

Text— Luke 19:1-10

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

Immediately preceding our Scripture selection we learn that as Jesus “was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.” (Luke 18:35-43)

Hence, the blind man was obviously a believer in Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah, for he addressed Jesus as both “Son of David” and “Lord.” Then, when Jesus subsequently healed the man of his physical blindness, Jesus also proclaimed to him that his faith had saved him.

My friends, faith in God’s only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, is never misplaced, for John 3:36 clearly states: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Take it to heart that Jesus truly cares about each and every human being, for He shed His holy and precious blood to pay for all the sins of all people.

Our Scripture selection clearly demonstrates that Jesus truly cares about every individual human being, every sinner, as we shall plainly see as we consider:

“THE CONVERSION OF A MAN NAMED ZACCHAEUS”

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) Who Zacchaeus was and how he was converted
- 2) What proofs are given which show Zacchaeus was truly converted

-1-

Verses 1-3, ----- (Luke 19:1-3)

Jesus had healed a blind man outside the city, *And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho*. Thus, Jesus was traversing through the city while people continued to crowd around Him. *And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.*

So, a very short man named Zacchaeus desired to see Jesus who He was, for Zacchaeus had surely heard of Jesus who had recently and miraculously healed a blind man, and was currently surrounded by a multitude.

Our text informs us that Zacchaeus was *chief among the publicans, and he was rich*. Accordingly, Zacchaeus was one of the chief tax-gatherers for the occupying Roman government. Zacchaeus was rich since it was not uncommon among publicans to cheat people and extort extra money from them.

Hence, although Zacchaeus was physically a little dude, he was a big man when it came to worldly wealth. Nevertheless, Zacchaeus’ conscience must have been bothering him about his sins, for he sought to see Jesus with his own eyes— the Jesus he had heard so much about; the Jesus who said, as recorded in Luke 5:32, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Yes, Zacchaeus desired to see Jesus Christ who had been, “preaching the gospel of the kingdom of

God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel," as Mark 1:14-15 reports. No doubt about it, Zacchaeus had heard of Jesus and hoped to see Him because Zacchaeus had been touched by the Gospel of Christ, for Romans 10:17 informs us: "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Accordingly, Zacchaeus' heart was awakened and had been given that spark of faith in Jesus; and so, he yearned to see the Savior.

Verse 4, -----. (Luke 19:4)

Zacchaeus would let nothing deter him from seeing Jesus Christ, for he *ran before* the crowd that was surrounding Jesus, *and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.* Yeah, anticipating the route Jesus was to travel, Zacchaeus climbed up into a sycamore tree so he could see over the heads of the other folks and thereby see the Lord Jesus with his own eyes.

My friends, we should always desire to see Jesus with the eyes of faith by regularly viewing Him in the Holy Scriptures, for Jesus says in John 8:31-32, as He once said to some believing Jews during His visible sojourn on earth, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." And, Jesus says in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Thus, we can know the TRUTH, we can know Jesus and continue to know Him as our personal Savior and Lord, the only WAY to God and heaven, by continuing to view Him in the Holy Bible.

Verse 5, -----. (Luke 19:5)

Picture the scene in your mind: a short man named Zacchaeus is up in a tree watching Jesus approach as Jesus is surrounded by a multitude of people. Zacchaeus is hopeful he will see Jesus, his Savior, with his eyes, *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.*

Oh, not only did Zacchaeus get to see Jesus; Jesus saw Zacchaeus, looked at him, and called him by name, since Jesus is the all-knowing Lord. Then, Jesus told Zacchaeus to quickly get down from that tree, for today I must abide at thy house— I must come to your home and visit with you. Therefore, note well that Jesus Christ cared about that one man even while surrounded by a crowd. So, realize that every single soul is important to Jesus Christ!

Jesus cares about you; Jesus cares about me. Jesus cares about us no matter who we are or what we have done, for Jesus says in Matthew 18:11, "the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." Hence, we all should confess, as did the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

My friends, we are ALL by nature sinful, unclean and lost; but, Jesus came to earth to save us, for we read in Romans 3:23-26, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Let us thank and praise God regularly for His grace and mercy shown to us in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Think about how Zacchaeus must have felt as his hope was realized when Jesus *looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.*

Verse 6, -----. (Luke 19:6)

Zacchaeus' feelings about Jesus are quite clear; Zacchaeus could not get out of that tree quick enough, for *he made haste, and came down, and received Jesus joyfully.* Yes, Zacchaeus was

overjoyed at having Jesus Christ as a most honored guest in his home. Jesus calling Zacchaeus by name and going to his home confirmed and strengthened the man in the faith he had in Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and Lord.

Jesus Christ the LIVING WORD of God gave Zacchaeus faith and strengthened Him in the same, for Romans 1:16-17 informs us: “the gospel of Christ... is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

Fellow Christians, we too should be grateful to the Lord Jesus Christ because we would not have faith in Him if He did not gift us with faith by the power of His Holy Spirit working through His Word.

-2-

As we ponder our text to its conclusion, let us see what proofs are given which show Zacchaeus was truly converted.

Verse 7, ----- (Luke 19:7)

The crowd of onlookers undoubtedly were influenced by the Pharisees and the like who were stuck on themselves in sinful pride, for when they saw Jesus going to Zacchaeus' house, *they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.*

Unfortunately, the scribes, Pharisees, and those who thought like them, held themselves to be righteous while despising others. They considered it terrible to associate with people they viewed as notoriously wicked; they even held that one could be defiled by associating with such sinners. On one occasion, Jesus told the Pharisees straight out, as recorded in Matthew 9:13, “go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Hence, all the big show the Pharisees and company made was nothing but

hypocrisy with their self-satisfied view of themselves, while the merciful Lord God demands sincere repentance – contrition and faith – if folks would be His true children.

Verse 8, ----- (Luke 19:8)

Notice the evidence of the real change that had taken place in Zacchaeus, for his faith in Jesus bore the fruit of good works immediately, as is evident from the fact that *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.*

Observe that Zacchaeus addressed Jesus as LORD! Zacchaeus knew Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. Oh, it was not mere talk on Zacchaeus' part, for he gave half of his riches to the poor, rather than continuing to hoard worldly-wealth. Furthermore, Zacchaeus was finished with lying to folks to fatten his own wallet; instead, if he had cheated anyone he not only restored the person's money, he gave them four times what he had taken. Accordingly, Zacchaeus' life changed when he was converted from sinner to saint by the power of the Word.

My friends, real faith in the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, always bears the fruit of good works, for James 2:26 relates: “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” And, Ephesians 2:8-10 states: “by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Thus, Zacchaeus was indeed truly converted.

Verses 9 & 10, ----- (Luke 19:9-10)

Think about what Jesus said to Zacchaeus, with other folks listening, for *Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

Hence, another proof given that Zacchaeus was truly converted is that while at Zacchaeus' home Jesus Christ Himself said: *This day is salvation come to this house.*

Furthermore, Zacchaeus was a Jew, a son of Abraham according to the flesh; but now, after conversion, Zacchaeus was a real son of Abraham in that he had the same faith as Abraham had in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ! It's as we read in Galatians 3:6-7, 26-29, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Salvation came to Zacchaeus' house because he was given faith in Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and Lord. Fellow Christians, we too have salvation by God's grace through faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ, as our personal Savior and Lord, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," declares John 3:16.

The reason is clear as to why Zacchaeus was saved, and for that matter why you and I – fellow Christians – are saved: *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

Think about it. We were ALL lost in sin and headed for hell, but Jesus Christ the Son of man saved us, for Romans 6:23 clearly states: "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Additionally, take it to heart that the Son of man, Jesus Christ, sought us out since He is the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost and straying sheep.

We read in John 10:14, 27 & 28 that Jesus says: "I

am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." And, in John 15:16 Jesus declares to His followers: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." Thus, the Lord Jesus does the saving, all of it!

Zacchaeus was truly converted, as is evident by his fruits of faith. Zacchaeus' conversion was the work of Jesus Christ within him as the Spirit of Christ worked through His Word. Likewise, fellow Christians, our own conversion was a gracious work of God in us, for Jesus Christ has sought us out and saved us who were lost in sin.

Let us thank and praise the Lord Jesus Christ for all that He has done for us. Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins. Let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord. And, let us go forward being fruitful in the faith, striving to do such works as are pleasing to God in full accord with His Word. Amen.

m.e.l.