

Welcome to my home

Luke 19.1-10

Jesus meets Zacchaeus who, as a tax collector, is regarded as an outcast. Zacchaeus is eager to see Jesus, so he climbs a tree to get a better view. Jesus calls Zacchaeus down in front of the crowd who are not impressed, but Zacchaeus makes changes to his life that day and gives back all he has wrongly taken from people and more.

Now read **Luke 19.1-10** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Zacchaeus is man whose job – and the way he went about it – made him despised by his community. However, after meeting Jesus he changes his life radically and seeks to make amends for the wrong he had done to other people. The story challenges us too – does our life show our commitment to God? Or, to put it the other way round, are there parts of our life that need to change?



Collect together some coins, a large leaf, a cup, a stone or wooden block (or drawings of these things). Use these props to tell the story of Zacchaeus – e.g. use the coins for Zacchaeus, the leaf for the tree, the cup for Jesus asking to come to tea, the block for the house. Which bit of the story do you like best? Is there a part of the story that puzzles you? What does the story tell us about Jesus? And about ourselves?

Write

Imagine Jesus and Zacchaeus meet one year on from their first encounter. Write a script or a cartoon story board of a meeting between Jesus, Zacchaeus and one of Zacchaeus's neighbours, focusing on how Zacchaeus has changed as a result of his meeting with Jesus. In a group, discuss how you think you have each changed because you are a follower of Jesus.



What does 'welcome to my home' look like for you?

Tea PARTY

Set up a tea party with drinks, cakes or scones, etc. Invite some family and friends. While you eat and drink, get people to talk about how you might help or support marginalised people in your community. Is there a local charity you could support? Could you collect some money together right now to make a donation?

WELCOME

What behaviour and values would you want Jesus to see if he came to your house? Get a large sheet of paper or a chalk board and write down ideas that your family/household agree on. Then display this somewhere where you will all see it, as a reminder to try to live out those values during the week.



Play a game of hide and seek. What does it feel like to be seeking? And what is it like to be found? Think about how Jesus might have felt seeing Zacchaeus up the tree. Think about Zacchaeus up the tree – wanting to see Jesus, but maybe not wanting others to notice him.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Jesus was on his way through the city of Jericho, where there lived a man called Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector and he was very rich. Zacchaeus desperately wanted to see Jesus, so he joined the crowds that were waiting at the roadside. But Zacchaeus was quite short, so he couldn't see over people's heads! He looked around wondering what to do and, as he looked, he spotted a sycamore tree. Zacchaeus ran to the tree and climbed up. Now he could see everything.

A little while later Jesus walked past. As he came towards the tree, he looked up and saw Zacchaeus sitting there.



'Zacchaeus,' he shouted. 'Quick. Climb down! Today I am going to be a guest in your house.' Zacchaeus was shocked but very pleased. Quickly he climbed down the tree and welcomed Jesus to his house.

Some people in the crowd were not very happy about this, though. They began to grumble, 'Jesus is a guest at the house of a tax collector, a sinner! A man who has taken more money from us than he should have!'

Zacchaeus turned to Jesus and said, "I will take half of everything I own and give it to the poor. And anyone I have wrongly taken money from, I will pay back. In fact, I will pay back four times what I owe them."

Jesus looked at Zacchaeus and said, 'Today salvation has come to this house.' Then he turned to the crowd and said, 'Because this man too is a Son of Abraham. The Son of Man came to find and save those who are lost.'

Luke 19.1-10

Did you know?

- In those days, tax collectors often cheated people. No one liked them.
- Jesus said that Zacchaeus was one of God's children just like everyone else – being accepted by God doesn't depend on what we do.

Luke 19.1-10 (NRSV)

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and

was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'