

# Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10



New Testament 2  
Part 2: Jesus the Master Teacher

## SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 2 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Luke 19:1-10

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "You shall not steal" (Exodus 20:15).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Let him who stole, steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good..." (Ephesians 4:28a).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Zacchaeus: Called By Christ"](#)
- ["Zacchaeus, the Wee Man"](#)
- ["Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man"](#)
- ["Zacchaeus"](#)
- ["Zacchaeus Climbed a Tree"](#)
- ["God's Little Children Love Living Right!"](#)
- ["Oh Zacchaeus"](#)
- ["Zacchaeus Was His Name"](#)
- ["If You're Sorry and You Know It"](#)
- ["Choices"](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be scriptural.]
- [Miracles & Teachings of Jesus](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "N.T. 2 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)
- Apologetics Press' [Bible Timeline](#)
- "Summary of the Bible" from ["Kids Prep"](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- "Matthew Chapter Summary" from ["Kids Prep"](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- ["Map of New Testament World"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- ["Map of Palestine"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)



- **Later Ministry of Jesus A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*; skip card CD 4.3)**
- **Zacchaeus flannelgraph**
- ***Treasures in Heaven, Animated New Testament Stories, Video #11***
- **Puppets of Zacchaeus and Jesus**
- **“Robbie, the Robber” story and illustrations from Sarah Richey’s book, *Creative Bible Teaching, Vol. 2***

## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me always to be honest. When I make a bad choice, God will forgive me if I tell Him I’m sorry and try hard to make better choices.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Last week we learned about Jesus and someone He met at Jacob’s well. Who did He see there? (Samaritan woman) We learned about how important it is to talk to people about God no matter who they are. Everyone needs to learn about God! Today, we are going to learn about a man who wanted to see and hear Jesus so badly that he climbed up a tree. We are going to learn about how this man changed his life to do what is right.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson, emphasizing that Jesus came to teach **everyone**, not just people who looked or acted like He wanted. Have you ever wanted to see someone so badly that you would do just about anything to see that person? (Let students talk about this for a few minutes.) When Jesus was here on Earth, many people tried to see Him. The Bible often describes the “multitudes” that followed Him. So it was not always easy to get to see Jesus. There was one man who did something very unusual just so he could see Jesus; what he did paid off.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. The Romans controlled the country where Jesus lived, and they forced the Jews to pay lots of taxes. Jericho was one of the places where those taxes were collected. The Roman government hired Jewish men to gather taxes from their countrymen; they were allowed to keep a percentage of the money collected. These men, known as “chief **tax collectors**” hired other Jewish men to work under them and also collect taxes.



**Tax Collector:** A tax collector (also called a “publican”) was someone who took up money from the people for their government/country. Important people in the government would decide how that money should be used for their country. Sometimes tax collectors took more money than what they were supposed to and they would put that extra money in their pocket and keep it. This is the same thing as stealing.

2. Jesus was traveling through **Jericho** on His way to Jerusalem for the last time, teaching the crowds that followed Him. There was a man named Zacchaeus who was also following Jesus, trying to hear and see Him. Apparently, he had heard a lot about Jesus and wanted to see this

miracle Worker and great Teacher for himself. Even though Zacchaeus was rich, he knew there was something missing in his life. He wanted to hear what the great Teacher Jesus had to say.



**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Jericho, also called “The City of Palm Trees,” would have been one of the Roman government’s main locations for collecting taxes in Palestine. It was about 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. The Old Testament Jericho was roughly two miles northeast of the newer Herodian Jericho. The Herodian Jericho is likely being referenced by Luke here. See Eric Lyons (2004), “Controversial Jericho” [<https://apologeticspress.org/controversial-jericho-666/>].

3. Zacchaeus was a chief publican. Publicans were Jews who collected taxes for the Roman government. They often collected more than they were supposed to, keeping the extra money for themselves. The chief tax collector supervised other tax collectors, taking money from them. Because of this, tax collectors were often despised by other Jews. Zacchaeus was a very rich man.
4. As often happened, a large crowd surrounded Jesus, and Zacchaeus, a very **short man**, could not get close enough to see the Him. He ran ahead and found a sycamore tree that he could climb, and he sat in its branches until the Great Teacher came nearer. He did two things that were uncommon for an Eastern man of his importance: he ran, and he climbed a tree.



**HISTORICAL NOTE:** According to the *Bible Background Commentary* (page 240), Zacchaeus was probably less than 5 feet tall, since he was short “by ancient Mediterranean standards.” Jericho was known as “the city of palms,” but Zacchaeus chose a tree much easier to climb. The sycamore tree mentioned was probably related to the fig-mulberry tree, and was probably very similar to modern sycamores in North America, Europe, or Asia.

5. Not only did Zacchaeus want to see Jesus, but Jesus wanted to see him. When Jesus came to the sycamore tree, He looked up and called Zacchaeus by name, though they had never met. Jesus told the short tax collector to come down in a hurry. He wanted to go to Zacchaeus’ house. Zacchaeus hurried down the tree, excited and happy. But there were some in the crowd who were not happy and grumbled because Jesus was willing to spend time with a sinner like Zacchaeus.



**NOTE:** Jesus frequently angered the Jewish leaders who did not approve of Him spending time with sinners, like tax collectors, whom they considered unacceptable and “unsaveable” (e.g., Luke 5:27-32 and 15:1-2). Jesus not only talked to those people but chose to eat at their tables. Eating at one’s table was considered by many to be a sign of social acceptance of a person and his lifestyle. Jesus never approved of sin. His choice to eat with sinners was to teach them the Gospel (Luke 5:31-32).

6. Zacchaeus stopped (either along the way to his house or after spending time with Jesus) to tell Jesus (apparently in front of the crowd, possibly in response to their grumbling, murmuring attitudes) that he was giving away half of everything he owned to the poor. He also gave back anything that he had wrongfully taken from anyone. In fact, he gave to give back four times as much as he had taken. This was incredibly generous for Zacchaeus, much more than the law required.



**NOTE:** Under Mosaic Law, a Jew was required to make restitution when he could (Exodus 22:1-4) as a sign of repentance. The Pharisees developed their own traditions and rules. They required a Jew to pay back (or make up) four or five times what the original item was worth, but only for stolen oxen and sheep—and only in certain circumstances. Zacchaeus’ offer to return everything, plus extra, went beyond both the Law and the traditions of the Pharisees.

7. Jesus did not care that Zacchaeus was a tax collector, or that he had made bad choices in his past. He came to teach everyone, to help people change, and to show everyone God’s love for those that humbly wish to repent and obey Him. He said He came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). What He expects from us, when we do wrong things, is repentance (a change of heart which causes a change of actions). If we repent (say we are sorry and show it by our actions), He will forgive us. Every day we can start over, just as Zacchaeus did, and try to do better and make better choices. Jesus said that Zacchaeus would be saved because of his faith and his willingness to follow Him. Jesus came to Earth to bring salvation to everyone who would believe in Him. He forgave Zacchaeus because of his faith and his repentance.
8. As soon as he heard Jesus’ teachings, Zacchaeus knew that he could not be a follower of Jesus if he continued to be dishonest and take money from other people. So, he changed his life. Jesus wants us to be honest too, not just with our money, but in our words (lying) and actions (cheating, etc.). (Another lesson would be that when we do wrong, even though we repent, we often have to suffer consequences, or do things to make right what wrong we did—Matthew 3:8.)
9. Jesus left Jericho to go on to Jerusalem just a few days before He died. We don’t know if Zacchaeus followed Jesus into Jerusalem or if he saw Jesus crucified on the cross. But his life was changed by the love and acceptance and forgiveness of Jesus that day in Jericho.

**PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):**

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Keys](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- [“Zacchaeus Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Make small money bags for the children with caption, “Zacchaeus Learned to Be Honest.” Can put play money in bags and have children share their coins with one another.
- Enlarge the Zacchaeus section of Luke 19, mount it on cardstock, and laminate it. Show a word card of “Zacchaeus,” and let the kids find and circle the word on the Scripture card.
- Make a large tree and several small figures of Zacchaeus. Blindfold each child, one at a time, and play “Pin Zacchaeus on the Tree.”
- Have several questions from the story numbered on a sheet of paper. After (or instead of) the above game, have each “Zacchaeus” numbered and put them on the tree. Let each child pick a Zacchaeus out of the tree and ask him the question that corresponds to the number on his Zacchaeus. If he answers correctly, the child gets play money for his money bag.
- Have the outline of a tree on a sheet of paper (one for each child). Have each child draw a Zacchaeus in his tree.
- Let the children role play the story.

- [“Help Zacchaeus Find Jesus Maze”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- “Put Zacchaeus in the Tree” game: Draw and cut out a basic tree on a sheet of posterboard, then hang the tree on the wall. Make several diecuts/cutouts of a male figure (enough for each child to have one). **Or** cut out circles on which you (or the children) have drawn basic faces (one per child). Blindfold each child, and let each one try to put “Zacchaeus” in the tree (like “Pin the Tail on the Donkey”).
- Zacchaeus sack puppets: Give each child a small paper sack. For the two and three year olds, draw the facial features on the sacks ahead of time; let the children color/add finishing touches. Four and five year olds should be able to draw facial features on their sacks. If you have rectangular pieces of fabric available, the children could also glue on Zacchaeus’ “robe.” As children finish their sack puppets, ask them to pretend to be Zacchaeus and answer questions about the lesson. (Example: Where are you from? What kind of job did you have? What famous teacher came to visit your town? etc.)
- Role Play: Let the children act out the story, or ask some teens from your congregation to act out the story for your class.

### 1st-2nd Graders:

- Let the children role play the story.
- Make a large tree on the wall. Have several questions from the story numbered on a sheet of paper. Make several small figures of Zacchaeus; number them (or write the questions on each Zacchaeus), and put them on the tree. Let each child pick a Zacchaeus out of the tree and ask him the question that corresponds to the number on his Zacchaeus. Can be played in teams, keeping score by how many questions are answered correctly.
- Have the outline of a tree on a sheet of paper (one for each child). Have the children draw a Zacchaeus in their tree.
- [“A Wee Little Man”](#) word search (provided in activity sheets)
- [“Can You Figure This Out?”](#) activity sheet (provided in activity sheets)
- [“Help Zacchaeus Find Jesus Maze”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- [“Why Jesus Came”](#) activity sheet (provided in activity sheets)
- Tic-Tac-Toe game: Use review questions about all the lessons in this unit ([Instructions](#) and [Board](#) provided in activity section of website).
- Memory Verse review: Write one or two words of today’s memory verse on separate index cards. Make 3-4 sets of these cards; put each set in a zippered plastic bag. Divide the class into 3-4 groups, and give each group a set of the cards. Challenge each team to put the verse back together as quickly as possible. To make it more challenging, make sets of cards for the memory verses of each lesson in this unit. As each team finishes one verse, give them another bag with the cards for another memory verse to put in the correct order.
- Role Play: Let the children act out the story, or ask some teens from your congregation to act out the story for your class.
- “Put Zacchaeus in the Tree” game: Draw and cut out a basic tree on a sheet of posterboard, then hang the tree on the wall. Make several diecuts/cutouts of a male figure (enough for each child to have one). **Or** cut out circles on which you (or the children) have drawn basic faces (one per child). Blindfold each child, and let each one try to put “Zacchaeus” in the tree (like “Pin the Tail on the Donkey”).
- “Who Am I?”: On index cards or strips of paper, write clues about different characters in the stories in this unit (e.g., widow, blind man, Pharisees, sower, crippled man, Zacchaeus, Jews, apostles, shepherd, Jesus, etc.). Put the clues in a basket or bag. Let each child choose a clue and tell who it describes. **Or** Write the characters on the board and let each child put his clue on/by the correct

character.

- Have the children read the following:
  - *Zacchaeus Meets Jesus* Happy Day book from Standard Publishing
  - *Zacchaeus* Big Book from Group Publishing
  - Zonderkidz “I Can Read!” Series: *Zacchaeus Meets Jesus*

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- Make a large tree on the wall. Have several questions from the story numbered on a sheet of paper. Make several small figures of Zacchaeus; number them (or write the questions on each Zacchaeus), and put them on the tree. Let each child pick a Zacchaeus out of the tree and ask him the question that corresponds to the number on his Zacchaeus. Can be played in teams, keeping score by how many questions are answered correctly.
- Have a yardstick and measure the height of the children to see who is the shortest in the class. Be sensitive to children who may not want to be pointed out as being “short.” Make it fun and positive.
- “[Honesty Adds Up!](#)” activity sheet (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Why Jesus Came](#)” activity sheet (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Zacchaeus Opposites](#)” activity sheet (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Help Zacchaeus Find Jesus Maze](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- “[A Wee Little Man](#)” word search (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Can You Figure this Out?](#)” activity sheet (provided in activity sheets)
- Tic-Tac-Toe game: Use review questions about all the lessons in this unit ([Instructions](#) and [Board](#) provided in activity section of website).
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- Have the children read the following:
  - Luke 19
  - *Zacchaeus* Arch Book
  - *Jesus Does Miracles and Heals People*, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing House, pp. 52-53

## FINGERPLAY:

### “ZACCHAEUS: CALLED BY CHRIST”

(action story)

Jesus is coming! (cup hands to mouth)

Let’s all go see! (hold one hand over eyes and look around)

Zacchaeus was so short, (hold hand low to indicate short height)  
So he climbed up in a tree! (move hands in climbing motion)  
Soon Jesus walked by. (walk in place)  
The crowd was so big! (extend arms out to sides)  
Jesus told Zacchaeus, (place hand over eyes and look up)  
“Come down now! Don’t wait. (motion to come down)  
I’m going to go to your house today. (point to self, then point away from self)  
Zacchaeus, I know all the ways you’ve sinned. (point to head, then shake head sadly)  
So believe in God and begin again.” (point up, then extend arm in gesture of invitation)  
Zacchaeus was sorry, (wipe tears from eyes)  
For the wrongs he had done. (shake head sadly)  
He repaid everyone money he had taken. (pretend to distribute money to crowd)  
He trusted Jesus and made a new start. (fold hands in prayer, then shake head “yes”)

Little Zacchaeus had a **big** change of heart! (hold hand low to indicate short height, then place hands over heart)

## POEM:

### “ZACCAEUS, THE WEE MAN”

Zacchaeus was a little man who lived in Jericho.  
He probably was smaller than ‘most any man you know.  
He had never seen the Lord until one happy day.  
He heard the news that Jesus was passing through that way.  
Zacchaeus was determined to see this wondrous man.  
So out the door he hurried and down the road he ran.  
Soon he was among the crowd that waited eagerly.  
Then, because he was so small, he climbed up in a tree.  
Here above the others’ heads, he’d be sure to see,  
The man he’d heard so much about, the man from Galilee.  
When Jesus finally came, He lifted up His eyes.  
And saw the anxious little man gazing in surprise.  
“Come down, Zacchaeus,” Jesus said. “Please come down right away,  
For I am going home with you to be your guest today.”  
Zacchaeus slid down from the tree just like a happy boy,  
And as he walked beside the Lord, his heart was filled with joy.

## SONGS:

### **“ZACCHAEUS WAS A WEE LITTLE MAN” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Traditional

Zacchaeus was a wee little man,  
And a wee little man was he.  
He climbed up in the sycamore tree  
For the Lord he wanted to see.  
And as the Savior passed his way  
He looked up in the tree.  
And said, “Zacchaeus, you come down from there.”  
“For I’m going to your house today.”  
“For I’m going to your house today.”

### **“ZACCHAEUS” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Yankee Doodle”)

Once there was a little man a sittin’ in a tree.  
He sat there as the folks passed by,  
The Lord he wanted to see.  
Then Jesus looked up in the tree and saw Zacchaeus there.  
He said, “Zacchaeus, please come down from there.”  
“I’ll help you ‘cause I care.”

### **“ZACCHAEUS CLIMBED A TREE” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Farmer in the Dell”)

Zacchaeus climbed a tree.  
Zacchaeus climbed a tree.  
He hoped to see the Savior there,  
So he climbed up in a tree.  
Jesus said, “Come down.”  
Jesus said, “Come down.”  
“Come down and walk with Me.”  
Jesus said, “Come down.”  
“I’m going to your house.”  
“I’m going to your house.”  
“I hope I will be welcome there.”  
“I’m going to your house.”



**“GOD’S LITTLE CHILDREN LOVE LIVING RIGHT!” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Sarah Richey

(Tune: “Mammy’s Little Baby Loves Short’nin’ Bread”)

God’s little children love living, living,  
God’s little children love living right!

(REPEAT)

Get out the Bible, turn to the place,  
Gonna talk about Jesus and His saving grace!  
He is our Savior; He saved our race!  
Gonna spread Jesus all over this place!

(REPEAT FIRST STANZA)

**“OH ZACCHAEUS” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

HALF OF CLASS: O Zacchaeus, O Zacchaeus, where are you? Where are you?

OTHER HALF OF CLASS: I’m up in a tree. I’m up in a tree, a sycamore tree, a sycamore tree.

HALF OF CLASS: O Zacchaeus, O Zacchaeus, hurry down, hurry down.

I am going with you, I am going with you,  
To your house, to your house.

**“ZACCHAEUS WAS HIS NAME” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Lora Laycook (adapted)

(Tune: “Battle Hymn of the Republic”)

In Jericho there was a man, he was very, very short. (3X)  
Zacchaeus was his name.

He wanted to see Jesus, so he climbed up in a tree. (3X)  
‘Cause he was very short.

“Zacchaeus, hurry down from there, and let’s go to your house,” (3X)  
Jesus said that day.

“I’ll take half of what I own, and then I’ll help the poor,” (3X)  
Zacchaeus said that day.

Glory, glory, hallelujah, (3X)  
Zacchaeus changed his life!

**“IF YOU’RE SORRY AND YOU KNOW IT” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “If You’re Happy and You Know It”)

If you’re sorry and you know it, talk to God. (REPEAT)  
If you’re sorry and you know it, then your life will surely show it,  
If you’re sorry and you know it, talk to God.

If you’re forgiven and you know it, praise the Lord. (REPEAT)  
If you’re forgiven and you know it, then your life will surely show it,  
If you’re forgiven and you know it, praise the Lord.

**“CHOICES” ([Click to Hear](#))**

(Tune: “Yankee Doodle”)

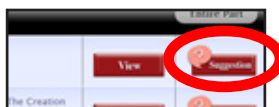
Every day in every way,  
We all make our choices;  
We say “yes” or we say “no,”  
By using our own voices.

CHORUS:

Help us Lord, to choose what’s right  
Every day and night.  
Help us, Lord to choose what’s right  
We want to make good choices.

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



# Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10



New Testament 2  
Part 2: Jesus the Master Teacher

## WEDNESDAY EVENING

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Luke 19:1-10

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “You shall not steal” (Exodus 20:15).

OLDER CHILDREN: “Let him who stole, steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good...” (Ephesians 4:28a).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY’S LESSON FOR WORDS):

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- [“Zacchaeus, the Wee Man”](#)
- [“Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man”](#)
- [“Zacchaeus”](#)
- [“Zacchaeus Climbed a Tree”](#)
- [“God’s Little Children Love Living Right!”](#)
- [“Oh Zacchaeus”](#)
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- [“If You’re Sorry and You Know It”](#)
- [“Choices”](#)

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- Zacchaeus flannelgraph



- *Treasures in Heaven, Animated New Testament Stories, Video #11*
- *Puppets of Zacchaeus and Jesus*
- “Robbie, the Robber” story and illustrations from Sarah Richey’s book, *Creative Bible Teaching, Vol. 2*

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me always to be honest.

### INTRODUCTION:

- Briefly review Sunday morning’s lesson (see [N.T. 2 Review Questions](#) for example questions)
- [N.T. 2 Bible Facts Flashcards](#) (provided under “N.T. 2 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Emphasize the many ways we can be dishonest. If the devil can convince us to do something “just a little bit wrong,” it will be easier and easier to do things wrong. (It is hard to tell a “small” lie to our parents, but if we do, the next time it’s easier to do it, and the next time is even easier, until telling “big” lies become, easy.) Publicans had a bad **reputation** because there were so many who were dishonest. With OLDER CHILDREN, discuss what a **reputation** is and what it means to have a good reputation. Discuss things we can do that will make us have bad reputations. What do you think your reputation is? Do others hear your name and think of you as a liar, cheater, cusser, bully, thief, etc.?
2. Tell a story to bring home to the children what it means to be dishonest and to steal, such as taking a toy from a friend’s house when they are not looking, not returning money to the store if they accidentally give you too much, etc.
3. With OLDER CHILDREN, talk about what it **cost** Zacchaeus to follow Jesus’ teachings. He was not just willing to give up his wealth. He was willing to completely change. What does it cost **us** to follow Jesus?

### PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson

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