of all. We look at. The seeking of Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus is a man. And he is.

He's seeking Jesus. Verse two. A man was there. In this crowd. By the name of Zacchaeus. And.

Ask the children. I could go around. And ask a few questions. Just now. I won't do that. Because. You're not going to respond. But. What do we know about Zacchaeus? Well. We don't actually know a whole lot.

[41 : 33] He's in all the Sunday school stories. But. We don't actually know a whole lot. About Zacchaeus. It's only Luke that tells us about him. Matthew. Mark. And John. They don't mention him. So.

What does Luke tell us about Zacchaeus? Well. He tells us his name. It's a Jewish name. And Jesus points out to us in verse nine. That by bloodline.

Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham. And the name Zacchaeus. Meant righteous. Zacchaeus. That's what his name meant.

But Zacchaeus was. Was not living a life that. Matched his name. You know. Sometimes people have nicknames. And they're. They're the opposite of.

Who they are. And remember. My dad had a friend called Jim Fat. He was the thinnest man you'll ever meet. He probably had another friend called John Slim. And he might have been the size of a house. You know.

[42 : 31] You get nicknames that are actually the opposite. Of what the. Depression is. And. And Zacchaeus. His name meant righteous. But the problem was that Zacchaeus. He was a crook. And everyone knew it.

He wasn't righteous. And the sin that he was struggling with. Or. He wasn't even struggling with it. He was just embracing it. It was greed. So he wasn't righteous.

And that's where we can make our first connection with. With Zacchaeus. We like him. Are not righteous. Romans 3.

And verse 10. Says there is no one righteous. Not even one. You might live a life that's better than. You know. The guy across the road.

Or the woman around the corner. Or. The people read about in the newspapers. But. God's standard. For what is right. And good is perfection.

[43 : 35] Sinlessness. Sinness. That's why Jesus. When the rich young ruler. Came to him. And said. Good teacher. Jesus. Says to him. No one is good. But God alone.

There's none righteous. So. By God's assessment. We like Zacchaeus. Have a problem. We are unrighteous. And the thing with Zacchaeus.

Is. Everyone knew. About his unrighteousness. He was. To carry on in verse 2. He was a tax collector. He was the chief tax collector. And he was wealthy. So not only was Zacchaeus.

A tax collector. He was the managing tax collector. And Jericho was a place. That was swimming in money. Jericho had kind of.

Undergone a revival. It had lots of cash. Invested in it. It was like a resort. For the rich and famous. So there was loads of taxes.

[44 : 32] To collect. In Jericho. And the tax collectors. In that place. At that time. They were renowned. For collecting. Much more money. Than they were supposed to collect. So Rome said.

I need 10 pounds. The tax collector said. Give me 15. 10 to Rome. 5 in my pocket. Multiply that. By a million. Different transactions. And these guys. Were swimming in money.

They were filthy rich. But their wealth. Was gained by. Extortion. By. Corruption. So Zacchaeus.

Would have a big mansion. He'd have a Lamborghini. He'd have all the. Top devices. He would have everything. That money could buy.

But everyone knew. Zacchaeus was rich. Because he was unrighteous. It's dishonest. He was a cheat. So Zacchaeus was probably.

[45 : 32] The most notorious. Sinner in that place. Everyone hated him. But the word was going round. That this Jesus.

He seems to have time. For the most notorious sinners. No one had time for Zacchaeus. But he's heard. That Jesus seems to have time. For tax collectors even.

He's heard that his. Colleague Matthew. Or Levi. The tax collector. He'd stop tax collecting. He's now following Jesus. Jesus. And so it seems that this.

Zacchaeus was. Was curious. About Jesus. Zacchaeus is seeking Jesus. Which wasn't very easy.

Because Zacchaeus was. Not tall. And he was not popular. So it was going to be hard. To get over the crowd. He wanted to see.

[46 : 34] Verse 3. Who Jesus was. But being a short man. He could not. Because of the crowd. And we can imagine the crowds. All gathered around Zacchaeus.

He's one guy. In this throng of people. And he's wanting to see Jesus. And we can imagine the crowds. When they realize Zacchaeus is beside them. They're not going to give this guy an inch. He wants to see Jesus.

Tough. He's smaller than me. Tough. They were not going to help him one bit. To see Jesus.

But Zacchaeus. Was determined. So verse 4. He ran ahead. And climbed the second war fig tree. To see him. Since Jesus was not.

Jesus was coming. That way. So we see the seeking of Zacchaeus. He's seeking Jesus.

[47 : 37] There's lots of reasons why. He could maybe have just said to himself. Oh why bother? When we can imagine. The devil saying to him.

You shouldn't bother seeking Jesus. You know. Everyone hates you. Everyone knows how bad you are. You're a lost cause. Give up.

And for a small man. In a big crowd. You'd think he would just say.

Oh this is not worth it. I'm off home. And with all the people around him. And his reputation. It would be at the very least awkward.

And at the most. It would be dangerous. For Zacchaeus. To be in that crowd. Because. He could get. A punch or two. In the head. There's lots of reasons.

[48 : 34] For Zacchaeus. Just to say. Oh give up. But Zacchaeus. Is determined. To seek. Jesus. So he kind of makes a.

A fool of himself. He runs ahead. Chief tax collector. Think of it. Man in the suit. Shiny shoes. Designer gear.

He's running along the street. Sees a tree. All the kids. Maybe up in the tree. Up he goes the tree. To climb in the tree. To see if he can get.

A good view of Jesus. And he does all this. Because he's seeking Jesus. We see the seeking. Of Zacchaeus. And the question. I want to ask today. Is. Are you seeking Jesus?

What are you doing? To seek Jesus? Malcolm McLean. The minister. Says.

[49 : 36] If we want to understand. Who Jesus is. We have to take some steps. And do something about it. If Zacchaeus. Had stayed at home. He would not have met Jesus.

If we want to meet with Jesus. Then we have to. Do things. To get close to him. We can read a book about him. Go to a service. Or to a bible study. And hear about him.

The point is. We have to be like Zacchaeus. And do something relevant. And connected. To where. Jesus. Can. Be found. So Zacchaeus.

Is seeking Jesus. And you know. What we often see. Is it's. It's the people that we wouldn't expect.

It's the people who have the hardest time. Coming to Jesus. Who actually meet him. And are saved. Both Zacchaeus.

[50 : 33] And the blind man. They have to fight against the crowd. They have to overcome. Various obstacles. To get to Jesus. But they do it. And yet.

The rich young ruler. The one who has the respect of the crowds. The one. We would expect to follow Jesus. The one. Who has no one pushing him away.

He walks away from Jesus. And that's so often the way. That's the way in this room just now.

There are some people here. And it was difficult for you to come to Jesus. It was costly. There were friendships you lost.

There were battles with family. And yet you came to him. You were saved. And there's others who are sitting here this morning.

[51 : 35] And if you came to Jesus. Your family would be delighted. And they would be helped. Your friends would be supportive. The congregation would rejoice.

There's no obstacles. But you keep walking away. Zacchaeus teaches us not to walk away.

Even if it's difficult. Even if you have the worst reputation in the place. Even if you're going to have the harshest critics looking in your direction.

Zacchaeus teaches us to seek the Lord. While he may be found. So we see the seeking of Zacchaeus. He's seeking Jesus. And the second point we see is the seeking of Zacchaeus.

And in this case it's Jesus actually that's seeking Zacchaeus. So that's what the emphasis changes. Remember in school. You would look in on these games.

[52 : 43] I don't know if they still play them in school today. But remember the tag and tag games. You know there's the runners. And there's the catchers. And there's the chasers. So somebody's it. And they're trying to catch other people. And all the kids are charging around trying not to be caught.

And they know what's going on. But when you look in on this game. You can't figure out who's running. And who's catching. And who's trying to escape. But it's difficult to see who's chasing who. And there's something of that here.

The question that we have as we look at this passage. Is who's seeking who. Now clearly we've looked at Zacchaeus. And he is seeking Jesus.

Determinedly he's seeking Jesus. But actually as we read on. What we see is that. Jesus is seeking Zacchaeus. Verse 5.

When Jesus reached the spot. He looked up. And said to Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.

[53 : 49] And even the word there. The spot. I was speaking with someone last night. And they mentioned the tree. That Zacchaeus climbed up.

And made the observation. That God put that tree there. Before the beginning of the world. That was Zacchaeus' tree. That was the spot.

That before the beginning of time. God had determined. That would be Zacchaeus' appointment spot. To meet with Jesus. So when Jesus reached the spot. He looked up.

And said to Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus come down immediately. I must stay at your house today. And can you imagine the shock. On the face of Zacchaeus. He's trying to remain.

Hidden in this tree. Perched up there. Looking ridiculous. With probably all these. Teenagers who are trying to get the best view. And all of a sudden. Jesus looks up.

[54 : 46] And he says. Zacchaeus. And the crowds say. Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus is up in the tree. Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus.

Down. Come down. Jesus calls him out. He calls him by name.

He wants to remain hidden. In that moment. But Jesus calls him by name. And. Maybe there's some here today.

And you're. You're doing Zacchaeus. You know. You're here. But you're kind of hoping that. People won't see you here.

And perhaps. More likely still. There's people who are not here. But they're on the end of that camera. Looking in from a distance. And you're really hoping. People don't know. That you're. Watching and listening. Into the words of.

[55 : 44] Of Jesus. Through scripture. There's some people. And tomorrow. When you ask the question. Tell me about your weekend. You'll tell them about the football. And you'll tell them about what you watched on TV. You may tell them.

Where you went. But you'll. You'll probably not tell them about church. You're like Zacchaeus.

Hiding up. In the tree. Hopefully no one saw me. I can. I can just sort of. Sit here. And watch from a distance. And. And hopefully no one will see.

And yet. The experience that so many have. Is when. They're trying to remain hidden. Jesus keeps calling their name.

You know the experience when. You know you're. You're reading. The Bible. Or you're sitting in a sermon. And you don't even know the guy who's preaching. But it's as if.

[56 : 45] Every time. The word is opened. It's for you. Jesus is. Is calling you by name. As he called Zacchaeus by name.

And he's. He's saying to you. I want to come into your life. I don't want you to stay up in the tree. I want to come into your home. So what did Zacchaeus do.

When Jesus called him by. By name. Well. It says in verse six. He came down at once. And welcomed him gladly. Zacchaeus didn't run away.

He didn't pretend. He didn't pretend not to hear. He didn't climb up another couple of branches. To see if he could. Escape. He doesn't say to Jesus.

I'm sorry. But. This is a bit embarrassing. And this is certainly not a convenient time. He doesn't even seem to be embarrassed at all. He came down at once. And he welcomed him gladly.

[57 : 46] And yet it's an awkward encounter. When you think about it. And I remember as a.

As a child. Being told. You never invite yourself to someone's house. I remember asking. Can I go and play at such and such's house? Have you been asked?

Well no. Well you don't just go. If you're not asked. You don't invite yourself to someone's house. You wait to be asked. That's manners. And that's the way it was in Jesus' day as well.

In fact it was even more so that way. It was not polite to invite yourself to someone's house. And yet Zacchaeus is told by Jesus. I must stay at your house.

How can Jesus say this? What is Jesus saying?

[58 : 44] What's the point he's making as he's so direct to Zacchaeus? Well I think he's saying two things. One is. That he has the authority. To come into the house of Zacchaeus.

Because after all. Jesus is the one who created everything. He's Lord. So he can say. I'm coming to your house. And the other point I think that Jesus is making.

As he says this. A very direct thing. Is Zacchaeus. Salvation is important. It's more important than your dinner etiquette. It's more important than the social trends.

Of that day or this day. And so Jesus is communicating something of the urgency of receiving him. Jesus is telling the crowds as well. As he highlights Zacchaeus. That even people like Zacchaeus.

Even the most hated man in that town. Is welcome. To come to Christ. So yes.

[59 : 49] We can say point one. Zacchaeus is seeking Jesus. But the reason. That Zacchaeus was seeking Jesus. Was because Jesus.

Was seeking Zacchaeus. That's always the way. You don't just decide to follow Jesus. He calls you.

I heard a story this week about David Suchet. For the older ones. He was the actor. Who played Poirot. I think it was. Russell's nodding his head.

So yes. It was. And he was. One night. In a hotel room. I think it was in Boston. And he was doing a job. An acting job over there.

And he was just going through a normal evening. And all of a sudden. Sitting in this room. He just had a real compulsion. He wanted to read a Bible.

[60 : 52] He didn't have a Bible. So he starts rifling through the drawers. Of this hotel room. To see if. It's maybe one of these hotels. That has a Bible in one of the drawers. And it didn't have a Bible.

He searched up and down. No Bible. So off he goes. Into. Downtown Boston. Looking for a shop. That might sell him a Bible. And he's trying to figure out.

In his head. What's going on? Why am I doing this? So what was going on? Suchet was wanting to read a Bible.

So he could see something of Jesus. He was seeking Jesus. But the only reason he was seeking Jesus. Was because. In that moment. Jesus was seeking him. And that's the way it is in our lives.

You know. Why is it. That a spiritual book. Can sit on your shelf. Gathering dust for decades. And then all of a sudden. One day you want to read it.

[61 : 59] Why is it that you can. Leave a Bible. On the bookcase. For years. And all of a sudden. You're drawn to it. Because Jesus is seeking you.

Why is it that you can. Sit in church for years. And sleep through the sermons. And plan your week. And eat 15 pan drops. And count how many lights.

And rafters are in the roof. And then all of a sudden. One week. You start to hear it. Then as you hear it. You start to realize.

This seems to be. Connecting with my life. This seems to be. A word for. For me. What's going on. When that's your experience. Well Jesus is seeking.

He's calling you. He's saying to you. What he said to Zacchaeus.

[62 : 55] I must stay. In your house today. You and I need to speak about salvation. And so Zacchaeus.

He hears Jesus. He responds to Jesus. He comes to Jesus. And Jesus comes to the home.

Of Zacchaeus. And that takes us to our final point. Just briefly. We see the salvation. Of Zacchaeus. There's the seeking. Of Zacchaeus. He's seeking Jesus. There's the seeking.

Of Zacchaeus. Actually Jesus is seeking him. And there's the salvation. Of Zacchaeus. Be interesting to get your answers.

On the question. When is Zacchaeus saved? At what point is he converted? And we're not told specifically.

[63 : 53] But. I think. And people who are cleverer than me. Think. That. The moment. The moment Zacchaeus is saved. Is the moment. He comes down from the tree. Responds to Jesus.

J.C. Ryle. Says. He came down at once. And welcomed Jesus gladly. It is precisely at this point. That the conversion of Zacchaeus.

Seems to have taken place. Nothing. Is so frequently found. To turn the hearts. Of great sinners. As the unexpected. And undeserved news. That Christ loves them.

And cares for their souls. These tidings. This news. Has often broken. And melted. Hearts. Of stone. Do I think it's the moment.

That Zacchaeus. Hears the voice. Of Jesus. And comes down from the tree. That he's saved. He could have heard the voice.

[64 : 57] Stayed up in the tree. And Jesus is gone. His chance is gone. That he hears the voice. Of Jesus.

He responds. He comes to Jesus. And then he's saved. And what happens next. Is the evidence. Of the fact.

That he's saved. It's not the means. Through which he's saved. All verse 7. The people saw this. They see. Zacchaeus. Coming down from the tree. They see Zacchaeus. Wandering off with Jesus.

And they began to mutter. Jesus. Has gone to be the guest. Of a sinner. They're not having a party. Because Zacchaeus is saved. In fact. They're.

Uh. Furious. That Zacchaeus. Seems to be wandering off. With. With Jesus. Uh. They're speaking against Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus.

[65 : 53] Uh. In the moment. He responds to Jesus. He. He's getting a hard time. People are talking about him. Now. Actually says.

Not just some of the people. But all of the people. Are. Are. Muttering. Against. Zacchaeus. And. If you come to Jesus.

I don't know. Quite a few of you here today. Maybe some of you are. Hearing the call. You're thinking about coming to Jesus. You need to be aware.

If you come. To Jesus. And if you walk. With Jesus. Uh. You have to expect. A bit of this. People will mutter. People will point.

People will look. Critically at you. It's one of the costs. Of being a Christian. But. Notice that the muttering cry.

[66 : 53] Didn't put off Zacchaeus. He hasn't just had an emotional experience. And. You know. Those who have an emotional experience. The first time somebody speaks against them. They're done with it all.

Never see them again. But Zacchaeus. He's not put off. By the. The muttering crowds. Which is evidence of the fact.

That there's. There's substance to this. In fact. The muttering crowds. Seem to provoke Zacchaeus. To come. Out even more clearly for Jesus. Uh. So it says in verse.

Eight. Uh. Zacchaeus stood up. That's significant. He stands up for Jesus. One of the commentators says.

Zacchaeus was making his stand. For Jesus. And the new way of life. Maybe somebody here. Has been called to do that. Stand up. Stand up. Zacchaeus stood up.

[67 : 54] And said to the Lord. Verse eight. Look Lord. Here and now. I give half of my possessions. To the poor. And if I have cheated anybody. Out of anything. The Greek actually is. Since. I have cheated. Uh. People out of. Uh. Things. I will pay back. Four times. The amount. Which is more than the law required. The law required.

That you. You pay back. The original amount. Plus one fifth. And you can. I can point you to. Old Testament texts. For that. But Zacchaeus. He knows the law. But he. He commits openly. And cheerfully.

Uh. To give much more than that. And he's not saying this. Because he wants to strike a deal. With Jesus. He's not saying this. To try and. Uh. Cut a deal with Jesus. To be saved. He already is saved.

The good works. Are just an evidence. Of the fact. That he's saved. And then. As the people. Who are muttering. Against Zacchaeus. In the crowd. Start to get.

[68 : 53] Tax rebates. From Zacchaeus. They'll maybe remember. The words of Jesus. When Jesus said to him.

Lightly. In the. Hearing of the crowd. Today. Salvation. Verse nine. Has come to this house. Because this man. Is a son. Of Abraham.

Of Abraham. For the son. Of man. Came to seek. And to save. What. Was lost. So that's the conversion story.

Finished. Of Zacchaeus. That's his testimony. He's saved. He's saved. He's saved. By grace.

In the instant. Freely. He receives the grace. Of Jesus. He's saved. Sin's gone.

[69 : 54] He's given. He's given. He's given. He's given. He's given. A new life. Zacchaeus. Doesn't pay for it. But Jesus must.

So as this scene closes. We see Jesus. Traveling on. He's still moving. He's heading to Jerusalem.

Him. He's going to a cross. To pay for Zacchaeus' sin. And your sin.

And mine. If we're trusting him. He's going to the cross. Because of his love.

For Zacchaeus. And his determination. To seek. And to save. Lost souls. Like Zacchaeus. Are you hearing the voice.

[70 : 57] Of Jesus today? If you're hearing his voice. Don't harden your heart. Don't stain the tree.

Come down. Open your house. Open your heart. Don't miss your chance. Trust him. Be saved.

Let's. Let's pray. Lord we thank you for this testimony. For this story. Of the salvation that Zacchaeus.

Received. And we. Thank you that. We see that. Just as Zacchaeus. Is able to be saved. Although his sins. Were so many. We thank you that we are able to be saved.

If we. Will simply hear the voice of Jesus. And respond. Help us we pray. To hear. The voice. We recognize that we.

[72 : 01] Do not seek you. Lord Jesus. Until you first seek us. And so we pray that. You would be seeking many here. Waking up hearts.

That are sleeping. Touching. Touching. Souls. Which are. Dead. And calling them. Calling. Us to life.

At work. Lord we pray. For your glory. For our. Salvation. And thank you for the cross. Thank you Lord Jesus.

That you. Persevered. On this journey. And you. You reached Jerusalem. And you laid down your life. To make it possible.

For this grace. To be received by us. Help us to receive it. In Jesus name. Amen. We sing to finish your grace.

[73 : 00] That leads this sinner. Home. From death. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

And now I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore.

Amen.