

# Jesus Treed Himself A Tax Collector

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good morning. Today we're in Luke chapter 19. We are coming to the end of a section that had several interesting stories.

Today, we're going to be looking at Zacchaeus. Luke is the only one who tells us the story of Zacchaeus, and it's another interesting, fun story.

But we're going to do something a little bit different with this since we're coming to the end of this section. We're going to actually be taking these stories and looking at some deeper theological implications that these stories unearth for us.

So you might not necessarily think of Zacchaeus or Bartimaeus as something that contained deep theological truth, but we're going to find it nonetheless.

And so we're going to do that today. But we're going to actually start with going to Little Children's Church.

[ 1 : 28 ] Some of you already know where I'm headed with this, right? There's a song, a little chorus associated with the fellow Zacchaeus.

And so you thought you were done singing for the day, but let's go ahead and sing it together, shall we? Zacchaeus was a wee little man, and a wee little man was he.

He climbed up in the sycamore tree for the Lord he wanted to see. And passed that by, he looked up in that tree.

I didn't remember all the words. For I'm going to your house today. For I'm going to your house today.

You'll forgive me, I did not grow up going to Sunday school or children's church. So I forgot some of those lyrics already. What's interesting is that the story itself from Luke chapter 19 doesn't give us really that much more information.

[ 2 : 40 ] We find out he's a tax collector. Our little song doesn't say anything about him being a tax collector. So that's an interesting piece of information. But beyond that, we don't know much about Zacchaeus.

So let's go ahead and dive right in to Luke chapter 19, verse 1. And verse 1, he, speaking of Jesus, entered Jericho and was passing through.

Remember, he just encountered the blind man, Bartimaeus. And so now he was outside the city of Jericho. And now he needed to go to Jericho.

And it wasn't just that Jesus was passing through. He had a particular appointment that he had to keep. He was the only one aware of that appointment. But he needed to go into Jericho.

Now, a few observations about Zacchaeus.

[ 3 : 47 ] Number one, he was a tax collector. And if you have been following along in the Gospel of Luke up until now, you are already aware that when someone is labeled a tax collector, what do people in the community think of them?

This is not a good man. Okay, he is considered basically more or less like a criminal. And actually, we're going to find out Zacchaeus behaved like a criminal in the carrying out of his duties.

Remember Jericho, we mentioned this last week, was a wealthy city. This is the new Jericho that was built about a mile south of where the rubble was when back in the book of Joshua, when the walls came tumbling down.

They built Herod the Great, actually invested quite a bit of money into building the new Jericho. And it was quite the major city by the time we get to the ministry of Christ.

There were three main hubs for tax collection in the territory of Israel. And Jericho was one of those major hubs.

[ 5 : 01 ] And we see that Zacchaeus here, and Luke is the only one who ever references a chief tax collector. So he's a tax collector in charge of other tax collectors.

So he's high up on the food chain. And he's been doing this for a number of years, maybe even a couple of decades. So he is really wealthy.

The word rich here describes not someone who's just potentially wealthy, but someone who is very wealthy. And that describes Zacchaeus. And being a wealthy person in Jericho would have suited him very well because of all the niceties and all the luxuries that would have been available to him in this more or less kind of a tourist city.

We talked about how the wealthy and the nobility of the day would vacation or take respites and retreats in Jericho.

And if this is where Zacchaeus was stationed, he would have lived life in the lap of luxury according to the standards of that day. And so this is Zacchaeus and his life.

[ 6 : 17 ] And he was seeking to see who Jesus was. So he had heard of Jesus. Most people had by that point. The crowds, the multitudes that were with Jesus were incredible.

Thousands of people were pressing in. We know that from other accounts in the other two Gospels as well as in Luke.

That there was to the point where trampling was happening. There's so many people pressed in to get a look at Jesus, to hear Jesus, to see Jesus, either his teaching or his miracles.

And Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus himself. But on account of the crowd, he could not because he was a wee little man.

How embarrassing for Zacchaeus. And I wonder when we get to heaven and we see him just how short Zacchaeus is. I had an uncle who was like five foot tall.

[ 7 : 23 ] So I imagine my uncle, my uncle Guy, G-U-I, he's passed on now. But my uncle Guy was a short man. And so I kind of imagined Zacchaeus being that small in stature.

And you could kind of, you know, picture him, if you will. The crowd is pressing in. And so he's not got a good view of Jesus. And I can picture him kind of jumping up and down, trying to see or get between the heads of people and see.

And he can't and he can't. And so Zacchaeus comes up with a plan. A quite unglamorous plan.

Okay? And you guys already know because you know the song. So he ran ahead and he climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him. For the Lord he wanted to see.

For he was about to pass that way. He could see this massive parade in the direction that it was taking. And so he went on ahead.

[ 8 : 26 ] He climbed up into a tree so that he gets a view, a glimpse, a sight of Jesus. And that's exactly what happens.

And the undignified nature of this. I mean, Zacchaeus would have been a well-dressed man in his day. In these long, colorful, flowing robes.

And here he is climbing up a tree. And there he is. So when Jesus came to the place where Zacchaeus was, he looked up and he said to him, Notice that Jesus wasn't introduced to him.

Jesus didn't ask anybody what his name was. Jesus already knew Zacchaeus in an eternal way. Zacchaeus, hurry down.

For I must. Not I'd like to stay at your house today. But I must. This is not just some little short visit with a few little cheese trays and a drink and we're on our way.

[ 9 : 31 ] This is I'm coming to stay at your house. And it's going to happen today. And there's no chance for you to get back to the house and vacuum and dust and make sure all your clutter is put away and all of that kind of stuff.

There's no preparations that you're going to be able to make here and now. So just understand Zacchaeus. You're going to come down out of that tree and we're going to go straightway to your house.

Now this would have been a nice house. Interesting, interesting circumstances. For I must stay at your house today. Would be interesting to see Zacchaeus, the expression on his face when this happens.

And so he hurried and he came down and he received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they being the rest of the crowd. This would have been basically everybody in the crowd.

I can see even the disciples, even though they've got an ex-tax collector in their midst. This is Zacchaeus. He is a chief tax collector, meaning he is a chief sinner.

[10:41] He's like a sinner in chief. He is the worst of the worst. He's betrayed Israel. He's betrayed his people. He's betrayed his family. He's betrayed his religion for money.

And he has swindled people. He has defrauded people. He's taken advantage of people. And he has risen in the ranks to become the chief tax collector of that region.

But they all grumbled. He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner. It would have been wrong in their culture to go into a tax collector's home.

To even go shake the man's hand or to greet him. Or to have polite conversation with a tax collector.

A tax collector would have been considered ceremonially unclean all the time. 24-7. And so to come into contact with someone who was ceremonially unclean would be, no, you can't do it.

[11:51] You'd make yourself ceremonially unclean. So that you couldn't go into the temple without first properly ceremonially washing and cleaning yourself. So that you could do those things.

And so here's Jesus. This is the next. Not just the next. He is the only. Messiah. Messiah. The one who is to come.

Who is to rescue all of Israel from Rome. He is sent by God. He is holy of holies. He is. And he's going to go spend some time in a tax collector's house.

It just didn't fit their mindset. They couldn't imagine something like that happening. And so they're grumbling. They're upset with this.

Everything's going so good. Jesus, we're so close to Jerusalem. When you get outside of Jericho, you could see it off in the distance.

[12:50] And it's up high on a mountain. And there it is. And we're so close. And it's just about time. And you're going to go spend time in a tax collector's house?

Jesus, you are the leader of the people. You are the spiritual leader of the people. And this is what you choose to do?

Are you sure this is the right thing to do? Of course, you know how Jesus feels about this. Also, if you have been with us through any part of Luke here.

And Zacchaeus stood. This is now a scene inside of the house. Gathered around a table with Jesus. His disciples are there.

Behold, Lord. The half of my goods I give to the poor. It's a lot. This is a man who's very wealthy. This week, we just in United States history had our first, what is it, trillionaire?

[14:06] Do you guys catch that? Elon Musk became our nation's, maybe our world's first ever trillionaire. I don't know that Zacchaeus' wealth matched up to that.

I imagine it didn't. But he was very wealthy. Half of my stuff. Half of my money.

I'm going to give it to the poor. And if I have defrauded. I've stolen anything from anyone. I've cheated anyone. Of anything.

I restore it. Fourfold. Wow. What an interesting thing. What an interesting response by Zacchaeus. And then Jesus follows up Zacchaeus' statement by saying this. Today, salvation has come to this house. Who do you think he's talking about?

[15:05] Salvation has come to this house. He's talking about Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus has gotten saved. Zacchaeus has come to the point of recognizing Jesus as the true Messiah.

Zacchaeus has come to this house. And he has repented of his sin and he has trusted in Christ. Whatever that meant. Zacchaeus is a wonderful children's story.

And the level of understanding that it takes to get the story is very simple. Very easy. And that's probably the level of Zacchaeus' understanding of all of this.

That doesn't matter. That's all it takes. The message of Christianity, the message of the gospel is very simple. Me bad.

Jesus good. I trust him. And it really does boil down to that. I am a sinner deserving of death. Deserving of his wrath, of his judgment.

[16:03] Jesus is the perfect and sinless son of God. Who chose to die for me. To take my place. And then he rose again from the dead.

And when I trust him as my Savior, I too am saved. And you too. It's that simple. It's that easy.

The day salvation has come to this house since he is also a son of Abraham. Loaded statement here. He is of Jewish descendants and so he is a son of Abraham.

But this day he became a true son of Abraham. Because it's not just your bloodlines that matter. Which is kind of what the rabbis taught. That if you were a Jewish person by blood that you were in. And that's really what mattered. And Jesus of course cleared the decks of that kind of teaching. And made it clear that it's not about your lineage or your heritage.

[17:08] It's about your faith. And so on that day Zacchaeus became a true son of Abraham. And then Jesus makes this somewhat famous statement here.

For the son of man came to seek and to save the lost. He came to seek. The son of man is a well-known title for the Messiah.

Most popular we see it in the book of Daniel. But it's a well-known in their day. The idea that people would look at Jesus and say, Well he never claimed to be God.

Are you kidding me? Are you crazy? Do you know anything about the Bible? Jesus says of himself for the son of man. Obvious, obvious title.

Paul, referring to himself. That claims his deity. Came to seek. To look for. To save. To rescue.

[18:11] The lost. The ruined. Another way of saying lost. Those who are ruined. And he came to rescue them. To save. Those who have been lost.

Those who are ruined. And that's of course the description of any life. Before it comes to faith in Christ. Now, before we go on.

I'm going to be talking about the similarities that we see between Zacchaeus. And Bartimaeus. They share the last part of their names in common.

That would have been true in the Aramaic. Or the Hebrew. Language that was familiar to the people of that day. So I want to compare these two men.

Because they have some similarities between them. Bartimaeus is who we talked about last week. The blind man just outside the city of Jericho. And just to kind of remind you.

[19:14] If you were here. Or if you weren't here last week. Just we're going to read these few verses here. Just to look again. And see the story of Bartimaeus himself.

As Jesus drew near to Jericho. A blind man was sitting by the roadside. Begging. And we talked about how there were no. Restoration of sight in the Old Testament at all.

The rabbis taught that one of the true signs of a healing that was from God. Would be the healing of a blind man. A blind person.

And Jesus of course does that in the New Testament now. And as they drew near to Jericho. Here's this blind man sitting on the dust. Outside begging. Looking for alms.

Looking for handouts. And hearing a crowd going by. He inquired what this meant. And they told him Jesus of Nazareth. Notice the title. Was passing by. Just the man from a particular location on geography.

[20:17] On a map. Jesus of Nazareth. Was passing by. And for this blind man. Because of the stories that he had heard. Remember he's blind. So he hadn't seen anything.

Yet. And he knows. Now he understands. Now who Jesus is. Because he cries out. The moment that he hears that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.

He cries out. Jesus. Son of David. Which again. Is another title of deity. The rabbis taught that. That the coming Messiah would be a son.

A descendant of King David. David. So when Bartimaeus. And we learn his name from the gospel of Mark. Bartimaeus cries out. Jesus. Son of David. He's not saying.

Oh Jesus. Great teacher. Or Jesus. A rabbi. He's. He's actually. Declaring. That he understands.

[21:16] That Jesus is God. That he is the Messiah. And he declares that. As he calls out for him. And he's not looking for change. He's saying. Have mercy.

On me. And those who were in front. Rebuked him. Telling him to be silent. How rude. But he cried out all the more. Son of David.

Have mercy. On me. He wasn't going to give up. Just because there were some people. Shushing him. And Jesus stopped. Commanded him to be brought to him.

And when he came near. He asked him. What do you want me to do for you? And again. Jesus doesn't ask this question. Because he doesn't know what's going on. And he wants an explanation.

Okay. He's doing this for the benefit of the people. Who are witnessing. What is about to happen.

What is it that you want me to do for you? And he said. Lord. Let me recover my sight. And Jesus said to him.

[ 22 : 10 ] Recover your sight. Your faith. Has. Made you well. Literally. The word here is. Your faith has saved you. The word for. For saved.

And depending on context. That it can be translated. As made you well. In this context. That fits. But it's also. Very often. Translated.

As your faith has saved you. Because when we talk about being saved. That would be the word. That we would use. If we were talking. In Greek. And immediately.

Bartimaeus. Recovered his sight. And followed him. Glorifying God. And all the people. When they saw it. Gave praise. To God. And so. These. This is the. The story of Bartimaeus.

And we just read the story of Zacchaeus. And I want to look at the similarities. Between these two men. And their stories. You have this on your notes.

[ 23 : 05 ] Both men. Desperately. Number one. They both desperately. Wanted to see Jesus. Absolutely. Bartimaeus.

The blind man. Cried out. And when they tried to stop him. Cried out all the more. And he knew exactly who Jesus was. He was labeling him himself as the Messiah.

The son of David. Have mercy on me. And so he. He. He showed that desperation. Zacchaeus showed that desperation. By what did he do? He climbed up in a tree.

Not exactly the dignified response. Of a wealthy man. In the city. But. This is what he did. Because he. Wanted to see. Jesus.

Second thing about both of these men. Is that they would not be stopped. By their. Obstacles. They both had obstacles. In their way. For Bartimaeus. The blind man.

[ 24 : 02 ] Outside of the city. He was hindered by his own blindness. And he was also hindered by the. The crowd who tried to. Shush him. The rudeness of the crowd.

He was hindered. By them. Zacchaeus. Was hindered. Also. By his. Lack of height. Poor. Poor guy. Couldn't see.

The crowd. And also. He was hindered by the crowd. Who were obnoxiously tall. No. They were average. In height. But for him. They blocked his.

His view. And so. He had to go. Climb up. In a tree. And neither one of them. Let those obstacles. Or those hindrances. Keep them. From reaching their goal.

And then number three. Both of them. Were rewarded. By Jesus. Now the reward here. In this case. Is not eternal life. It wasn't salvation. The reward was.

[ 24 : 57 ] They. They got an audience. With Jesus. That's. That's what they were looking for. That's what they could. In a sense. Push for. More. Bartimaeus.

By crying out. All the more. Loudly. Not giving up. Just incessantly. Crying out. Jesus. And. And. Zacchaeus. By. Climbing up.

Into the tree. And. And. Getting his. His view. And. And so. They got their audience. With Jesus. That way. Now.

Now. On your notes. Here. I want to notice. One. Big. Difference. Between. These. Two. Men. The first.

Is that. For Bartimaeus. He called out. To Jesus. He called out. Jesus. If. In a sense.

[ 25 : 52 ] We. We don't. We're not told that Jesus knew he was there. We're not told that Jesus. knew his name. With Zacchaeus. We. We. We get that. That sense.

But not. Not so much with. With Bartimaeus. So Bartimaeus. Called out. To Jesus. And what's interesting about Bartimaeus. Is this.

That. It was Bartimaeus. Who seemingly. Initiated. The contact. With Jesus. By calling out. Wanting to be recognized. By Jesus. So Bartimaeus.

Was initiating. He was the one who. Heard. From others. That it was Jesus of Nazareth. Passing by. And so he initiates. The contact.

Sometimes. As we talk about this. And where I'm going with this. Is. Is. I'm going to be talking about. A. A very deep. Theological truth.

[ 26 : 49 ] Of. Predestination. Or the word. Election. Is sometimes used there. Or. Free will. Of man. Who.

Who. Initiates. Who. Who begins. The. The relationship. Is it because of God. Calling us. Or is it because we recognize.

Our need. And we cry out to God. And with Bartimaeus. From our human. Standpoint. And perspective. It looks like. Bartimaeus. Is the one who is initiating. This.

This contact. Who is. Who is. Beginning. This. This. This. This dynamic. And. We see this. In. In. In. Scripture. Elsewhere.

As well. This idea. Of. Of. Us. Initiating. The content. Romans. 10. 13. Says it this way. And this is from the old King James. Translation. The modern translations.

[ 27 : 42 ] Use the word. Everyone. For whosoever. But. Ever since. You know. I memorized this way back when. From the King James. Who so. For whosoever.

Whosoever. Is just. I just love that phrase. Love that word. For everyone. Who calls on the name of the Lord. For whosoever. It's. It's. It's. As if.

Paul. As he writes this. Is swinging the doors open. And. He's actually. Quoting from an Old Testament. Passage of scripture. And. It's as if. God is swinging the doors open.

With this open invitation. That everyone. Or. Whosoever. Will. May come. Whosoever. Will call. On the name of the Lord.

Shall be. Saved. And that's. This is. What Bartimaeus. Was. Was doing. Now. For Zacchaeus. We don't know in the text.

[ 28 : 39 ] But it seems like in the text. That he may have preferred to remain. Anonymous. Did he want to meet. Actually meet Jesus. Or did he just want to.

Get a good look at him. We don't really know. From the text. The text doesn't really. Doesn't really tell us. This. But.

It was Jesus. Who took notice. Of Zacchaeus. Who calls. Zacchaeus. Out by name. Even though they hadn't been introduced. He knows his name.

In advance. And he. And he looks at Zacchaeus. And. Jesus knew. He was going to be there. That day. He was. In a sense. They had. He had a divine appointment. With Zacchaeus.

And. Jesus is the one. Who initiated. The contact. In that. In that. In that. Relationship. In that. In that dynamic. That's. That.

[ 29 : 35 ] That part of the story. And. And so. We see that. Also displayed. In scripture. Romans. 5. 8. But while God. But God shows his love for us. And that while we were still sinners.

Christ died for us. So. We weren't. Crying out for God. Right? No. God. God. While we were still. In the midst of our sin.

Thumbing our nose at God. As it were. Even while we were still sinners. Christ. Died for us. First John 4.

19. Says it very simply. We love. Because he first loved us. Again. God. Initiates. The relationship. Because he chooses to love us. Even though we don't even recognize who he is. And then. In Ephesians chapter 1. Verses 4. And 5.

[ 30 : 36 ] Paul is famous for his. Run on sentences. As he writes these letters. To these different local churches. And to the church at Ephesus. Part of this.

Long. Run on sentence. He says this. By the way. Our punctuation. Our English punctuation. That the translators provide. Would not have been there. In the original language.

When. When they wrote. The. The Greek. New Testament. When these. Letters were originally penned. And when the gospels were penned. They used. All capitals.

There were no margins. On the page. Because the papyri. That they used. To write these. Were so valuable. You wouldn't put any margins. Or spaces. Between letters.

Or words. Imagine trying to read. That kind of text. Our books. Our books today. Are filled with white space. Right? And it's because it's easy on the eyes.

[ 31 : 32 ] For us to have that. It makes reading that much more simpler. But they wrote in all caps. With no spaces or margins. And no punctuation. So.

When Paul wrote these. This was literally one long. Run on sentence. And if you remember your freshman year. Grammar class. You remember what a run on sentence is.

Right? Anybody? A run on sentence is a sentence that. It's like the song that never ends. It's a sentence that never ends. Well Paul is famous for this. And so. He will sometimes go whole paragraphs.

Writing one sentence. Just one long sentence. That just doesn't have a period in there. Our translators. Have done us nice. By giving us. Space between the words.

And punctuation here. That wasn't part of the original. Even as. God chose us. In him. Before the foundation of the world. The idea of predestination.

[ 32 : 30 ] That we should be holy. And blameless. Before him. In love. He predestined us. For the adoption as sons. Through Jesus Christ. And I want you to notice that.

The basis. For God's choosing. Is his love. For us. And so. These are statements. That we find. In scripture. These ideas of.

God. Predestining us. Before the foundation of the world. Which. It's an uncomfortable. Truth. But truth. Nonetheless. The scriptures.

Very clearly. Teach us. That he chose us. Before the foundation of the world. That blows my mind. We can't understand that. Can we? We can't understand.

Before the foundation of the world. We can't understand. That God has always existed. We can only understand. In our finite minds. The idea of a beginning.

[ 33 : 26 ] And an end. Because we have a beginning. And an end. We cannot fathom. The idea of. Someone existing without beginning.

We. We're not equipped to handle. That. To know that. And so. I've come up with. A statement. That's not on your notes. But if you want to write this down. You're welcome to.

There's nothing. So wonderful. About the statement. But I hope it helps you. To understand. What we're. What these two stories. What Bartimaeus. And what Zacchaeus. Kind of demonstrate here. The Bible clearly teaches. Both the absolute sovereignty of God. And in the sovereignty of God. That. That includes. That God predestines us. Before the foundation of the world.

And. And. The Bible clearly teaches. Genuine human responsibility. That. Because. God chooses us. Before the foundation of the world.

[ 34 : 23 ] There are some who would say. Oh. Well that means that. You're not to blame for your sin. No. That's not what it teaches. At all. The Bible makes very clear.

That we are responsible. For our own decisions. Whether we choose to follow him. Or not. Whether we choose to sin. In any given circumstance. We are fully. Responsible.

And accountable. For those decisions. These two ideas. Even though in our minds. They contradict. They do not contradict. Each other. They just don't.

They're. They're presented. Basically. Side by side. In scripture. Even though. Even when. They appear to be a paradox.

To our finite minds. In my mind. I. I. I cannot. I can't. I can't. Even understand. Predestination at all. Period.

[ 35 : 18 ] I. I don't get it. I'm. I'm hoping though. That when there's something about God. That I don't understand. And I can't explain.

I'm hoping that for you. As it is for me. That that is a comfort. To you. We don't often take it that way. Matter of fact. Some people will use it. As an obstacle.

To their faith in Christ. Well because I can't understand. This about God. I won't trust Christ. As my savior. How silly is that? Because God is God.

And I am not. And my question is. How big of a God. How much of a God. If. Would he be. If I could understand.

Everything about him. If me. In my simple. Human. Finite. Understanding. Could understand.

Everything there is to understand. About God. That's not much of a God.

[ 36 : 17 ] But. But I got to tell you. There's a lot about God. That I don't understand. Predestination. God's sovereignty. God. Having no beginning. The Trinity. All of these things.

Are things that I cannot understand. And cannot explain. But that comforts me. To know that I serve a God. That I cannot fully understand.

And I hope that it does. For you as well. Paul said this. At the end of. Romans chapter 11. When he's talking about. Romans chapter 9. Some.

Some very difficult things. To understand about predestination. Romans chapter 10. The whosoever will. That all who call upon him. In the name of the Lord. Everyone. Whosoever.

Will call upon the name of the Lord. Will be saved. Romans 9. Predestination. Romans 10. Free will. Door wide open. Romans 11. Oh how unsearchable. How unknowable.

[ 37 : 15 ] Is the mind of God. That's how he concludes. The argument. I don't get it. And if Paul. The apostle. Doesn't get it. I don't think I am either.

Okay. And my guess is. You're not going to either. Praise the Lord for that. That hopefully. That brings you. That brings you comfort.

Now. I want to end our time. With some observations. About this story. Of Zacchaeus. That. That I.

Again. There's. There's some questions. That. I wonder what some of the answers are. And I may not necessarily. Fully understand them. But. I'm going to bring them to you. Anyway. So let's do this. Notice. And you. Again. You have this on your notes. Notice that Zacchaeus. Offered quite a lot. To the poor. Remember. Half.

[ 38 : 12 ] Of all of his possessions. He offered to the poor. Right. You remember that in the story. Half. Half. But he didn't offer.

All of it. You guys remember. The previous chapter. There was another man. That Jesus was talking to. We know him as the rich young ruler. We don't know him by name. But remember what he told. The rich young ruler. Sell it all.

And give it all. To the poor. Why the difference? Why the difference? Real simply.

In a simple way. That my mind can understand. Jesus was challenging. The rich young ruler.

Because the rich young ruler. Didn't recognize. His own need. Remember.

[ 39 : 08 ] He thought. Oh I've got it all down. I've obeyed all those commands. From my youth. Ever since I was a kid. I've done all. I've done it all well. And so Jesus.

Jesus. In a sense. Confounds him. To demonstrate that. No. You don't have it figured out. And so I'm going to give you a challenge.

That you will not accept. And I'm going to demonstrate to you. That you have a God. And your God is your money. That you're unwilling to unhand. That you're unwilling to let go of.

So all of it. Get rid of all of it. Sell it. And give it to the poor. Because I'm giving you this command. As a way to demonstrate to your own heart.

That you're holding on to a God. That is not the God of the Bible. So that's interesting. Zacchaeus offers half of his wealth.

[ 40 : 07 ] To the poor. And then. Zacchaeus offered to repay. Those that he had stole from. Remember. He defrauded.

Those he swindled. He. He. He. Decides. I'm going to. I'm going to repay them fourfold. What does fourfold mean? Multiply it. By four times.

It's interesting. That in the book of Leviticus. Leviticus chapter 6. Verse 5. The command there.

That. If you've stolen from somebody.

Yes. You need to. Reimburse them. You need to. Pay them back. What you've stolen. Plus 20%. One fifth.

You need to restore it. Plus add a fifth. Add 20% to what you've stolen. And then. You can come and offer your sacrifice. And be forgiven.

[ 41 : 02 ] And be restored. And all of that. But here Zacchaeus. Doesn't just offer the minimum. Doesn't just offer the 20%.

He offers. Fourfold. Four times. His willingness. Here's what I believe. That this demonstrates about Zacchaeus. His willingness to make things right.

Indicated. That he didn't minimize his sin. You know how we can do this at times? Well. I'm never going to find all those people.

I'm never going to. Do you think that was Zacchaeus' mindset? Or do you think he's going to go back in his records. And he's going to recall. And he's going to say. Okay. I remember when I did this to this.

To this man. To this business. And I'm going to have to go visit him now. And make it right. And not only am I going to just make it right. I'm going to repay it four times.

[ 42 : 00 ] The amount. And this was Zacchaeus'. This was Zacchaeus demonstrating. He wasn't going to make light of his sin. He was going to take it very seriously.

And that ought to inform us. About our own sin. That when we wrong someone. That we ought to make sure that we do what.

What is necessary to restore the relationship. And then. Last one. While salvation is not by works. Around here we're very familiar with this. We talk about this over and over again. Because it's part of the message of the gospel. Salvation is not by works. But while it's not by works.

When true salvation comes to a man. His life is. Radically altered. It's changed. It is different. Genuine conversion.

[ 43 : 04 ] Produces change. In the lives of those who are saved. It has to. The gospel knows nothing. Of someone coming to faith in Christ.

Or someone. Making a profession of faith. In Christ. And having really no observable difference. In the way that they live their life. In the choices that they make.

Their decisions. Their priorities. The way they think. The way they operate. The way they live. There ought to be something different. About a person's life.

Now sometimes that's hard to observe. Like. Some of you. You came to faith in Christ as a young child. And so for you. It's. It's difficult to say.

Okay. How does my life. How is my life so radically changed. Like Zacchaeus. When I was five years old. Versus when I was six years old. And I. Put my trust in Christ to save me.

[ 44 : 04 ] Because when I was five. I mean. I was. I was just a terrible. Low down. Dirty rotten. Right. We don't see it that way. But my question for you.

If you were saved at a young age. How do you think compared to the. To the ways of the world. How do you. How do you think compared to the. The ways of people that you know.

That are not saved. That aren't Christian. That aren't trying to live a Christian life. And is your life radically different. From them. Not that you're comparing them. In terms of understanding.

Am I. Am I a Christian or not. Based on. Someone else's behavior. Compared to mine. That. That's not the point. But. Is my life different. Than the.

Than the way that the world. Thinks. And let me demonstrate. To you. This. From scripture. And I want to show you. A couple of very familiar. Passages of scripture.

[ 44 : 59 ] And then sometimes. And I'm going to show you. Parts of the passage. That we may not necessarily. Be familiar with. So here's. Here's Ephesians 2. 8 and 9. We. We.

We talk about this. We. We. We. Sing about this. For me. The. The. The day that I trusted Christ. As my savior. This for me.

Was the. The passage. Where. You know. The little comic strip. Where the guy finally gets it. The light bulb that sits over his head. That comes on. Aha. That was me.

When I was presented with these. With these verses. With this passage of scripture. Because up until that point. I was 17 years old. Up until that point. I understood salvation was something that you earned.

That you had to go to church. That you had to go to confession. That you had to do this. And this penance. And say these prayers. And do this. And all of. And if you. If you jump through enough of the hoops.

[ 45 : 53 ] You one day may get to go to heaven. That's kind of. The way of the. The world thinks about religion. That.

That is religion. When I. When I think of religion. But here's what the Bible says. For by grace. You have been saved. Through faith. Okay. Well. People will say.

Well. I believe in Jesus. Okay. That's. That's great. But again. James tells us. The demons believe that too. And tremble. Just believing that God exists. Is not your ticket to heaven.

Okay. That your faith. Leads to something. And this is not your own doing. It is the. The gift of God. You don't. You don't earn it. It's. It's a gift. If I give you a gift.

You don't. It's not something that you earn. Not as a result. Of works. And when I read that. I was like. Oh boy. I get it now.

[ 46 : 50 ] So that no one. May boast. Okay. I get it. I'm not going to go to heaven. And the Lord asked me. And this was a. A famous question. That people were asking.

Back in the day. That if you were to go to the gates of heaven. And the Lord were to ask you. Why should I let you into my heaven? What would you say? And I remember. I remember my mother. At the time. Her answer to this question. There were some men who. Came to our house. And they sat down. And they talked with my mother. And my father. And my father at that point. Had already become a Christian.

And had trusted Christ as Savior. And now these men were there to. To witness. Basically to my mother. I witnessed the conversation. But they weren't talking to me. So I kept my mouth shut.

You know how. As a kid you do that. And I listened to my mother. Answer that question. By saying. Well. I'm a good person. I go to church.

[ 47 : 48 ] We give to support the church. I haven't killed anybody. And I remember sitting there. Thinking. That ain't it.

That's what was in my mind. That's. Mom. That's not it. That's not the right answer. I didn't know what the right answer was. But I just knew in my heart. It wasn't the right answer. I didn't know how

to answer the question myself.

So I. Even if I could pipe up. And say something. I wouldn't know what to say. That's not it. And so that same man.

That asked my mother that question. Took me to the golf course. And we played golf. He was a golfer. I was a golfer. And the whole time we were playing. We just played nine holes.

The whole time we were playing golf. He's sharing with me. His testimony. And scriptures. And then after the. After the round. We sat there at a picnic table. At the golf course. And he. Had a little.

[ 48 : 49 ] Pocket New Testament. And he opened them up. And. This was kind of like the closing verse. That he showed me. And it was like. Okay. I get it now.

I get it now. And I don't know how to describe it. But I drove away. A different person. From that golf course. I. I was a different. I was a different young man.

I didn't even know. How to describe it. But I was just. A different man. We started school. Not long after that. My senior year of high school.

This was in the summer. And. Maybe a week or two. After. After that. That day. That I trusted Christ as Savior. Went to school. And they were having a Bible study.

At the beginning of the school. So some of the people. Some of the Christians in the school. They would get together like. Half an hour before school started. And they would pray together.

[ 49 : 46 ] And someone would give a devotional. And. And. The one. There were three of us standing there in the cafeteria. And. And the one man who had. The young man. Jimmy Fitzpatrick.

Who had witnessed to me. Several years up to that point. I didn't know what. I didn't know what that was. It's like.

My mindset towards Jimmy was. Oh that's good for you man. I'm. I'm. I'm. I'm fine. Thank you. I'm not interested. But he was talking to the other young man.

Standing there. Who was our friend. Who was an atheist. Very avowed. Very vocal. Atheist. And. And. And. He was inviting him.

To come to that. Before school Bible study. And. And. He was answering. No thanks. I'm not interested.

[ 50 : 44 ] I don't believe in God. I don't. I don't believe in that. And. Of course Jimmy knew that. But. He was still. Being faithful to present the gospel. Present the opportunity.

And. And Jimmy. Not knowing anything about my circumstances. Kind of laughingly pointed to me. And said. Hey Rich. You're a Christian. Aren't you? And my response was.

And you have to forgive me. I'll shorten the answer. My response was. F. Yeah. I'm a Christian. I didn't know better.

But. He just about. His jaw hit the floor. The next morning. When I walked into the Bible study group. Carrying my Bible.

Like. What happened to you? Well. Let me tell you. And it had nothing to do with me. Doing good works. Or being a good enough person. It was all because of what Jesus.

[ 51 : 48 ] I. I didn't do anything. Jesus did it all. That's what this verse. Talks about. But I want you to notice. The verse right after that. For we are his workmanship.

Okay. It's not by works. So that no one can boast. No one's going to get to the end of the line. Stand before the Lord. And say. The reason I'm here. Is because I'm such a good person. Because I did this.

Because I gave to the poor. Because I prayed. Because I. Your answers are filled with. Bragging about yourself. No.

If we're ever going to be in a position of answering that kind of question. We're going to be bragging. But we're going to be bragging about Jesus. We're going to be boasting in the name of Jesus.

Because Jesus saved me. Because Jesus paid my debt of sin on the cross. Because he paid the penalty for me. Because Jesus rose again from the dead.

[ 52 : 50 ] My name's not involved. The letter I is not involved at all. Because Jesus did this. But. We are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus.

For good works. The word. The phrase. For good works.

It's for the purpose of. Good works. That's what this prepositional phrase is pointing to. For the purpose. We were created in Christ Jesus.

For the purpose of. Good works. That's why we are saved. Which God prepared. Beforehand.

That we should walk in them. God creates us. There is a place for good works. It's just. Not in order to be saved. The place for how we live.

[ 53 : 49 ] And the things that we do to serve God. Are because we are saved. Not in order to be saved. Because my life is different.

I am his workmanship. It's. It's. It's. The word there speaks of poetry. It speaks of artistry. We are God's beautiful creation.

His. Workmanship. His craftsmanship. Is another way of saying that. God creates us. In Christ. Now that we are saved. Not because of our works. Because of what he has done. But now that I am saved. He has got a life.

Of works. Prepared in advance. For me to do. Not in order to be saved. But because I am. Saved. Do you see the difference there?

[ 54 : 51 ] And it makes all the difference. In the world. The difference is. Is. What is the message. Of the gospel. Second Corinthians 5.17.

Another famous. Phrase. Therefore. If anyone is. In Christ. And. And Paul is famous. For using this. This little prepositional phrase. In. Christ. When we come to faith.

In Christ. That's where he places us. In Christ. So. So. Therefore. If anyone is. In Christ. He is a. New creation.

The old has passed. Behold. The new has come. There's a different way of living. That is evidenced. By those who have put their faith. Their trust. In Christ. Now. Titus. In this passage. Here's four verses. That's a one. It's. It's all part. Of a. Of a. Huge. Run on sentence. Titus. Chapter two. And so.

[ 55 : 49 ] You'll. You'll. You'll see. Lots of dot. Dot. Dots. For the grace of God has appeared. Bringing salvation for all people.

That's the grace of God. We're saved by grace through faith. Okay. Not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. Not by work so that no one can boast. The grace of God has appeared. Bringing salvation to all people.

Now that we are saved. That same grace. Trains us. To renounce ungodliness. And worldly passions. We don't live like the rest of the world.

We don't think like the rest of the world. And to live. Self-controlled. Upright and godly lives. In the present age.

This is what we're called to do. The present age that you and I live in. It's 2026. You guys can. You. You. You flip through social media.

[ 56 : 46 ] You watch the news. You. You know. The state of the present age that we live in. It's not good. But we are called to live a different way.

In the world that we live in. As we are waiting for our blessed hope. What is the blessed hope? It's the returning of Jesus. Whenever you see that phrase in the scriptures.

In the New Testament. Talking about our blessed hope. That blessed hope is the return of Jesus. The appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Who gave himself to redeem us.

From all the lawlessness and to purity for himself. A people for his own possession. Who are zealous for good works. That's a mouthful.

What does all of that mean? That he came to redeem us. Who gave himself to redeem.

[ 57 : 44 ] To buy us back. Redeem is a financial word. To buy us back. From all lawlessness. God doesn't save us.

God doesn't redeem us from lawlessness. Just for us to continue to live in lawlessness. It's not what he does.

He redeems us. He purges us out of that situation. So that we can live differently. To live a life that is pure. For himself.

For his own possession. We don't even belong to ourselves. Because when he redeems us. He buys us. And we belong to him.

And as his possessions. We are zealous. Zealous meaning. Go get him. For good works. That's how we live our lives.

[ 58 : 47 ] That's our desire. The desire of our heart. Is to serve him. To live for him. To do good things. Again. Not in order to be saved. But because I am saved.

I hope that makes all the difference in the world. This is the story. Of kids. Recognizing. We recognize just like children.

We're broken people. We have no hope without Christ. We have nothing to offer him. It's the best place to be. Then he can take us. And save us.

And redeem us. And make of us a new creation. In Christ Jesus. A craftsmanship. A workmanship. A beautiful creation. Created to live for him.

So that we can be like a Bartimaeus. Who with the rest of our lives. Follow him. And serve him. Like a Zacchaeus. Who repents of his sin.

[ 59 : 47 ] And says you know what? I'm going to take all that I have. I'm going to take half of it. And I'm going to give it to the poor. And the other half. I'm going to pay back the people. That I've ripped off. And I'm going to pay them back fourfold.

My life is going to be completely different. Zacchaeus is going to be unrecognizable. Unlike. The rich young ruler.

Who walked away. Holding on to the gods. That he had already had in his life. Choosing to reject Christ.

And suffer the consequences. That's what these stories are about. That's what these stories inform us.

From here we're moving on to parables. We're moving on to prophecy. We're moving on to Jesus. Going into Jerusalem now. So the drumbeat that we've been hearing.

[ 60 : 53 ] About the kingdom of God is at hand. It's about to come to an end. That drumbeat. Because Jesus is about to enter the kingdom. Everything will be changed.

Everything will be different. You and I. We're the result of all of this. Here we are 2,000 years later. And once again we're waiting for Jesus to come and establish his kingdom.

And he's coming. We're waiting for that blessed hope. The appearing. The glory. Jesus Christ who is to come.

I hope that that's the story of your life. That you've trusted Christ as Savior. That you're more like a Bartimaeus. Or a Zacchaeus. Or one of the little children who has come unto him.

And just with real simplicity put your faith in Christ. And that's all you know. And not like the rich young ruler. Let's pray.

[ 61 : 58 ] Lord thank you so much. For these stories. Of these people who. So broken. And some who put their face in you.

Recognize their need. Recognize their poverty. Their bankruptcy. They have nothing to offer you. And put their faith. In Jesus Christ. I pray that that's the story of our life. That we would.

That we have done. Already. This very same thing. To recognize their need. And to trust you. For everything.

For eternal life. The forgiveness of sins. The redemption. That you so freely offer. It is so easy for us to understand it.

[ 63 : 06 ] And yet at the same time. There's so much depth to it. I pray that. I pray that. I pray that. As we grow in our relationship with you. As we grow in Christ.

that we would come to wrestle with these great truths of the Scripture and that we would have every day a renewed fascination, a sense of awe and wonder at who you are and what you have done for us.

Lord, thank you. We love you. We ask all of this today in Jesus' name. Amen.