

Jesus Meets Zacchaeus

Key Verse: “*And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.*”
—*Luke 19:5*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 19:1-10

of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.”—*Luke 19:3,4*

Our Key Verse demonstrates that Jesus had the ability to read men’s hearts. The haughtiness of the Jewish onlookers was evident, as they were shocked to learn that the Master desired to dine in the home of this individual, who they considered to be a sinner. Zacchaeus, however, received Jesus joyfully.—vss. 6,7

Zacchaeus then made a declaration about restitution—half of his goods he would give to the poor, and a four-fold restitution would be made to anyone he had wronged. (vs. 8) The Law of Moses did not generally require people to restore things fourfold; usually, it was the value of the wrong plus one-fifth. (Lev. 5:14-16; Num. 5:5-7)

Zacchaeus had gone above and beyond. Jesus then declared that salvation had come to Zacchaeus' house. This seems to imply that from the divine standpoint, he had been restored to God's favor, having shown the type of character that could be used in God's service.— Luke 19:9

As consecrated followers of Christ, there are lessons we can utilize in our own walk from the foregoing narrative. These should sensitize us to the need to stay very close to the Lord in our thoughts, words, and deeds. As imperfect specimens of humanity, even the spirit begotten children of God realize it is possible to be overtaken by sin. Such acts may be unintentional, or they may be partially willful with the potential for severe consequences. When acts of sin occur, they need to be acknowledged and repented of if we are to be restored to God's full favor. Prayer and filling our minds with holy thoughts can be two effective tools towards preventing or reducing the incidence of sin in our lives.

A noted Christian writer made the following observation concerning this lesson as follows. "We might find parallels to this incident, which belonged to the end of the Jewish age and to fleshly Israel, in the end of this age and to spiritual Israel. We find today some backsliders from the Lord's Covenant of Grace, as Zacchaeus was a backslider from the Lord's Covenant of the Law. We may find them living in a measure of sin, in business which they admit is unjust and in violation of their consciences. We are not, therefore, to pass by them with the Gospel message, the good tidings of great joy; but if any such manifest an interest in the present truth, we are to seek to assist them as our Lord and Head assisted Zacchaeus."

In the experience of Jesus and Zacchaeus we see a marvelous example for us to emulate as we interact with others, especially with the household of faith, our brethren in Christ. ■