

Episode: Luke Series No. 17

Narrator: Zacchaeus

Primary Scriptures: Luke 18:35-43, 19:1-27

Story Summary: Story of Zacchaeus and ending of Jesus' ministry

Location: Judea

Time: Circa 30 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Luke 18:41-43, 19:17

As Jesus approached Jericho, he was very likely tired and his mind elsewhere. He had just predicted his impending death and was focused on going straight to his probable doom in Jerusalem. It's likely that his apostles thought they were being compassionate to him as they kept the crowds away, letting him be thoughtful.

You can imagine they wanted the blind man to be quiet instead of yelling at Jesus, but the more they tried to quiet him, the louder he yelled. The apostles probably felt like failures when Jesus stopped and called for the blind man to be brought to him. Where the apostles saw an inconvenience, Jesus saw an occasion for God to be glorified.

You can glean how quickly the news spread through the small town that one of their own blind men had been healed by Jesus. The man famous for doing miracles and healings had come to *their* town! Zacchaeus was used to getting news first, so it is likely he knew about Jesus as soon as anyone else, but rather than fight for a place in the crowd, he took advantage of this knowledge and raced ahead to climb a sycamore-fig tree so he could easily see Jesus. He probably didn't realize that it made him a target for Jesus to see.

Can't you imagine the different reactions when Jesus told Zacchaeus to come down quickly? Many in the crowd must have been wondering why such a respectable man was up in a tree, and maybe laughed as he scrambled to the ground. The apostles must have wondered why Jesus singled out the man and been astounded at Jesus' need to eat at his house. Zacchaeus would have been bewildered to hear the stranger call him by name. What a sight that must have been!

The Parable of the Minas sounds a lot like the Parable of the Talents in *Matthew*, but with some meaningful differences. The Parable of the Minas also combines a story of an unpopular rich man going away, which very possibly was a vague reference to Herod's trip to Rome to retain his kingship, and his retribution to his enemies when he returned. The crowd must have been very surprised that Jesus would reference that event in public. Keep in mind that Jesus told this parable because the people expected the kingdom of God to appear immediately.

Discussion Questions:

1. Jesus asked the blind man what he wanted. It appears that Jesus might have granted him anything he wanted. What other things could the blind man have asked for instead of being healed of blindness?
 2. Where do you suppose Zacchaeus was when he heard the news about Jesus?
 3. How did Zacchaeus acquire his wealth?
 4. When Jesus said that salvation had come to the house of Zacchaeus, what did he mean?
 5. Jesus wanted the rich young ruler to give all of his wealth to the poor, but seemed to be satisfied that Zacchaeus gave only half of his wealth to the poor. Why the difference?
 6. Why did Jesus tell the parable of the Ten Minas?
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1. Great riches, a wife and children, go to heaven when he died.
 2. His tax booth, his house, in the market?
 3. He was the chief tax collector, so he got some his wealth honestly. His later discussion with Jesus indicates he may have cheated people, too.
 6. Because the people thought the kingdom of God was to appear immediately

Application Questions:

1. Can you think of an event when you thought you were being inconvenienced only to discover it was a time when God ended up being glorified? How can you maintain an openness to those times in your daily life?
2. Zacchaeus pleased Jesus by making amends to people through giving away his wealth. Do you have any people in your life to whom you need to make amends? How can you make amends to people you have offended or taken advantage of?
3. Name talents of yours that you have both improved through use, and talents that you have kept unused. What could you do to start using your unused talents?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. If Jesus asked you what you want, what would you answer?
2. Is there someone you have taken advantage of that you need to ask forgiveness from? Is there someone whom you need to forgive? What can you do to make peace in all your relationships?
3. If you knew you were going to eat dinner with Jesus tonight, what would you do to prepare? Would it be more important to get your rooms in order or your relationships in order?