

Does Jesus See You?

What kind of person would get Jesus' attention? Who does Jesus notice? Is he seeing you? Or do you feel overlooked? Is Jesus even aware of you? Does Jesus See you?

You are going to get the good answers in less than ___ minutes.

INTRO

In the first part of Luke 19 is a story of a man who may be a lot like you. He had a lot going against him. First, he was height-challenged. The original word in Luke 19:3 for being small is mikros, very similar to our word micro for tiny.

He was also in a highly un-popular government position. He was a Jew who collected taxes for the hated Romans. He was almost like a traitor. That was the 2nd thing that was against him.

But Zacchaeus was an overcomer. The kind of man we want to be like. He was a problem-solver. He did not let his micro-height deter him. And he worked hard at this job, possibly developing a multi-level type of tax collecting, hiring others to help him collect taxes and collecting a small amount of money from each of them. The Bible says in Luke 19:2 that he was the chief tax collector and that he was abundantly wealthy.

He learned that Jesus was going to be going through Jericho, his town. And he had been wanting to know as much as he could about this Jewish phenom of a healing, traveling teacher. Jesus had been doing miracles, and teaching, and preaching repentance for almost 3 and ½ years now. He wanted more than just to "see" him, but to "know" him. Zacchaeus wanted to experience and learn who Jesus really was. He wanted to know what Jesus was all about.

On the day Jesus was coming through Jericho, there were lots of people present. There were the self-righteous people who were always judging others. And there were rich people and poor people. There were sick people and healthy people crowding around Jesus. And because this was a big event in Jericho, there were people there just so they could later say, "I was there the day Jesus came through Jericho." And there were those who were just hoping to see one of Jesus' miracles. There were masses of sinners there. We can remember what we are told in Romans 3:23, that all of us are sinners. And, God noted for us, a micro-sized problem-solving tax collector was also there.

Of all the people there, who was Jesus looking for? Did Jesus have time to deal with all those pompous, self-righteous snobs? Should he do something for the poor? Or did he need to teach

the rich to help the poor? And all those sinners needing so much help in so many ways.... Who was Jesus going to notice that day?

Meanwhile, our little man figured out that if he were in that big crowd, he would not even see Jesus, much less hear anything great from him. He had to do something different. He ran on ahead of the crowd. This highly successful, well-dressed man did the unlikely. He climbed a tree along the road where he could have a chance at a Jesus moment.

So, who does Jesus see? Was he seeing the crowds or individuals? And if he was seeing individuals, what was he seeing about each of them? Was he looking for someone needing his special attention now?

Luke 19:5 tells us, “And 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.” Jesus told the problem-solving, Rich, Short, Tax Collector, Sinner to get down out of the tree quickly because he must stay at his house today.

Zacchaeus did exactly what Jesus said. He got down quick. And he “received” Jesus. He was hospitable to Jesus. He was also learning and figuring out who Jesus was, what Jesus was about. Now he began to understand Jesus’ preaching for the Jews to repent and start living like the Old Testament commands. Zacchaeus was experiencing Jesus on a personal, individual level.

Suddenly, unexpectedly, Zacchaeus stops. He is about to say something worth hearing. Zacchaeus was in the process of repenting, changing. The Bible says Luke 19:8 And 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.”

This wee-little man was getting quite serious about his change. I mean, ½ of all your abundant wealth would be given to the poor. And he was going to re-check his tax-collecting records and see IF he had taken extra taxes he should not have done, he would repay those people 4 times what he had wrongfully acquired.

Jesus said to the one person he was with today, the one person who needed his help and was willing to listen and change, to him, he said, Luke 19:9 ... “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.”

That day, salvation had arrived at Zacchaeus’ house. It had been near for a while. He was previously wanting to know about Jesus. But that day it developed, it grew, it blossomed into

maturity. Jesus had declared that even a very sinful Jew, like a tax collector, could receive salvation.

But this day, in Jericho, Jesus saw the one man in the crowd who was worth saving — a fellow Jew.

And it was to this man that Jesus made one of his greatest declarations. He said about himself, Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Jesus came to look for individuals who want to know Him and his Father. Is that you? Do you want to know him?

Jesus came to bring forgiveness, freedom from guilt, peace with God and people, to give God-seekers the hope of living forever.

But he will do this only with people who see themselves as God sees them. The word for “LOST” in this passage could also be translated as “destroyed”; translated as “dying”; or translated as scarred and marred”. Lost as in what sin has done to them, their lives, and their families.

If you see yourself as being in trouble, in a life that only God could fix, AND if you want to know Him, he wants to help.

What you need to do is what Zacchaeus did. Investigate Jesus for who he says he is. If you figure out that he must be God’s Son, then you should change to whatever Jesus says. If you want your sins forgiven, you will be immersed for the forgiveness of sins, as stated in Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16.

But what should you do this very moment?

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Thanks for watching. We hope to see you again tomorrow. Until then, goodbye for now.