

I SAW HIM

Text: Luke 19:1-3

19:1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.

2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

3 He wanted to see who Jesus was,

Introduction: Wednesday night ginger and I met some folks for some after service fellowship and food at Denny's. As I made my way to the men's room a young lady sitting at a table with another woman waved and spoke to me. I nodded my head but did not stop until I had passed by them and glanced back. The young lady was Pastor Tim Kinney's daughter, Blake. I did not recognize her until I saw the other lady that was with her was her mother, Jackie. She had changed! She was so much older looking. Even though I knew her well, not seeing her for that period of time left me clueless to whom she was. I submit that some Christians, and you may be one have not taken a serious look at Jesus for some time and you don't really recognize His Presence in your life.

Jesus questioned the crowd that had gone out to see John the Baptist.

Matt 11:7 As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?"

Jesus is asking them, "Did you recognize who he was?"

8 If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces.

9 Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

Jesus then shares with them his true identity.

10 This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

11 I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

13 For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

14 And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come.

15 He who has ears, let him hear.

Jesus is basically saying to these people, "You went out and saw a man but you did not realize who he was or what he was doing. You missed out because you did not recognize that he was the forerunner of the Messiah preparing the way for His entrance into the world."

I want us to look at Zacchaeus again tonight as his story declares to us that he recognized who Jesus was.

I. I Want to See Jesus.

A. He had a plan.

1. He knew the crowd would hinder his view.

Luke 19:3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd.

2. He positioned himself above the others.

4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

3. If you want to truly see Jesus today, you probably need to admit that the crowd will always get in your way.
4. If you are serious about seeing Him, you are going to have to realize that just standing by the wayside will not do.
5. If you want a real clear view of Jesus today, you must be determined like Zacchaeus to find you a vantage point when He passes by.
6. Chances are, you will here that He has just passed by from your pew.
7. And chances are, you will miss your opportunity for Him to see you.

B. He had a problem. He was wealthy and a tax collector.

Luke 19:2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

1. Don't let your financial prosperity be a hindrance to you.

1 Tim 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

2. Don't let your status in life hinder you.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

3. In Jesus day, Jews shunned the tax collectors.

Luke 5:30 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

C. You and I cannot let anything keep us from being in His Presence.

II. He Saw Jesus.

A. Zacchaeus had a specific desire.

Luke 19:3a "He wanted to see who Jesus was..."

1. "Who he was - what sort of person this was, about whom there was so much speculation, and after whom such crowds were following.
2. Curiosity, then, was his only motive..."
3. Isn't it time you got beyond just being curious about the things of the Kingdom?
4. Isn't it time you became serious about your personal walk and relationship with God?
5. Zacchaeus climbed a tree.

Luke 19:4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

6. I wish I knew where a good sycamore tree was because I would recommend that some of you climb it because you will never encounter God where you are right now.

7. I even thought about bringing some sycamore tree seeds today but some of you cannot wait that long to see Jesus.

B. Observe from his story that Zacchaeus really “saw” Jesus.

1. Zacchaeus found out that Jesus was looking for him.

Luke 19:5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

2. When Jesus said, “I must stay at your house today,” He was reflecting the truth of salvation's hope “Today is the day of salvation. Behold now is the accepted time.”

3. Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus gladly.

6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

a. “He came down” Get in an altar

b. “At once” is the only way to receive Jesus.

4. Zacchaeus acknowledged his sin.

5. Zacchaeus did not let the crowd sway his decision.

Luke 19:7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"

Luke 19:7 But the crowds were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled. [TLB]

4. Zacchaeus further actions confirm he realized who Jesus really was.

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

Luke 19:8 Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "Sir, from now on I will give half my wealth to the poor, and if I find I have overcharged anyone on his taxes, I will penalize myself by giving him back four times as much!" [TLB]

Conclusion: Jesus declared the outcome of His encounter with Zacchaeus.

Luke 19:9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

Jesus also declared His reason for coming to our world.

10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

The Word of the Lord to you and I in this story is that Zacchaeus truly grasped who Jesus was.

1] When He saw Him, he did not hesitate to obey Him – he came down from the tree.

2] When Jesus declared His desire to be at his house, he welcomed Him—and he gladly welcomed Him.

3] When he saw Jesus, he did not deny his sinful ways—here and now I give...and if I have cheated...I will pay back.

You need to see the Lord one more time. See Him as He really is. See Him as the One who knows all about you. See Him as the forgiver and cleanser of sin. See Him as the new guest at your house today.

He's passing by and He is looking to see who will position himself or herself to see Him. If you are there, He will spot you and He will declare Himself to be your help today.