PRETEEN MINISTRY

4TH & 5TH GRADE



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.

LEADER DEVO

"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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ARRIVAL

When kids arrive, they can play in the game room, large group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until large group starts. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids. Use this time to interact with kids and build relationships with them. Ask them about their week, big events coming up, or follow up on a prayer request from the week before.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

THIS MONTH'S 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



NEXT BIBLE BUCKS DAY

NOV 22

There are many techniques and tools to help kids (and you!) memorize Scripture.

THIS MONTH'S TOOL: VERSE ABBREVIATIONS

On an index card, write out the first letter of each word in the verse you want to memorize. For example, 2 Corinthians 5:21 will look like:

F O S H M H T B S W K N S S T I H W M B T R O G

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LESSON

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

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SMALL GROUPS

OUR GOAL

To create opportunities that invite preteens to discover for themselves what it means to own and live out their faith.

DISCUSSION / APPLICATION

1) Read Luke 19:1-4. What do we observe and learn about Zacchaeus?

2) Why is it important to note that he was a tax collector? What would have been his status in the community?

3) Read Luke 19:5-7. What does this interaction tell you about Jesus? How does He view a person differently than other people do?

4) Read Luke 19:8-10. What stands out to you about Zacchaeus' response to being called a sinner? What does he say that he will do?

5) Zacchaeus is repentant about his sins. What does it mean to be repentant? How is it different than just asking for forgiveness?

Repentance includes an active decision to turn away from sin and turn to God. Asking for forgiveness but intending to continue the sin is not repentance.

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PICK UP

After small group, kids can play in the game room, large group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until they are picked up. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids. Use this time to interact with kids and follow up on any questions or discussions from small group time.

As parents arrive upstairs, direct them to the game room, large group room, or balcony to pick their kids up. Make sure to match their security code with their kid's name tag and remove the name tag before they leave!

CLEAN UP

- Put away any supplies used during small group.
- Turn off TVs and lights in the small group rooms.
- Turn off both air hockey tables and put away extra pucks or paddles.
- Gather any balls or other items left out in the game room and put them away in the correct bins.
- Put away any games, books, or supplies in the balcony area.
- Check for any items left behind by kids and put them in the lost and found.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING!

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