July 19, 2026

Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Zacchaeus, the Repentant Tax Collector
Luke 19:1-10

Lesson Background and Introduction

Jesus and his disciples journeyed to Jerusalem for the final Passover that they would observe together (Luke 9:51; 18:31-33). Along the way, Jesus taught (17:22-37; 18:31-34), told parables (18:1-8; 18:9-14), handled questioning people (17:20-21; 18:18-30), and healed (17:11-19; 18:35-43). Jericho was their last stop before reaching the capital city. It was only about 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem and situated in the Jordan River valley. It had a warm climate and freshwater springs; Jericho was an oasis for weary travelers.

Luke groups together three special encounters with Jesus, a "certain ruler" (Luke 18:18-30), a blind beggar (18:35-43), and Zacchaeus (19:1-10). Each of them sought out Jesus as he traveled. In the first scenario, the man was wealthy and privileged but went away unfulfilled. The crowd who witnessed the exchange questioned, "Who then can be saved?" (18:26). In the second, the man had nothing but audacity and perseverance. Jesus was moved on his behalf, and his faith healed him, he received his sight and followed Jesus (18:43)! Zacchaeus's story is the third encounter in this sequence.

Zacchaeus was a "chief tax collector" in Jericho (Luke 19:2). As such, he led those who implemented taxes, collected tolls, and performed customs duties. Lead tax collectors hired other collectors and set collection policies. Tax collectors held a position of prominence or authority, but with this came hard feelings from the general populace. Tax collectors frequently overcharged to make a profit. They were despised and mistrusted, seen as collaborators with oppressive Rome, and considered dishonest (Mark 2:15-16). Roman authorities auctioned contracts to the highest bidders, groups or individuals, to collect local tolls and tariffs. Whoever won the contract was on the hook for the contracted amount. Therefore, collections officers often took bribes and passed overages onto ordinary citizens, protecting themselves while ensuring contracts were paid.

Key Verse: Luke 19:5

And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
True repentance comes from the heart.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK:
Lord, please give me a heart of repentance to see myself as You do. Give me the grace to respond to Your merciful call for change.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm

(Joel 2:13 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", October 18, 2016)

Summer Series: The Testimony of Faithful Witnesses

NEXT WEEK

UNIT 2: Faithful Witnesses Say "Yes" to Jesus

Mary, the Loyal Mother

Luke 2:15-19; John 2:1-5; 19:25-27

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Seeking Repentance (Luke 19:1-4)

God meets us where we are (1-2)

Meets us where we are because He chose us (John 15:16)
Meets us where we are because He wants to give us rest (Matt 11:28)
Meets us where we are because it is His Will (Eph 1:4-5)
Meets us where we are through the gospel (1 Thess 1:4-6)
Meets us where we are because of His grace (2 Tim 1:9)

Obstacles while seeking God (3)

Obstacles of all kinds of evil (1 Thess 5:22)
Obstacles from the devil (James 4:7-8)
Obstacles from our old self (Eph 4:22)
Obstacles of unrighteousness (Col 3:8-11)
Obstacles of things that hinder (Heb 12:1)

God provides ways for us to find Him (4)

We can find God if we love Him (Prov 8:17)
We can find God if we seek His kingdom (Matt 6:33)
We can find God if we ask and seek (Matt 7:7-8)
We can find God when He is near (Isa 55:6)

Called Into Repentance (Luke 19:5-6)

Called to follow (5)

Called to follow into one hope (Eph 4:3-6)
Called to follow into eternal life (1 Tim 6:12)
Called to follow into fellowship (1 Cor 1:9)
Called to follow Jesus' example (1 Peter 2:21)
Called to follow into service (John 12:26)

Obeying the call (6)

Obeying the call to love God (John 14:15)
Obeying the call to live by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:12-14)
Obeying the call to be obedient and serve God (Dan 3:16-18)
Obeying the call to offer our whole selves as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1)

Salvation Through Repentance (Luke 19:7-10)

Salvation from sin (7)

Salvation through Jesus' Name (Acts 4:12)
Salvation through receiving the goal of faith (1 Peter 1:8-9)
Salvation through belief (John 1:12-13)
Salvation through the gospel (Eph 1:13-14)
Salvation through justification by Jesus' blood (Rom 5:9)

Salvation results in giving (8)

Giving to help those who ask (Matt 5:39-42)
Giving generously (Prov 11:24-25)
Giving to do good works (1 Tim 6:17-19)
Giving to share with others (Heb 13:16)
Giving purposely and cheerfully (2 Cor 9:7)

Salvation requires relationship with God (9)

A relationship that deals with the mind and heart (Heb 8:7-10)
A relationship that is written with the Holy Spirit on the heart (2 Cor 3:3)
A relationship through faith (Gal 3:26-29)
A relationship in which we are called children of God (Rom 8:16-17)
A relationship that makes us heirs of God (Titus 3:3-7)

Salvation of the lost (10)

Salvation of the lost because God searches for them (Ezek 34:16)
Salvation of the lost because Jesus came for sinners (Matt 9:12-14)
Salvation of the lost because there is joy in Heaven in saving the lost (Luke 15:7)
Salvation of the lost because Jesus died for the lost (Rom 5:6)