

Jesus Saves Zacchaeus

Watch: <https://youtu.be/5BjtbJFz2ug>

Read: Luke 19:1-10

Ask:

What did Jesus do in this story? (he noticed Zacchaeus in the tree and invited himself over to Zacchaeus' house; Jesus told Zacchaeus that he was saved.)

How did the people react to what Jesus did? (the crowds of people were not very happy that Jesus had gone to the house of Zacchaeus; they were probably happy later, when they learned that Zacchaeus was going to return 4 times the amount of money of anyone that he had cheated!)

What is something that you can learn from this story? (Jesus wanted to help anyone, even a guy like Zacchaeus that everyone disliked; it doesn't matter what bad things you might have done, what Jesus cares about is that you turn away from those bad things and follow in his way!)

Lesson:

Zacchaeus was a rich guy because he cheated people. But when Jesus came to his town he was so interested to catch a glimpse of Jesus that he decided to climb up a tree so that he could see over everyone's head (because he was too short). Jesus could have ignored Zacchaeus. Jesus usually was helping the poor people, because they needed the most help and were willing to put their trust in Jesus. But this time Jesus noticed this rich man Zacchaeus trying to watch him, and he knew that Zacchaeus was willing to put his trust in Jesus. So Jesus went over to Zacchaeus' house to hang out with him. And Zacchaeus told Jesus that he would give up his riches that he had gained by cheating people. That showed Jesus that Zacchaeus was a changed man. Zacchaeus had decided to follow Jesus' way of loving those around him.

The crowds of people had been angry with Jesus because he went to spend time at Zacchaeus' house. How do you think the people felt about Jesus' visit after Zacchaeus started giving them back the money that he had cheated them out of?

Supplies (not included)

- 3 bowls
- water
- a small mirror (pocket mirror)
- flashlight

The crowds of people probably learned that Jesus knew best. Even though it seemed like Jesus was making friends with the bad guy Zacchaeus, Jesus actually changed Zacchaeus to follow after Jesus' example and be good. Zacchaeus ended up showing that Jesus can quickly change someone's life around to reflect God's goodness to everyone!

Activity:

(Supplies you need: 3 bowls, some water, a small mirror [like a pocket mirror], flashlight)

The room needs to be slightly darkened – close the blinds so that it is not too bright.

Fill bowl #1 and #3 about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way full with water. Place bowl #2 between the others on a table. Put the small mirror in the empty bowl #2, try to rest it at about a 30 degree angle in the bowl.

Shine the flashlight into each of the bowls starting with #1 – a reflection will show on the ceiling. In bowl #1 you might see some rippling light on the ceiling. In bowl #2 you should see a bright reflection on the ceiling. Both of these are not all that exciting. (take the mirror from #2 and place it in #3) Shine the flashlight through the water and onto the submerged mirror. Now the reflection is a rainbow. Explain that we can think of the flashlight as the good news about Jesus. Explain that bowl #1 and #2 represent people who reflect the good news about Jesus to those around them, but don't do it very well. But bowl #3 is an example of someone who shows the good news of Jesus to people around them, and they do so in a way that shows that the message of Jesus is for everyone, and is something different and exciting!

Which bowl do you think best represents what happened with Zacchaeus after he believed in Jesus?

You can also show your friends the good news of Jesus, like that third bowl, when you know Jesus and follow in his ways!