

Luke 19: 1 – 10 Growth Group study

Introduction/ warm up question

What is something (big or small) you have either lost or damaged? How much time/effort did you spend looking for or restoring it?

Unimportant things we may just forget about, but things that matter to us we will go to greater lengths to find/restore.

Pray & read the passage.

- What stands out to you from the passage, or what questions do you have?
- What do we know about Zacchaeus from verses 1 – 4?

He wanted to see who Jesus was (linking back to the blind man who saw, and the disciples who could not see.) He was a chief tax collector, a despised sinner, one who betrayed Israel to the Romans. He was wealthy (and can therefore only possibly enter the kingdom because of God, see 18:25-27). He was willing to climb a tree to see Jesus.

- Jesus says he must stay at Zacchaeus' home (v5). Why is this a divine necessity?

Jesus, who is God incarnate (the Holy One, whom sinners cannot enter the presence of without atonement) went into the house of a great sinner. He initiates this. He wants to show mercy.

- What assumptions do the people make in verse 7 about God, themselves, and sinners that cause them to mutter? Do we agree with them?

They don't like that Jesus will associate with someone as bad as Zacchaeus. However, they think that they can associate with Jesus. They don't realise that they are as much in need of God's mercy as he is.

- What is the change shown in verse 8? What has Zacchaeus seen that brought about this change? (Hint: verse 3.)

Repentance. He has seen who Jesus is – one who will go to a sinner such as himself. He also calls him "Lord".

- Jesus tells us his purpose verse 10: that he "came to seek and save the lost." How does Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus illustrate this for us?

Zacchaeus was lost. Jesus went to his house, and his life was transformed.

- Do you ever feel that people are beyond God's mercy? Can you think of examples of people? How would this passage address those feelings?

Because Jesus has come to save the lost, no-one is beyond his mercy – not even a chief tax collector (or the notorious sinners of our time).

- Have you ever felt that you have been beyond God's mercy? How does this passage bring comfort?

Great sinners are not outside the reach of God's mercy – we are not outside the reach of God's mercy. No matter the sin, we can be restored to God through Christ.

- Is Zacchaeus' repentance forced or free? What about yours?

Zacchaeus' repentance is free. He goes beyond what is required.

- How does this passage reinforce our understanding of our mission as a church? As individual Christians?

Christ came to seek and save the lost. We need to have this as a priority too (collectively and individually).

Pray for one another and for our church.