

Seeking the Saviour

“This day is salvation come to this house” (Luke 19:9).

“In this chief of the publicans was awakened a longing for a better life.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 301.

Suggested Reading: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 552–556.

1. Zacchaeus, a Chief Tax Collector

- a. What did Zacchaeus do as he wanted to see Jesus? Luke 19:3, 4. What conviction got hold of him?
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“The wealthy customs officer was not altogether the hardened man of the world that he seemed. Beneath the appearance of worldliness and pride was a heart susceptible to divine influences. Zacchaeus had heard of Jesus. The report of One who had borne Himself with kindness and courtesy toward the proscribed classes had spread far and wide. In this chief of the publicans was awakened a longing for a better life. Only a few miles from Jericho, John the Baptist had preached at the Jordan, and Zacchaeus had heard of the call to repentance. The instruction to the publicans, ‘Exact no more than that which is appointed you’ (Luke 3:13), though outwardly disregarded, had impressed his mind. He knew the Scriptures and was convicted that his practice was wrong. Now, hearing the words reported to have come from the Great Teacher, he felt that he was a sinner in the sight of God. Yet what he had heard of Jesus kindled hope in his heart.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 553.

- a. Luke 19:3-4 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. 4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

1. Zaccheaus, a Chief Tax Collector

- b. What fact should we always bear in mind with all evangelistic endeavors? Luke 18:27.
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“Repentance, reformation of life, was possible, even to [Zacchaeus].”
—Ibid.

- b. Luke 18:27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

2. An Enthusiastic Summons

- a. When Jesus arrived at the place where Zacchaeus was waiting in the Sycomore tree, with what words did He call him? Luke 19:5.
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“Above the clamor of priests and rabbis and the shouts of welcome from the multitude, that unuttered desire of the chief publican spoke to the heart of Jesus. Suddenly, just beneath the fig tree, a group halts, the company before and behind come to a standstill, and One looks upward whose glance seems to read the soul. Almost doubting his senses, the man in the tree hears the words, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house’ (Luke 19:5)”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 553, 554.

- a. Luke 19:5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

2. An Enthusiastic Summons

- b. When Zacchaeus met Jesus and started leading the way toward his home, what did the rabbis scornfully say? Luke 19:6, 7.
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“The multitude give way, and Zacchaeus, walking as in a dream, leads the way toward his own home. But the rabbis look on with scowling faces, and murmur in discontent and scorn, ‘that He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner’ (Luke 19:7). Zacchaeus had been overwhelmed, amazed, and silenced at the love and condescension of Christ in stooping to him, so unworthy. Now love and loyalty to his newfound Master unseal his lips. He will make public his confession and his repentance.”—Ibid., p. 554.

- b. Luke 19:6-7 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

2. An Enthusiastic Summons

c. What confederacy existed among the publicans?

“Among the publicans there was a confederacy, so that they could oppress the people and sustain one another in their fraudulent practices. In their extortion they were but carrying out what had become an almost universal custom. Even the priests and rabbis who despised them were guilty of enriching themselves by dishonest practices under cover of their sacred calling. But no sooner did Zacchaeus yield to the influence of the Holy Spirit than he cast aside every practice contrary to integrity.”—*Ibid.*, p. 555.

3. A Softened Heart

- a. Aware that many of his detractors were questioning his integrity, what did Zacchaeus say? Luke 19:8. With what Old Testament principle was this in harmony—and what should we learn from it? Exodus 22:1.
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“Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced that repentance which is not to be repented of, and have not with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit confessed our sins, abhorring our iniquity, we have never truly sought for the forgiveness of sin; and if we have never sought, we have never found the peace of God. The only reason why we do not have remission of sins that are past is that we are not willing to humble our hearts and comply with the conditions of the word of truth. Explicit instruction is given concerning this matter. Confession of sin, whether public or private, should be heartfelt and freely expressed. It is not to be urged from the sinner. It is not to be made in a flippant and careless way, or forced from those who have no realizing sense of the abhorrent character of sin.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 37, 38.

“No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and forsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.

“The Christian in his business life is to represent to the world the manner in which our Lord would conduct business enterprises. In every transaction he is to make it manifest that God is his teacher. ‘Holiness unto the Lord’ is to be written upon daybooks and ledgers, on deeds, receipts, and bills of exchange.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 555, 556.

- a. Luke 19:8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.
Exodus 22:1 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

3. A Softened Heart

- b. What does the psalmist say about those who pour out their innermost soul in a genuine confession? Psalm 34:18.
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b. Psalms 34:18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

3. A Softened Heart

- c. What did Christ say after hearing Zacchaeus' confession? Luke 19:9.

- c. Luke 19:9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

4. Christ's Mission to the World

- a. How did Christ use Zacchaeus as an example of His mission to the world? Luke 19:9, 10.
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“Christ went to [Zacchaeus’] home to give him lessons of truth, and to instruct his household in the things of the kingdom. They had been shut out from the synagogues by the contempt of rabbis and worshipers; but now, the most favored household in all Jericho, they gathered in their own home about the divine Teacher, and heard for themselves the words of life.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 556.

- a. Luke 19:9-10 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

4. Christ's Mission to the World

- b. Relate the parable that Christ added to complete the lesson He used to illustrate the good news of salvation. Luke 19:12–26.
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b. Luke 19:12-26 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. 15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. 17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. 18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. 19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. 20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: 21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. 22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: 23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? 24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. 25 (And they said unto him,

Lord, he hath ten pounds.) 26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

4. Christ's Mission to the World

- c. What is required of us in seeking to save that which was lost? 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 20.
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“We are to exert a saving influence over those who are without God and without hope in the world. The pathway to the city of refuge is to be kept free from the rubbish of selfishness of sin. Those who profess to be following the Lamb of God are to take every stumbling block out of the way. But too often those who claim to believe the truth lay stumbling blocks in the way of others. They say that they know Christ, but in works they deny Him. By their trifling conduct they hurt those they might have helped.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 29, 1899.

“We are living in a time when the last message of mercy, the last invitation, is sounding to the children of men. The command, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges,’ is reaching its final fulfillment. To every soul Christ’s invitation will be given. The messengers are saying, ‘Come; for all things are now ready’ (Luke 14:23, 17). Heavenly angels are still working in cooperation with human agencies. The Holy Spirit is presenting every inducement to constrain you to come. Christ is watching for some sign that will betoken the removing of the bolts and the opening of the door of your heart for His entrance. Angels are waiting to bear the tidings to heaven that another lost sinner has been found.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 237.

c. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

2 Corinthians 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

5. COLABORERS WITH GOD

- a. If we, as coworkers with God, will but do our God-given part, what words of the Saviour will come to many homes? Luke 19:5.
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“If the servants of God will walk with Him in faith, He will give power to their message. They will be enabled so to present His love and the danger of rejecting the grace of God that men will be constrained to accept the gospel. Christ will perform wonderful miracles if men will but do their God-given part. In human hearts today as great a transformation may be wrought as has ever been wrought in generations past. John Bunyan was redeemed from profanity and reveling, John Newton from slave dealing, to proclaim an uplifted Saviour. A Bunyan and a Newton may be redeemed from among men today. Through human agents who cooperate with the divine, many a poor outcast will be reclaimed, and in his turn will seek to restore the image of God in man. There are those who have had very meager opportunities, who have walked in ways of error because they knew no better way, to whom beams of light will come. As the word of Christ came to Zacchaeus, ‘Today I must abide at thy house’ (Luke 19:5), so the word will come to them; and those who were supposed to be hardened sinners will be found to have hearts as tender as a child’s because Christ has deigned to notice them. Many will come from the grossest error and sin, and will take the place of others who have had opportunities and privileges but have not prized them. They will be accounted the chosen of God, elect, precious; and when Christ shall come into His kingdom, they will stand next His throne.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 236.

- a. Luke 19:5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How can Christ's attitude toward Zacchaeus bring us hope?
2. What did Zacchaeus say before anyone had time to accuse him?
3. Why was Christ able to proclaim an open victory in Zacchaeus' home?
4. How are many to rejoice today just as did the household of Zacchaeus?
5. What cooperation is required of us in the work of seeking to save that which was lost?