

Luke 19:1-10

A Sinner, a Savior, and Surrender

In Step #12 // The Summit Church

MPT: Jesus' kingdom is open to everybody. Anyone who desires to see Jesus will, and, in turn, be seen by Jesus.

MPS: People who encounter Jesus cannot walk away unchanged.

REMAIN STANDING

Luke 19:1-10 (ESV)

¹He entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. ⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." ⁶So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. ⁷And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." ⁸And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." ⁹And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

****PRAY // BE SEATED****

INTRODUCTION

As I just read, we're going to be in Luke 19 today...if you don't have a Bible it's fine, I know your 2021 resolution was to memorize more Scripture so you probably have it memorized by now. It's all good.

ILLUSTRATION: How many of you are good with **directions**? (Notice how every male thinks they are...) How many are terrible with directions? You haven't moved in 10 years and you still have to use your phone to get to the grocery store. **Kids**, if your parents dropped you off at the local CFA could you find your way home? (Don't worry, they won't do that.)

My dad is great with directions. But he's also old school...to the point that he still uses a **paper map**. Seems like every time they visit he brings me an updated paper map. He's one of those "find something I like and stick to it" guys. They live just north of ATL and if you were to ask him for directions he's one of those guys who would say something like, "**Go west until you get to the big tree past the yellow mailbox then take a left. Head south about as far as the crow flies. Once you see the field where the old mill used to be that's when you wanna hop off the highway and head into town. Go til you see the corner store--not that newfangled one with the fancy sign, but the CORNER STORE, you know--then take a left, and we're about 200 paces on the left in the cul de sac. You'll see the dog in the yard. Or you could just follow the smell of the grill...amen?!"** And I'm like, "Um...do I need a map AND a time machine? How about you just give me the address and I'll use Google."

- Whether you're good at directions or not, we all get used to **landmarks** that help us know we're headed the right direction (**Audi rings**). And **landmarks are helpful** but what happens when you **come to a crossroad**? Landmarks help you know you *are* going, where a crossroad forces you into a decision: *which direction do I go?*
 - I think one of the problems with Christianity today is that we treat salvation like it's filled with landmarks...we think we can go along on our timetable at our own leisure and find Jesus when it's convenient for us.

- **But here's what you need to know: Jesus is a crossroads; not a landmark.**
 - He's not a guy standing on the road with his thumb out hoping you'll pick him up as you drive on by. When you are presented with Jesus **you have to make a decision**--*which direction will my life take from here?*

Gonna lay this out there: **some of you are getting saved today.** The hounds of heaven are on your heels and I believe today is the day of salvation.

If you are a **FTG** or specifically a **non-believer** with us this weekend, we always try to be so incredibly welcoming to you – and I hope you've felt that way thus far. But this weekend, I'm just gonna be honest, **this might just not be the best weekend to be here.** Because one of your biggest **suspensions** you've ever had about Christians – one of the main reasons you **dislike** them – is about to be confirmed. And here it is: **I'm going to try to convert you today.**

- It's true. I'm not **pulling any punches.** No **emotional trickery** here. At the end of the day you need to know that **I love you** and **I know Jesus** and **he changed my life** and now I have eternal **joy** and **peace**, and I want you to have it too. It's that simple.
- I believe the heart of the gospel is **that Jesus came to seek and save the lost.**

Here in Luke 19 we're going to look at a **man up in a tree** who has a **divine appointment** with the **sovereign, seeking, saving** Jesus who **spots** him, **names** him and by **divine necessity** says, *"I'm coming to your house because this is the day of your salvation."*

- And in the same **personal, loving** way I believe Jesus is coming to some of your proverbial houses today because today is the day of your salvation.

Here's the title of my message today: **A Sinner, a Savior, and Surrender.**

I almost called it, *"It's Time to Decide"*... Because today I'm gonna **set Jesus in front of you** and at the end of my message **the choice will be yours**--will you take Jesus or not?

- And listen: **indecision is not an option.** To *not decide* is to **decide not to take him.** He stands at the door and knocks...to decide **not to decide** to open the door, by nature, is to leave the door closed.
- Today we're at a crossroads. The only question is which path will you take?

CONTEXT

A basic Bible principle is that context is king. So let's get some context here for our story of Zaccheus.

In chapter 18 Jesus has talked about a few different groups of people:

1. First, he tells a few stories to exalt a **widow**, some **children**, and a **blind beggar.**
2. He also talks about how hard it is for **rich ppl** to come to Jesus ("it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.") Well we're about to see the camel come through the eye of the needle.
3. Because he's about to show us that the gospel is also for the **"chief tax collector;"** IOW, the gospel is for everyone--the **widow** and the **wealthy**; the **kids** and the **crooks**; the **blind** and the **beloved.**
 - Jesus doesn't care if you showed up today by **public transportation** or a **Tesla.**
 - He doesn't care if you're listening to this sermon in your **\$800k house** or **Section 8 housing.**

Let's look at this seeking Savior who came for sinners. . . First we're introduced to **the sinner.**

¹He entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.

We can't fully understand the magnitude of this story without having a clear picture of who Zacchaeus is--he's a **tax collector**. But not just a tax collector...he's the chief tax collector. Here's why that's a big deal, cuz to be a tax collector:

1. Had to **bribe** another tax collector to become one (**corrupt**)
2. You collected what is owed to Roman gov't (IRS)...anything above that is yours to keep.
3. Jewish man collecting for the Roman gov't...blessing Roman gov't who is oppressing Jewish people. Betraying his own ppl.
4. He also got a cut of other tax collectors (he was "chief"). Ponzi scheme.

Zacchaeus was a **chief tax collector hated by the Jews** because he was in the business of **extortion** and **considered a traitor**. Zacchaeus was a **professional cheat...an embezzler**. He took money from old ladies. He stole kids lollipops and kicked their puppies. He was a thief. He was rich with money that wasn't his. Which is ironic because his name, Zacchaeus, means "righteous one," "pure," "innocent."

- Being chief tax collector, he is at the top of the list as **the most despised, hated, and despicable man** in all of Jericho. He is a traitor of all traitors.

He can't **go to the synagogue**, he can't **interact with people**. He can't go **into the home** of a self-respecting Jew. No self-respecting Jew would **ever enter into his house**. He can't **eat a meal with one of them**. They can't **eat a meal with him**. He's completely isolated so that the only people who surround him are other crooks, outcasts and rejects. This is our guy, Zacchaeus. This is the sinner.

³And he was seeking to see who Jesus was,

Is he curious? Is he unhappy? Is he dissatisfied with life? Is he at the end of his rope? Honestly **we don't know exactly what was going on in his heart**...maybe he was legit just curious. But no matter what agenda Zacchaeus brought to that day, **God brought Zacchaeus to that day with a radically different agenda**...and the Holy Spirit made sure he was in the **right place** at the **right moment** for Jesus to look at him and speak to him.

If you're here today it's because, in **some sense** and at **some level**, you are "seeking to see who Jesus was." May say, "*No no no, not me. Christianity isn't for me. I just come cuz my parents make me.*" or "*I'm just here to get my friend to stop bugging me about it.*" But the fact that you're here today is evidence that **God is already at work in your heart and your life**.

- I mean **you're here, right?** You're **listening**, right? At some deep, gut level you're interested...and I'm here to tell you that the **satisfaction**, the **joy**, the **peace** you're looking for is only found in Jesus.
- And God's promise to you is that if you **search for him** and **seek him** with all of your heart then **you will surely find him**.¹
- Jesus' kingdom is open to **everybody**. Anyone who desires to see Jesus *will*, and, in turn, be seen by Jesus.

Let's keep reading...

but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature.

¹ Jeremiah 29:13. See also Proverbs 8:17; Isaiah 55:6; Amos 5:4; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 7:7

Short. Vertically challenged:

*Zacchaeus was a wee little man
And a wee little man was he
He climbed up in a sycamore tree
For the Lord he wanted to see*

We won't make fun of him. He was so short...how short was he? (KIDS). So short that...

- ...whenever he sneezed he hit his head on the ground.
- ...when he jumped off the toilet he broke his leg.
- ...when he smoked pot he couldn't get high.
 - Okay, I won't **belittle** him anymore.

⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.

- Bad guy up in a tree...you could say he's committed *treason*.
- Look y'all, I'm just *branching out* my humor a little...*going out on a limb*, one might say.
- Okay, I'm done. Seriously, let's get back to the Bible. It's the *root of our faith*.
 - (Father of four...I live for dad jokes.)

Zacchaeus runs and climbs up this tree. Now it would've been **highly unusual for a man to run** in these days...almost offensive...much less a **wealthy gov't official to run**.

- I mean even today there's only about three reasons I can see for a man running:
 - 1. Athletics: you wanna get in shape
 - 2. Defense: a dog is chasing you
 - 3. Thievery: you stole something

- But Zacchaeus isn't running like any of these...he's running like a **little boy following a parade whose curious and excited**.
- Climbing a tree would've been **seen as childish**. But **perhaps that's just the point Jesus is trying to make**: that we must receive him like a child! PJD actually taught on this last week--how the kingdom must be inherited like children.²

Now *what often keeps us from taking on a childlike attitude of **faith and curiosity**?*

- **Easy**: it's our **pride**. **Pride** and **dignity** and **ego** are often the first and biggest barriers between our hearts receiving Jesus.

Well something happens to Zacchaeus the sinner that makes him leave all of that behind. Now let's look at **the Savior**.

⁵And when Jesus came to the place (Jesus knew exactly where he was going), he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today."

Think about how this played out. It's not super descriptive in the text but **here's how I think about it**:

- When Jesus stopped I think **the whole world basically stopped**. It's one of those, "*What the HECK is about to happen?!*" moments.
- He stops and turns...and there's a **grown man in a tree**. Little awkward. But not just any grown man...the most hated man in town. We'll actually see this later in v7, but **everyone who was there was judging Zacchaeus as a "sinner."**
- And here's why I think everything and everybody stopped: cuz Jesus calls this dude out by name and tells him to come down...like a **teacher who singles out a kid in class**.

² Luke 18:17

- And I think a hush fell over the crowd and they were like, *“FINALLY! Finally somebody’s gonna call this guy out! Finally, someone has the courage to face this thief. Finally, somebody’s not intimidated by this tax collector and he’s gonna get what he deserves!”* They were hoping for Jesus to **drop the hammer** on this dude.

But then the awkward scene gets even more awkward. Jesus shocks them and says, *“Zacchaeus...I’m gonna stay at your house today.”*

Wait, what? *“Uhhh, Jesus...what are you doing? You know who he is?!? He’s a tax collector! He’s a cheat! He’s a thief! He’s jacked up!”* IOW, *“Come hang at our house, Jesus...we’re the righteous ones. He’s the sinner!”*

They’re not telling Jesus anything he doesn’t already know--he already knows all about Zacchaeus...all he’s **done**, the **lives he’s ruined**, all the **pain** and **frustration** he has caused. And yet **Jesus still wants to meet him** and stay at his house.

Zacchaeus never could have anticipated anything like this. To the crowd he’s this **defiled sinner**. Nobody can **come near him**, much less **come into his house** or **break bread** with him.

- **BUT JESUS...how many of you are thankful that Jesus doesn’t only hang out with people that have it all together?**
- Sure, Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus...but, more than that, **Jesus wanted to see Zacchaeus.**

By inviting himself to Zacchaeus’ house Jesus is hitching his wagon to this sinner. To enter into someone’s home; to dine with them; to hang with them was to *participate in their life*.

You see how beautiful this is? Jesus: God clothed in flesh. **Divinity** and **perfection** deciding to hang with the lowest of low; the most despised of the town.

Don’t skip over this: so many of us see Jesus as “Lord, God, Sovereign, King” ...as a **theological construct**. But he’s also *friend, brother, Savior*.

- **KIDS**, here’s what you need to see: **Jesus loved Zacchaeus when nobody else did**. When everyone hated him and made fun of him, **Jesus wanted to be his friend**. Because Jesus was showing people what God’s love is like.³

LISTEN: everyone else may have written you off, **but not Jesus**. Today, Jesus has come to the place--*this* place--and he has stopped, he’s looking straight at you and he’s calling you **by name**, and he’s saying *“Hurry and come down. For I must be with you today.”*

- Notice what Jesus did NOT say...he did not say: *“Zacchaeus, if you clean yourself up, I’d love to come to your house.”*
- No, no, no. Simply, *“I’m coming to your house.”* Because that’s how it is with Jesus.

If he waited until we had **our lives in order**, until **we’ve done all the right things**, until **we’ve become the people we’re supposed to be** ... we’d never ever get close to him.

- Thank God Jesus doesn't **wait for us to get better!**
- Thank God Jesus comes to our home **to MAKE us better!**
- I’m just wondering...is there anyone here who’d like to testify:
 - I don’t have it all together...but I know the one who does.
 - I disappoint myself every day...but I don’t have anything to prove because my acceptance is in Jesus.

³ *Jesus Storybook Bible*

- I don't pretend to measure up...but I know that Jesus measured up for me.

Anyone in here who is willing to say, *"My life is jacked up. My house is messy. My kids are crazy. My life is nothing like my social media account."* If that's you, you need to know: JESUS IS CALLING YOUR NAME TODAY. He's at the front door of your heart saying: *"Behold, I stand here and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."*⁴

- Beloved, this is how Jesus is seeking after you right this moment. He doesn't holler, "Baptist!" or "Summit member!"
- No...he calls, "Zacchaeus!" He grins and says, "Mary!" When I was 21 he called for me: "Curtis." He changed my heart. Changed my life. And I believe today is the day he's gonna change yours too.

(We've still got five more verses to go...) Let's see how Zacchaeus responds to this...

***6**So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.*

***7**And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."*

Jesus does what he has done consistently throughout his ministry--he violates the established traditions of the Pharisees.

Now isn't this interesting? **The main thing keeping Zacchaeus from seeing Jesus is the religious crowd.**

- One of the biggest problems people have with Christianity today is the **moralistic, self-righteous, religious** crowd.

⁴ Revelation 3:20

- Here's this Jesus they've heard so much about showing GRACE...and what's their response? What does it say? *"They all began to grumble."*

- That word, grumble, in Greek is an onomatopoeia. It is a word whose meaning sounds like what it is. The word is *diagongyzō* (*de-ä-gon-gü'-zo...KIDS, say it with me*).

Now all through this section of Luke's gospel, there's a series of stories of **religious people** acting in ways that actually hinder the gospel from advancing (their all *diagongyzō-ing*).

- For starters, there's Jesus' constant struggles with the **Pharisees**. But it's not just them...
- ...because even Jesus' **disciples** hinder the gospel too. In chapter 18, which PJD showed us last week, they're so focused on having "**adult grown-up religion**" that they push the children away. Jesus has to say, *Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them* (Luke 18:16).
- Then there's a **blind beggar** calling out to Jesus for mercy...and the crowd is the one who tells him to shut up.
- And now we have Zacchaeus...and again it's the **crowds** of people who are appalled that Jesus would have anything to do with a sinner like him.

Now the obvious question is this: why would Luke group these stories together? Well I just wonder if **he's wanting us to be thinking about whether the way we do things is making it harder for people to come to Jesus...**

What I see is Jesus trying to get to babies, beggars, and bad people...while religious ppl, even unknowingly, are keeping that from

happening. Listen, the longer you are in church the easier it is to become part of "the crowd." *What?! Not me...never!*

What are some ways we act like "the crowd?"

- We **get inward focused** and we start coming to church for **comfort** and looking to **get something out of it** rather than to be the church. *"I didn't feel 'fed' by today's sermon."*
- We're so busy tweeting sermon quotes thinking, *"Oh, if only so-and-so could hear this..."* when the HS is trying to do work on you! You're saying **'amen!'** when you should be saying **'ouch!'**
- So busy trying to get to **"my seat"** we don't bother to stop and greet the lonely person **standing by themselves** in the lobby who is **hurting** and came to church to find an **ounce of hope**.
 - Even though our mouths would never say it, basically our actions are saying, *"This is our religious club...we don't really care about you. You can just go to hell."*

TO those of you who have been hurt by the church--by the religious crowd--yet you've pressed through, I want to say I'm sincerely sorry. I hope you know Jesus sees you, he knows your name, and he loves you beyond anything you've ever experienced before.

It's the very thing about to happen to Zacchaeus--he welcomed Jesus into his home, and before the day was over, he would welcome Jesus into his heart.

⁸And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."

There's so much in here. Let's take line by line...

Zacchaeus rises, takes his stand and says to Jesus, *"Behold, Lord."*

- *(KIDS: 'Lord' just means he's the master. He's in charge. He makes the rules now.)*
- And what's awesome, y'all, is **that's enough right there**. Don't miss this...it's foundational.
- **Romans 10:9**, *"if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*

Zacchaeus's words are an **admission of guilt** and a **sign of his new humility** before God.

- You've got a man who is **defined by selfishness** now acting in an **absolutely unselfish** way. Something dramatic has happened here. And, to me, one of the most fascinating things about this conversation is that we don't know everything they said or **what was talked about**. All we need to know is **who was there**. It wasn't *what* Zacchaeus talked about – it was *WHO* he talked about it with. It was about being with Jesus and that was enough to totally wreck this chief tax collector.

But he doesn't just confess that Jesus has changed his life; he immediately *shows* that Jesus has changed his life by what he's about to do next. **"Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."**

- Saving faith is more than pious words and devout feelings. It creates a living union with Christ that results in a changed life of complete **surrender**.
- That's the entire point of **James 2--faith without works is dead**. True **salvation** always results in a **tangible transformation**.

Now again, don't get this twisted--Zaccheus was not saved because he promised to do good works; on the contrary, his salvation and understanding the grace and love of Jesus is what gave him the *desire* to do good works. Having trusted in Jesus as Lord, he then gives evidence of his faith by his act of making restitution to all of those he had wronged.

Levitical law would have required he pay back in full plus 20%⁵--keep in mind he would've known the law--instead he chooses to give 400%!

ILLUSTRATION: Imagine what this would've actually looked like--

- *That guy who stole all our kids college tuition?* "Yeah, he's here and he just paid it back fourfold.."
- *That guy who stole our Hyundai?* "Yeah, he just parked his BMW in our driveway and said it's ours now."
- *Why are you doing this?* I met Jesus. And he radically changed my life...
 - This is **biblical restitution**.

Now let me say **what restitution is NOT...restitution is not penance**.

- Penance is the false teaching that you need to pay God and others back so that you can be forgiven.
- That's not true--restitution has nothing to do with forgiveness in the sight of God. It's not **karma** or **reincarnation** where you gotta pay off the debt so that you can be forgiven.
- No, Zacchaeus practiced restitution **as evidence** that he *has* received God's forgiveness.
- Restitution is **making things right to those that you've sinned against** as a response to the work of Jesus in your life. **That's**

not penance; it's justice. And justice is the duty of every Christian.⁶

Zacchaeus's restitution was **proof of a changed heart**; not a means to it!

- We don't do good things to **win God's approval**; we do good things **in response to his approval**.
- We are extravagant in our response to others because **God was extravagant in his love toward us**.
- Not *so that* he'll **love** you, but because **he already has**.
- Not *so that* he'll **forgive** you, but because **he already does**.
- Not *so that* God would **befriend** you, but because **Jesus has already called you a friend**.

Zacchaeus could freely let go of the thing he spent his entire life worshipping--**money and power**--because he was thinking less about the amount he was **giving** and more about the kingdom he was **pursuing**.

We've seen this over and over in the life of TSC:

- ~~People leaving 6-7 digit salaries to go to the mission field.~~
- ~~People giving up CEO positions to start non-profits.~~
- ~~People giving up comfortable lifestyles to help plant a church.~~
- ~~Retirees moving into apartment complexes solely for the purpose of being a gospel light.~~
- ~~Story after story of people giving something up the world says is valuable because they understand how much more valuable the kingdom of God is.~~

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." (Jim Elliot, October 28, 1949).

⁵ Exodus 22:1

⁶ Driscoll, *Rediscovering Restitution*

What do you need to **surrender** today?

- Money...power...position...expectations...timeline...

What is God calling you to **restore** today?

- Something you've stolen...a relationship...some else's reputation you slandered...

Zacchaeus is now no fool, for he gives what he cannot keep (his money and power) to gain that which he cannot lose (his Savior, Lord Jesus).

⁹And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.

Presumably Zacchaeus was already a racial Jew. But now, only through faith in Christ, has he become a true descendant and "son of Abraham."⁷

His lineage did not bring him salvation...a person is not saved by good heritage any more than they are condemned by a bad one. There's only one way into the family of God, and it's through faith in Jesus...and it's exactly why Jesus came. Verse 10...

¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

CONCLUSION

The gospel--the reality that *Jesus came to seek and save the lost*--will only become good news to you once you properly understand your

⁷ (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; 4:12; Gal. 6:16)

state as someone who *is lost and without God*. Only once you truly realize:

- That w/o Jesus there is none righteous, not even one.
- That w/o Jesus you are dead in your trespasses and sins.
- That w/o Jesus you are a follower of Satan, the prince of the power of the air and he's at work within you.

Without Jesus you are lost. Have you messed up? Jacked up your life and relationships? Jesus does not sit still and pity you. He does not stand up and propose a plan to you. **He came to seek and to save you.**

- He is a "...a friend of **tax collectors and sinners!**"⁸
- He didn't come for the **righteous**, but for **sinners**.⁹
- He didn't come for the **healthy**, but the **sick**.¹⁰

The truth is, *I am Zacchaeus; you are Zacchaeus*. You may not be short in stature, but you're certainly **spiritually short** in your own **ability** and **capacity** to save yourself.

So we try to reach Jesus by our own **strength**...our own **doing**...our own **good works**. We **run faster** and **climb proverbial trees of religious actions** trying to get to Jesus.

- *Oh, Jesus, look how awesome I am! Look at everything I'm doing.*

We think our works are going to cause God to stop and take notice of us because he sees us up in our cute sycamore tree.

- *See, God...you see me? See how much I pray? See how often I attend church? See how I know all the songs?*

⁸ Luke 7:34

⁹ Luke 5:32

¹⁰ Luke 5:31

- But **that's not what gets God's attention.**
- Jesus stops of his own choosing...of his own accord...of his own volition...of his own grace. And today, here at TSC, he's stopping, he's looking at you, and he's calling you by name.
- He's saying, "*Hurry down from your **religion**. Hurry down from your **traditions**. Hurry down from your **striving**. Only my grace can save you. Come on down. **Don't spend another second trusting in yourself**. Don't spend another second **climbing trees**. Don't spend another second **believing you can be satisfied by anything other than me**. Hurry on down from the **trees you're climbing**, from the **sins you're stuck in**, from the **labels you're trying to hide behind**. Come down quickly, for I'm coming to your house today."*

We try to climb these trees thinking we'll find salvation...but **salvation isn't found in climbing a tree**; it was found **when Jesus died on one**.

- Zacchaeus climbed a tree using his hands and feet. . . Jesus would hang from one by his hands and feet as they were nailed through the wood with rusty nine-inch-long spikes.
- The man who would **hang from a tree** on Golgotha came to Jericho that day **to get Zacchaeus out of a tree**.
- That same man, Jesus, **found me in my childhood bedroom**. He **found Todd in a hotel bathroom**. He **found Elizabeth in a parking lot**.
- The question is, **will he find you here today?**

If you're waiting til your life is perfectly clean to come to Jesus it'll never happen. That's like waiting to get in shape *before* you go to the gym. No, no, no...it was...

- My **transgressions**; his **wounds**.
- My **iniquities**; his **chastisement**.

- My **sin**; his **sorrow**.
— —
- **My peace**, brought about by his **punishment**.
- **My healing**, brought about by his **stripes**.
- **My joy**, brought about by his **grief**.
- **My life**, brought about by his **death**.

His grace gave me life. His **free, rich, unsought, abounding, sovereign, entirely undeserved, infinite, unchanging, eternal, boundless** GRACE. It will save you from sin, from yourself, from the devil, and from hell.

Salvation has come...and it's not a doctrine; it's a person. And he's calling your name.

I told you at the beginning I'm going to set Jesus in front of you and the choice would be yours. Now's the time--will you take Jesus or not? In this world there are only two states: you're either in a state of condemnation or a state of salvation.

- **Moms/dads**: will you change your family tree...?
- **Students/kids**: some of you have parents whose single greatest hope in life is that you would grow up to love Jesus.
- **First time**: it's as simple as I'm making it sound, you confess/believe...
- **Religious**: stop climbing...take Jesus...

Do not postpone this decision any longer. How awesome would it be if you could say, "*This day, in January 2021, I received salvation...that's when I met Jesus. Let the recording angel mark my name down.*"

- Behold, Jesus is standing at the door of your heart and knocking. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts. Today is the day of salvation. I believe it.

“Putting your faith in Christ means that you utterly renounce any other hope of being counted righteous before God. Do you find yourself trusting in your own good works? Faith means admitting that they are woefully insufficient, and trust Christ alone. Do you find yourself trusting in what you understand to be your good heart? Faith means acknowledging that your heart is not good at all, and trusting Christ alone.” It means jumping off the edge of the pool and declaring, “Jesus, if you don’t catch me, I’m done. I’ve no other hope, no other savior. Save me, Jesus, or I die.” That’s faith.¹¹

PRAY

¹¹ Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?*, 79.