

Messy People | The Guy who loved Money... | Discussion Guide - Luke 19:1-10

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People are a mess. We have messy lives, even the OCD control freaks. We may have orderly jobs, homes, or even schedules, but we still have our Messes! *But That's Okay*, because there is a MESSiah! In this series, we have witnessed some of the greatest clean ups efforts in history and in them learned how the MESSiah - Jesus - can fix Our Mess!

Today we look at a man that most children heard about in Sunday School, Zacchaeus. He was a man who had it all, but was still looking for something. He wasn't sure what, but he was looking.

Money will not clean up the Mess...

Luke 19:2-3 NLT *He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. 3 He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short.*

Zacchaeus was a sell out. Zacchaeus worked for the Internal Revenue Service of His day, only in his day, "IRS" collections went to another country. You can imagine how unpopular it would have been to be the man collecting taxes on his own people. Those taxes were really just tribute to the Roman Government.

Luke 19:7 NLT *But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled.*

Because of His job as a tax collector, he was an outcast. So, Zacchaeus, even though successful, was an outsider among his own people. Maybe we can identify with the perspective of an outsider. Often the isolation and "aloneness" is a catalyst for some big messes.

Luke 19:4 NLT *So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.*

Zacchaeus was searching. What drives a successful businessman up a tree? It is not very dignified for a full grown man to climb a tree. What was he looking for up that tree? It doesn't seem likely that a man of his reputation was some kind of "groupie". Only desperation could humble a person to behave in such a manner. He was wealthy. He enjoyed comforts few others could experience in his time. Yet, here he is, desperately searching for something. It seems that if he could have plenty of money and possessions and still be in a mess, so could we.

When Jesus finds the Mess...

Luke 19:5 NLT *When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today."*

When Jesus invites Himself over... For some reason, Jesus looked upon a specific tree that day, and even though Jesus' own reputation would be sullied, He still took the moment to befriend a desperate man. You just have to love how Jesus just kind of "walks" into Zacchaeus' life.

What if Jesus is Looking for you? What if Jesus were to just barge in to your life? Would that be okay? After all, haven't we already tried to clean up our mess? Haven't we just made it worse time and time again? Isaiah described our situation plainly.

Isaiah 64:6 NLT *When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags.*

But Jesus is the MESSiah. He knows about messes, and He knows how to fix them!

Luke 19:10 NLT *For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.*

The Original "Come to Jesus" Meeting

The Bible does not record the conversation between Jesus and Zacchaeus. We don't know if Jesus dressed Zacchaeus down, or if he just loved him. What we do know is that Zacchaeus concluded that dinner free from greed. We also know Jesus found that for which He was seeking.

Somehow, and in some very deep way, Zacchaeus was lost. Maybe he lost his way, maybe his soul, and definitely his own heart.

Matthew 6:24 NIV *No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.*

Somewhere along the way to success, he discovered that the most important parts of his life were missing. When he met Jesus that day, everything changed for Zacchaeus. He was no longer the outsider. He was not longer in a mess. Because, everything changes when you know you are loved. Everything changes when Jesus finds you.

Discussion:

- Read Luke 19:1-10. What stands out in this story? Discuss some things you notice.
- What does Zacchaeus' action of climbing a tree tell you about him?
- What do you think Zacchaeus, with all of his wealth, was searching for?
- Why do you think Jesus was so direct in his invitation to Zacchaeus?
- Discuss Luke 19:10. What does it mean to be lost? Discuss ways we get "lost".
- Discuss Isaiah 64:6. How do we make our messes worse?
- Discuss Matthew 6:24. How do money and possessions make our mess worse?
- Did anything stand out in your reading today that you could share with someone else?