***Luke 19:1-10*** *Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. 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.” So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.” Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

This morning, we’re back in Jericho with Jesus. It’s springtime. The news of the healing of 10 lepers and then 2 blind men is drawing more and more people to see Jesus. Jericho is the lowest city on earth, over 800 feet below sea level. No inhabited city is lower. It’s an oasis city, known as the City of Palms. It has great wealth, with the rich, and even Herod the Great, building winter homes here. The well of Elisha is nearby, still delivering fresh water to the city, from a bubbling fountain. Drawn by money, beggars and thieves congregate as well. The city has two high classes, priests and publicans. We’re about to meet a publican, Zacchaeus. We’re due in Jerusalem for Passover soon and Jesus has been talking about being delivered up, rejected, and even dying. But, right now, we are among a great crowd.

Verses 1-2 say, *Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. 2Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.* We learn two things of Zacchaeus: 1) He is a chief tax collector, a publican – hated among the Jews. He’s working for the Romans. 2) He’s rich, being called rich among the rich. We suspect that Zacchaeus lives in a very fine house. Tax collectors were known to be dishonest, cheating to enrich themselves.

Verse 3 *And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.* He’s seeking Jesus, but he can’t see over the crowd. He’s short. Regardless, he sought to see who Jesus was – He’s heard of the miracles. He’s heard of the Hope in the middle of that crowd. He wants to know Jesus.

Verse 4 *So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.* So, what does this rich, high class, worldly successful man do when he’s blocked. He runs ahead of the crowd. This would’ve been very out of character for a man of such status. He doesn’t care. He’s desperate to see Jesus. He runs ahead, and he climbs, because he’s heard Jesus will pass that way. The tree he climbs is a sycamore tree, but it’s not the kind we have around here. The one he climbs would have thick lower branches, known for bearing a type of fig. Around here, we’d have to climb 30 feet to get to the first branch. There, he’d be more like seven to ten feet off the ground, on a thick branch, probably just sprouting springtime leaves.

Verse 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.”* Jesus sees him. He didn’t have to look way up. But notice, Jesus calls him by name. Zacchaeus, come down. In verse 3, it says Zacchaeus didn’t know Jesus – he sought to see who Jesus was. Jesus knows Zacchaeus. He knows us by name. Zacchaeus had to lower himself to have Jesus abide with him. Don’t let this be lost on us. In order for Jesus to stay at his house, he had to come down, from his worldly perch. We must come down. Verse 6 *So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.* Zacchaeus receives Him joyfully. The little man that sought to know Jesus realizes that he’s already known. He doesn’t dally, he doesn’t dawdle. He makes haste to the Savior, as we must make haste. And like with Blind Bartimaeus last week, the crowd speaks in verse 7 *But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”* Last week, it was hush! This week, it’s “that man’s a sinner”. The point is the crowd has no place in our relationship with Jesus. It’s personal, One on one. Jesus saw his trust and called him down and Zacchaeus received Him joyfully.

Verses 8 *Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”* Zacchaeus now publicly states his repentance, as Jesus calls us to do. He casts aside the worldly garment he’s been trusting in, his wealth, giving half to the poor. He follows the Old Testament Law, restoring those he’s cheated fourfold. He trusts and obeys the call of Jesus.

Verses 9-10*And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”* Jesus told the returning leper and Blind Bartimaeus, Your faith has made you well. We know the Greek word means to make whole, to save. Here, the word Salvation, from that very same Greek word, Jesus says has come to this house! A new garment covers this house, the Blood of Jesus.

Zacchaeus went out to seek Jesus. Turns out Jesus was seeking him. Can you imagine the praising when Zacchaeus knows he’s no longer lost? Jesus is seeking someone today. Perhaps, you’re high up looking down, or desperate by the side of the road. The garment you’ve trusted isn’t working anymore. Jesus is saying, make haste! I want to clothe you anew. Don’t dally, don’t dawdle. Won’t you invite Jesus to your house and be saved today?