

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ spend time with outsiders.

SCRIPTURE

LUKE 19:1–10

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Oddly enough, Zacchaeus' name means *righteous one*. It's unlikely anyone from his community saw him as righteous. As a tax collector, Zacchaeus would have been thought of as a thief (Luke 3:12–13) and a traitor working for the oppressive, Gentile Roman government. But when everyone else looked at Zacchaeus as a lost cause, Jesus saw a future citizen of his Kingdom. Maybe Zacchaeus' name was less about who he was and more about who Jesus would make him.

Check out the **Teacher Prep Video** for this lesson: <https://vimeo.com/933465895>



BELONG

CONNECTION

1–2 minutes

Spend the beginning of group being curious about your students and their past week. Be sure to include anyone new! Don't single them out, but help them feel included!

- How was the week? What's the best thing that's happened? Anything major going on?



BUILD MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

OPENING QUESTIONS

3–5 minutes

- If you could interview any person, dead or alive, who would you choose? What would you ask?

BELIEVE

EXPLORE GOD'S WORD

3–5 minutes

Today we are in the second lesson of the *Habits of Jesus* series. We will study Jesus' encounter with Zacchaeus and how we can imitate Jesus' example. Jesus often behaved in ways people never expected. When he arrived in Jericho, the crowds likely thought he would spend time teaching in the temple, performing miracles like they had heard about, or dining with the city's most important religious leaders. Instead, he walked right up to possibly the most unpopular person in town—Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector—and asked to spend time with him at his house. Jesus came to offer salvation to all people, no matter their background, wealth, or popularity status.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

7–10 minutes

- Why do you think Jesus called out to Zacchaeus?
Jesus—because he is God—had an amazing way of knowing what people really needed (consider the woman at the well). He called out to Zacchaeus because he knew Zacchaeus was ready to change.
- What do you think Zacchaeus felt when Jesus called out to him?
Probably astonished! He wasn't used to people calling out to him to say positive things. He had a very lonely life. The call from Jesus was likely out of the ordinary.
- Why did the people whisper and mutter when Jesus went to his house?



ASK INTENTIONAL QUESTIONS

People don't like outsiders. And they probably didn't like the famous Rabbi spending time with a despised sinner like Zacchaeus! They thought Jesus should spend time with the "good" people instead.

- What's the primary thing that keeps you from connecting with outsiders on a personal level?
Usually, it's fear. Fear of the person or fear of what others might think about us for associating with them. "But perfect love casts out fear"(1 John 4:18).

FACILITATOR NOTE: If you have extra time, go through the next set of questions. If not, skip to the BECOME section.

7–10 minutes

- Jesus said he came to “seek and save the lost.” What does that mean?
Elsewhere, Jesus said he came to "heal the sick" (Mark 2:17). People who think they're completely spiritually healthy and have it all together might not want to listen to what Jesus offers. But those who know they're spiritually sick and need forgiveness are ready to accept his salvation. That's who Jesus is looking for.
- It's one thing to just “be nice” to an outsider. But Jesus established a genuine relationship. What's the difference?
It's nice to be nice, but it can also be surface-level. Jesus doesn't do surface-level. Jesus engaged Zacchaeus in a real relationship. There was a human connection and friendship. That's where change comes from!
- What can you do to connect with someone who needs to know about God's love and offer of salvation?
Answers will vary and may include: praying for them, asking someone who sits by themselves at lunch to sit with you and your friends, inviting them to church, sharing your testimony, etc.

BECOME

MARK OF A DISCIPLE (main idea)

2–3 minutes

Disciples of Christ spend time with outsiders.

APPLY IT

5–10 minutes

Jesus made it clear that salvation is available to everyone. No one is beyond the saving love of Jesus. Who will you connect with this week, and how?

Be specific:

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?



MAKE LIFE APPLICATION



HOLD STUDENTS ACCOUNTABLE

FACILITATOR NOTE: Allow students who are comfortable to share their plans for application. This may encourage or spark ideas for other students, plus add a level of accountability.

CLOSING

PRAYER

2–3 minutes

Take time to pray that we are filled with the boldness and compassion of Jesus, pushing us to reach out and share his love with all people.

Write down any prayer requests mentioned and ask your students about them at your next meeting.

MEMORY VERSE

Send the memory verse graphic included in your download to your students later this week to keep the conversation going.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:28 (ESV)

NOTES

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