

## Sermon followed by Service - November 9, 2025 - Luke 19:1-10

“Zacchaeus was a wee little man; a wee little man was he.  
He climbed up in a sycamore tree  
For the Lord he wanted to see.”

Zacchaeus was a short man, but that wasn't the worst of it. Zacchaeus was a crooked man. He lied and he cheated. He lied and he cheated people like you and me. He lied and he cheated to make himself rich at the expense of people like you and me. You see, Zacchaeus was a tax man, and in those days the tax man was largely free to charge what he wanted and to take what he could get. So Zacchaeus charged and he took and he got rich at the expense of people like you and me.

But that wasn't the worst of it. You know how much we like paying taxes, and we're paying taxes to our own government, a government of the people by the people for the people. Well, Zacchaeus wasn't collecting taxes from his people for his people. Zacchaeus was collecting taxes for the enemy, for the Roman Empire, for an occupying force of bullies that were brutally earning the fear and hatred of the people. And so Zacchaeus also was earning the hatred of his people, his neighbors. Zacchaeus wasn't just a short man, and a crooked man; Zacchaeus was a hated man, a despised man, an outcast.

Does it surprise you that Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus? I imagine there were times Zacchaeus looked and acted like a hard-hearted jerk. I also imagine there were times that Zacchaeus' hard heart hurt - hurt with guilt for being such a crook, hurt with loneliness for being so disliked. Perhaps Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus just because Jesus was the talk of the town. Or perhaps Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus because he hurt, and the talk of the town suggested Jesus might have something for his hurt. For some reason - perhaps because big-shot Zacchaeus is climbing trees like a child - I wonder if God was working a hurt in Zacchaeus, a hurt and a need to see Jesus.

At any rate, Jesus felt a need to see Zacchaeus, and not just to see Zacchaeus, but to stop and take time out of his day to stay with Zacchaeus. Why? Jesus knew Zacchaeus by name. Jesus knew Zacchaeus as lost. Knowing Zacchaeus, Jesus just had to stop and spend time, to share God's life and love, with Zacchaeus. So Jesus called to Zacchaeus: “**Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.**” And Zacchaeus came down out of that tree as fast as can be.

Don't you wonder what Jesus said to Zacchaeus? Don't you wonder what Jesus said that led Zacchaeus to say: “**If I've cheated anybody out of anything I'll pay them back four times as much**”? Don't you wonder? I know I do. But Luke doesn't tell us. Instead, Luke tells us what Jesus said to the muttering crowd, a crowd muttering because Jesus went to the house of a sinner. Jesus said to them, “**Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.**”

Do you see yourself in Zacchaeus? Or see Zacchaeus in you? It can be easy to think, “No, I would never .... I would never sell out my own people. I would never cheat like that. I would never.” It can be easy to think that way, especially if we don’t think. To see our self in Zacchaeus, to see Zacchaeus in us, hurts. Unless our heart is so hard, it hurts to think of the times we’ve been the hard-hearted jerk. It hurts to think of the times we’ve taken advantage of others to get ahead at their expense. It hurts to think of the ways we have lied and cheated and betrayed others. To see our self in Zacchaeus, to see Zacchaeus in our self hurts. And, unless our heart is so hard, it hurts when people judge us and turn against us. It hurts, even when we deserve it. And we do deserve it. Not only do we deserve to be judged and rejected by the people we have hurt, we deserve to be judged and rejected by the God we have hurt. To see our self in Zacchaeus, to see Zacchaeus in our self hurts, until we see how Jesus saw Zacchaeus.

Jesus didn’t turn a hard heart against Zacchaeus; he didn’t judge Zacchaeus; he didn’t turn away from Zacchaeus. In fact, Jesus did the opposite. He looked for Zacchaeus; he found Zacchaeus; and he reached out to Zacchaeus. He took the time to be part of Zacchaeus’ life, but even more, he gave himself for Zacchaeus - just as he has done for us. Yes, Jesus gave himself for us, for you, and for me. He gave himself over to God and took our place as liar and cheat; he took our place as bully and jerk. He took our place as guilty. And on the cross, he was judged by God, rejected by God - in our place. But as I hope you know, the cross wasn’t the end for Jesus. God didn’t abandon Jesus. But God raised Jesus back to life, took him to his right hand in heaven, and set Jesus up to rule.

God set Jesus up - to arrange history to find you, to arrange your life so he can call you by name. Yes, God set Jesus up to make a home in your heart, to be part of your life, not just for a visit, but forever. That’s the love that God in Jesus had for Zacchaeus; that’s the love that God in Jesus has for you. It’s the love of God that calls you by name and says: “I must be part of your life.” It’s the love of God that calls you by name and says: “I love you and I forgive you with Jesus.” It’s the love of God that calls you by name and says: “I’ve got you today and forever.” It’s the love of God that is calling you by name and saying: “**The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.** Let’s do this together!”

Do you know any Zacchaeuses? Do you know anyone living lost? ... or maybe edging closer to lost? Maybe they’re hard to get along with. Maybe they’re easy to dislike. But maybe sometimes they feel hurt and alone. Maybe sometimes they feel a need for a Jesus. Maybe sometimes they wonder if Jesus could be for them. Do you know any Zacchaeuses? I think I do. What would Jesus do? What will the Jesus in us, in you, do? Why? “**The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost!**”

Zacchaeus was a wee little man,  
But a happy man was he.  
For he had seen the Lord that day  
And a happy man was he;  
And a very happy man was he.  
We get to share that happiness! Amen.

**DIVINE SERVICE II**

**IN OUR WORLD TODAY ...** do you know anyone who themselves as small, short, insufficient, rejected? How do they compensate for their “smallness”? Do you ever see yourself as small, short, insufficient, rejected? What’s your solution?

**IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...**we meet a short man - Zacchaeus; we see how he compensated for his shortness; but we especially see how Jesus met his needs ... and how Jesus meets our most important needs.

**OPENING HYMN**

*“How Great Thou Art”*  
**Hymn 612**

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder  
consider all the works thy hand hath made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
thy pow’r throughout the universe displayed; (Refrain)

Then sings my soul, my Savior-God, to thee,  
How great thou art! How great thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior-God to thee,  
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander  
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; (Refrain)

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,  
that on the cross my burden gladly bearing  
he bled and died to take away my sin; (Refrain)

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
and there proclaim: “My God, how great thou art!” (Refrain)

## INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

## CONFESSION

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.**

**For faithless worrying and selfish pride,**

**For sins of habit and sins of choice,**

**For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,**

**I deserve to be cast away from your presence forever.**

**O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

## ABSOLUTION

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

## LORD, HAVE MERCY (*Kyrie*)

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: **Christ, have mercy.**

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

C: **Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord God, forgive the wrongdoing of your people, and be gentle with us in our weakness. Deliver us from the bondage of our sin, and direct us to the path of righteousness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## FIRST READING

*Micah 7:18-20*

Who is God like you, who forgives guilt, and who passes over the rebellion of the survivors from his inheritance?

He does not hold onto his anger forever.

He delights in showing mercy.

He will have compassion on us again.

He will overcome our guilty deeds.

You will throw all their sins into the depths of the sea.

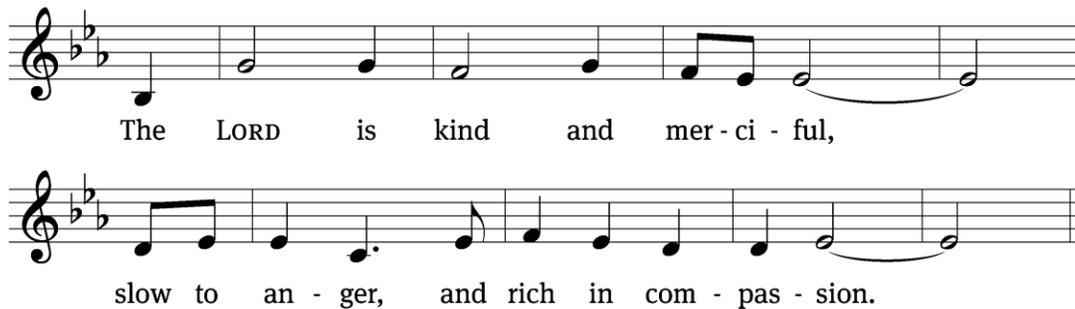
You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, as you swore to our fathers from days of old.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM OF THE DAY

**Psalm 103A**

*Refrain*



The LORD is kind and mer - ci - ful,  
slow to an - ger, and rich in com - pas - sion.

Praise the LORD, / my soul;

all my inmost being, praise his / holy name—

who forgives / all your sins

and heals all your dis- / eases,

who redeems your life / from the pit

and crowns you with love and com- / passion,

who satisfies your desires / with good things

so that your youth is renewed like the / eagle's. *Refrain*

The LORD is compassionate and / gracious,  
slow to anger, abound- / ing in love.  
He does not treat us as our / sins deserve  
or repay us according to our in- / iquities.  
For as high as the heavens are a- / bove the earth,  
so great is his love for those who / fear him;  
as far as the east is / from the west,  
so far has he removed our transgressions / from us.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son  
and to the Holy / Spirit,  
as it was in the be- / ginning,  
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

## SECOND READING

*Romans 5:6-11*

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SCHOOL CHILDREN SING (SUNDAY)

*"I Will Sing of My Redeemer"*  
Hymn 527

*I will sing of my Redeemer,  
and his wondrous love to me;  
on the cruel cross he suffered,  
from the curse to set me free. (Refrain)*

*Sing, O sing of my Redeemer,  
with his blood, he purchased me.  
On the cross he sealed my pardon,  
paid the debt, and made me free.*

*I will tell the wondrous story,  
how, my lost estate to save,  
in his boundless love and mercy,  
he the ransom freely gave. (Refrain)*

*I will praise my dear Redeemer,  
his triumphant pow'r I'll tell,  
how the victory he giveth  
over sin and death and hell. (Refrain)*

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Luke 19:9,10*

Alleluia! Salvation has come to this house today, for the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Alleluia!

#### **GOSPEL**

*Luke 19:1–10*

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man named Zacchaeus was there. He was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but since he was short, he could not see because of the crowd. "He ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus, because he was about to pass by that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." He came down quickly and welcomed Jesus joyfully. When the people saw it, they were all grumbling because he went to be a guest of a sinful man.

Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord. "Look, Lord, I am going to give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone out of anything, I will pay back four times as much."

Jesus said to him, "Today, salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to see and to save the lost."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"*

Hymn 578

### Hymn: 578 Chief of Sinners Though I Be

Chief of sinners though I be,  
Jesus shed his blood for me,  
died that I might live on high,  
lives that I might never die.  
As the branch is to the vine,  
I am his and he is mine!

Oh, the height of Jesus' love,  
higher than the heav'ns above,  
deeper than the depths of sea,  
lasting as eternity,

love that found me—wondrous thought—  
found me when I sought him not.

Only Jesus can impart  
comfort to a wounded heart,  
peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,  
joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,  
faith and hope to walk with God  
in the way that Enoch trod.

Chief of sinners though I be,  
Christ is all in all to me;  
all my wants to him are known,  
all my sorrows are his own.  
Safe with him in earthly strife,  
I await the heav'nly life.

Strengthen me, O gracious Lord,  
by your Spirit and your Word.  
When my wayward heart would stray,  
keep me in the narrow way;  
grace in time of need supply  
while I live and when I die.

## SERMON

## HYMN

*"Jesus Sinners Does Receive"*

**Hymn 654**

**Vs 1,2,5,7**

### **Hymn: 654 Jesus Sinners Does Receive**

Jesus sinners does receive;  
oh, may all this saying ponder  
who in sin's delusions live  
and from God and heaven wander.  
Here is hope for all who grieve:  
Jesus sinners does receive.

We deserve but grief and shame,  
yet his words, rich grace revealing,  
pardon, peace, and life proclaim;  
here their ills have perfect healing  
who with humble hearts believe:  
Jesus sinners does receive.

Oh, how blest it is to know,  
were as scarlet my transgression,  
it shall be as white as snow  
by your blood and bitter passion,  
for these words I do believe:  
Jesus sinners does receive.

Jesus sinners does receive,  
even I have been forgiven.  
And when I this earth must leave,  
I shall find an open heaven.  
Dying, still to him I cleave:  
Jesus sinners does receive.

#### OFFERING PRAYER

As we worship today, we are reminded of your great love for us. May these gifts be used to spread your love to others, bringing hope and healing to a world in need. Thank you for your love that never fails us. Amen.

#### OFFERING

*If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.*



*(You heard our school children sing today. Tuition Grant Fund envelopes are available in the pew rack to support affordable tuition for our school.)*

## PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

In peace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and all who offer here their worship and praise, that the Lord Himself would be pleased to stay here now and always, seeking and saving the lost by His Word, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all Christian homes, that we may be grounded in God's Word; and that husbands, wives and children may be united and nurtured in this Word, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For our leaders, and for ourselves, that we may plead the cause of widows and orphans and serve the needs of the least among us; and that peace and safety may abound, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who cry out with needs of body and soul, [*especially \_\_\_\_\_*,] that our heavenly Father would take all hurting hearts into His tender care, granting them His peace and delivering them out of their afflictions, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For us before Christ's altar, that none of us bring a vain offering or come concealing grudges, lies or any falseness of faith or life; that we come in true penitence; and that our sins, though as scarlet, may be washed white as snow in the blood of Christ, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For sincere and believing hearts, cleansed of sin, unbelief and false piety, that justice may be sought, oppression corrected, and true and acceptable sacrifices be offered before God according to His Word and teaching, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Heavenly Father, Your Son stooped low in His incarnation to be the guest of sinners and bring salvation to us. Make us worthy of Your calling. Work in us your power to fulfill our good and godly intentions that the name of Jesus may be glorified in us and his goodness and love shown through us. To that end, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord have mercy. Amen!**

## LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**BLESSING**

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN**

*"Amazing Grace"*  
**Hymn 576**

**Hymn: 576 Amazing Grace**

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found,  
was blind but now I see.

The Lord has promised good to me,  
his Word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come;  
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
bright shining as the sun,  
we've no less days to sing God's praise  
than when we'd first begun.

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