

NOVEMBER 8, 2026

JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

LUKE 19

CHRIST CONNECTION

We are all sinners, but Jesus came to seek and save us, too. He died on the cross and rose again so we can be forgiven and have eternal life when we turn from our sin and trust in Him.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What is justification? Justification is when God declares that we are forgiven of sin and are made righteous.

MEMORY VERSE

2 Corinthians 5:21

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PREPARE

Take time to reflect on today's lesson.

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

"Zacchaeus was a wee little man …"

This line from a popular children's song is lighthearted and catchy, but it can make Zacchaeus seem more innocent than he likely was. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. In Jewish culture, a tax collector was the kind of person families warned their children about. People thought of tax collectors as thieves and extortionists—people who had betrayed the Jews to work with the Romans.

And yet, chief tax collector as he was, Zacchaeus became a conduit of one of Jesus' most beautiful moments of mercy and grace.

Luke writes that Zacchaeus "was trying to see who Jesus was." Something inside Zacchaeus was stirring, and he wanted answers. But the crowd blocked Zacchaeus' view, so he did something about it: he climbed a sycamore tree. He put himself in a place to see Jesus more clearly.

Our spiritual lives often require similar action. We must learn to constantly position ourselves to see Jesus more clearly by leaning into Scripture and spending time alone with God. We make time for prayer and for fellowship with other believers who encourage and challenge us. We guard our hearts as we choose what content to consume. These disciplines don't make Jesus love us more; they simply help us be in a better position to see and obey Him.

True obedience involves trusting Jesus and doing what He says. We don't negotiate the terms. We move when He speaks. Our obedience becomes a blank check, already signed, ready for Him to fill in however He desires. That kind of surrender is where transformation begins.

This week, similar to how Zacchaeus climbed the tree, help put your kids in the best position to see Jesus so that He might lead them to repentance and transform their hearts.

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WELCOME

Connect with kids as they arrive.

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Greet each kid as they arrive. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group. Before heading to large group, you can play a game, chat with kids, or practice the memory verse!

MEMORY VERSE

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Each month, we'll have a new memory verse that goes with the lessons we're learning from the Bible. Choose one of the provided activities in your room's memory verse folder to review the verse with the kids.

Note: Bible Bucks day is November 22!



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LARGE GROUP LESSON

Review what we're learning in large group.

JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

Jesus was traveling through the city of Jericho. A man named Zacchaeus (za KEE uhs) lived there. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector, and he was very rich.

When Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming, he wanted to see who Jesus was. But there was a problem: Zacchaeus was too short to see over the crowd. So, he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus pass by.

When Jesus came to the tree, He looked up and saw Zacchaeus. "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down," Jesus said, "because I must stay at your house today."

Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed Jesus with joy! But the people complained. "Why would Jesus go to the house of a sinful man like that?"

Zacchaeus stood before Jesus and said, "Look, Lord, I will give half of everything I own to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times what I took!"

Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house, because you have believed in Me. The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

CHRIST CONNECTION: We are all sinners, but Jesus came to seek and save us, too. He died on the cross and rose again so we can be forgiven and have eternal life when we turn from our sin and trust in Him.

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ACTIVITIES

Do crafts and games with kids after large group.

TREE CRAFT

Glue one end of each green paper strip around the outer edge of the white circle. Once the strips are attached, twist and curl each strip, then bring the loose end toward the center of the tree and glue it down. Continue until all the strips overlap to create a full, leafy treetop. Finish by decorating the trunk and adding grass or other details around the tree.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree because he wanted to see Jesus. As you make your own sycamore tree, remember that when Zacchaeus met Jesus, his life was changed! Jesus came to seek and save people like Zacchaeus—and us too!



GRATITUDE CHAIN

It's time for our annual Gratitude Chain! Give each kid several strips of paper and have them write one thing they are thankful for on each strip. Loop the strips together and staple each one closed to create one long paper chain. Leave your finished chain in your room, and during the week, we'll connect all of the rooms' chains together to see just how much we have to be thankful for!

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CLOSING ACTIVITIES



Continue to engage kids before parent pick-up.

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

Ask the following questions and lead your small group to discuss.

1. Zacchaeus climbed up in a tree so he could see Jesus. What are some ways we can be more intentional to see Jesus in our lives?
2. Why is it important that we repent of our sin when we are saved?
3. How can remembering that we are all sinners change the way we view those who are lost and not following Jesus?

HAVE EXTRA TIME?

If you have extra time or your group needs to get out some energy, play one of the games/activities in your extra time bin in the cabinet or the "extra time" folder on the TV.

If there's a new game or activity you want to have available for your group in the future, let Taylor know!

BEFORE YOU GO...

Second service leaders, please clean up by doing the following:

1. Put all extra supplies and binders back in the curriculum bins.
2. Clean all trash off the tables.
3. Put all crayons, markers, etc. back in the appropriate containers and cubbies.
4. Erase the whiteboards and put markers/erasers back in the holder.
5. Turn off the TVs as you leave.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!

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