

Encounter

Key Verse: Luke 19:1-10

Key Thought: Jesus is waiting for you to invite Him into your life.

There are people who seem to possess everything this world holds in value and esteem. These people are looked upon by others as being successful. Perhaps you have even been jealous of someone who you thought had more than you did. Zacchaeus is one of those people who had it all. He was a rich man, and he was a man of position and power, I am sure there were many in Jericho and the surrounding area who would have gladly traded places with Zacchaeus. Yet, there was more to Zacchaeus than met the eye. Sure, he was successful by the world's standards, but you should never judge a book by its cover. It was what Zacchaeus lacked that made the difference in his life. But, when this little man met a great big God, he got his need met completely. Zacchaeus has a heavenly encounter that changes his life forever.

There may be some here today who seem to have it all together. You seem happy and successful, but you know deep down inside that something is missing. I want you to know that Jesus has exactly what you need. If you come to Him, as He passes by, He will take care of that thing that you lack. Join me this morning as we watch a little man have a big encounter.

I. THE SEEKING SINNER ENCOUNTER

a) His Prominence

- 1. A Man of Position** - Zacchaeus was a tax collector. This means that he worked for Rome. He was permitted to take taxes from those in Jericho at a rate of his own choosing. For instance, if Rome charged a 5% tax rate, Zacchaeus might charge 10% or more. This means that he was a man of considerable wealth.
- 2. A Man of Power** - By virtue of his position and of his contract with Rome, Zacchaeus was a man of power in Jericho. People probably walked in fear of this little man.

There are some who fit this description. Oh, they don't have this world's power or this world's wealth, but they do feel that they have a measure of freedom and control in their own life. And they are right! But the lost person needs to remember that without Jesus Christ, they are nothing.

“It matters not what we have or think of ourselves, we all need Jesus to be sure we have something when this life has ended!”

John 15:5

- b) **His Preoccupation** Even though this man was wealthy and successful by the world's standard, he knew something was missing! Most folks do! They try to drown it in alcohol, lose it in a fog of drugs, bury it in the shallow grave of tough talk, but when it gets quiet and no one is around but you and God, the truth sounds so loud in your soul that you know you need something that you do not have. Those who really care about their souls do something about it and come to Jesus, the rest tend to try and keep it buried deep within. Thank God, Zacchaeus had reached a place where something had to give, and it was him!
- c) **His Desire** - The Bible says that he sought to see Jesus. This man had a desire to see the Lord. You may go through many years in your life and never want anything to do with the Lord, but at some point, your soul will have the realization that Jesus is the only hope you have, and then you'll want to get to Him also. I remember the day when nothing could satisfy my soul but Jesus! I had to get to Him and what a difference He made!
- d) **His Desperate Need** - Zacchaeus may not have fully understood all that was happening in his heart and life, but this man had a desperate need to get to Jesus. He may have disguised his actions as pure curiosity, but deep down this man had a deep-seated need to come to Jesus Christ. You may not fully understand it, you may not even realize it right now, but your greatest need is to get to

Jesus Christ for salvation. No one or nothing else can save your soul. How desperate is the need? Extremely! Jesus is the only One who can save your soul and make a difference in where you spend eternity!

e) **His Problem** - Before this little man could get to Jesus, he had to overcome two great obstacles.

1. **The Crowd** - The Bible tells us that Zacchaeus was a little short man, and he could not see over the crowd. They were between him and where Jesus was to pass by. The crowd still keeps people from seeing Jesus! There are those who allow their friends to keep them from seeing Jesus!

Jesus is more valuable than any friend you will ever have in this world! If you need Jesus, please so not let the crowd stand in your way!

2. **His Condition** - Zacchaeus had a personal problem that kept him from getting close to the Lord. This man was short and could not see through the crowd. Similarly, every lost person here needs to realize that there is more than a few people who are keeping you away from the Lord. There is also the matter of your personal condition. You see, your sins are standing between you and the Lord. Before you will ever be able to be right with God, then your sin problem must be dealt with.

f) **His Persistence** - Zacchaeus climbed a tree to get a glimpse of the Lord as he passed by that day. This little man allowed nothing, not the crowd, not his condition, stand between him and his seeing the Lord Jesus Christ. What about you? Do you care enough about the condition of your soul to pay whatever price is necessary to be right with Him? Are you willing to make any sacrifice? Are you willing to turn from that little pet sin? Lay down that pride? Walk away from those friends?

I tell you from experience that Jesus Christ is worth any price, He is worth any sacrifice, He is worth whatever has to be done to be made right with Him!

II. **THE SEEKING SAVIOUR ENCOUNTER**

There was more than one person seeking something that day. Just as Zacchaeus was seeking to see Jesus, Jesus was seeking souls to save. That is always a combination that is sure to prove effective.

- a) **Jesus Came to Him** - Matt. 20:28 This is how it always comes about. Jesus comes to the dead sinner and offers life through Himself. There is no other way to be saved! According to the Bible, we are all dead in sin until Jesus saves us.

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”

Ephesians 2:4-5

If He didn't show us our need, we would never be able to recognize it ourselves. In other words, we would never be able, nor would we have a desire to come to Jesus, unless He came to us first!

- b) **Jesus Considered Him** - When Jesus stopped under the tree that day, He knew everything about Zacchaeus, yet He still loved him and had compassion on him. What a picture of grace! Jesus knows everything about you, but He still loves you and would save you by His grace, if you would only come to Him and receive Him.
- c) **Jesus Called Him** - Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem where He was going to die for the sin of the world, but He still took the time to stop and reach out to this one little, wicked man. What grace! Who was Zacchaeus that Jesus should care for him? He was a sinner, yet the Lord loved him just like He loves you and me!

1. **It Was an Urgent Call** - Still urgent today! The Lord may come, death may come. Salvation is nothing to be played around with. You need to be sure that you have been washed in the blood of the Lamb! Are you saved?
2. **It Was an Unmistakable Call** - I am sure Zacchaeus knew that the Lord was looking for something more than just a place to visit for the day. Jesus was and is interested in one thing - He is after your heart. He wants to save you by His grace and His power!

III. **THE SPECTACULAR SALVATION ENCOUNTER**

Did Zacchaeus get saved? Yes! How do we know? Notice what happened to him:

- a) **Zacchaeus Received The Saviour** - His salvation is revealed in three very significant things that he did.
 1. **Obedience** - He obeyed the Lord's call. This must be done before salvation can come into anyone's life.
 2. **Open Heart** - Zacchaeus freely gave himself to Jesus. This must be done before salvation will ever become a reality. Jesus stands at our heart's door and knocks, but we will never be saved until we open the door and allow Him to come into our life.
 3. **Obvious Joy** - Zacchaeus was overjoyed at the opportunity to be with Jesus. Joy is always a byproduct of genuine salvation. He will give you a joy that cannot be described or duplicated by anything else in this world. His is an everlasting joy. When your joy is placed in and based on things, your joy will pass away, because those things will also pass away. However, when Jesus is the source of your joy, it will abide forever, because He will too.
- b) **Zacchaeus Repented of His Sins** - These are 2 absolute proofs of salvation, both in Zacchaeus' life and in yours as well.

1. There Was Confession –

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

1 John 1:9

Until you come to the place where you are willing to call out to God and confess your sins, you will never be saved.

2. There Was a Change –

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

When Jesus comes into your life, He always brings about change. If your life doesn't change, then you haven't met Jesus!

c) Zacchaeus Was Redeemed with a Great Salvation

- 1. The Mercy of Christ** - Jesus took this little wicked man and in one instant saved him forever! That is what Jesus does for all those who come to Him by faith! Eternal salvation becomes yours and mine through Him.
- 2. The Mission of Christ** - In this verse, Jesus reminds us that He was here then to save sinners and that this is still His mission yet today. Jesus is still saving souls today!

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

John 3:17

In closing today, I feel that some of you are like Zacchaeus, and you need to meet the Master, because you long for a true encounter. If you come to Him this morning, He will save you regardless of who you are, where you have been or what you have done. I beg you, let nothing stand between you and Jesus Christ this morning. If you need Him, for any reason, don't delay . . . won't you come right now?

Place: FCA

Date: Sunday, July 16, 2023

Time: 10:30am

After Service: Oh Come to The Altar