

# THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2ND

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **Luke 19-21**

## **"Just Passing Through"**

**SCRIPTURE** Luke 19:1-10

### **OBSERVATION**

This is a tall story about a short man--Zacchaeus. Many of you may recognize him as the "wee little man" from Sunday School days of old. By profession Zacchaeus was a tax-collector. Think "Corrupt IRS Agent" and multiply it by five. Not only was Zacchaeus a tax-collector but Luke notes he was a chief tax collector--probably in charge of other tax collectors.

Tax collectors collected taxes for Rome, but they made their money by "shaking people down" for more than necessary - and pocketing the rest. Undoubtedly Zacchaeus shook down the tax-collectors under him, which would explain why v. 2 says he was "wealthy."

But that is not the point of this devotion. Look at v. 1: **"Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through."** It doesn't say where Jesus was going--just that he was "passing through." But as he passed through he noticed Zacchaeus. It probably wasn't hard to notice Zacchaeus--not many grown men were found hanging in trees.

But once Jesus noticed him it set off a whole chain of events: Jesus invites himself to Zacchaeus' house for dinner (v. 5-6), people start grumbling about Jesus having dinner with a "sinner" (v. 7), followed by Zacchaeus' repentant heart as evidenced by the actions he took to make restitution toward those he had wronged (v. 8).

**Jesus is astounded by Zacchaeus' reaction - announces to all watching this play out that repentant Zacchaeus was a "true son of Abraham"** (v. 9). And then comes the clincher: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (v. 10).

### **APPLICATION**

This whole Zacchaeus episode started with Jesus "passing through." It ends with Jesus announcing why he was "passing through"--whether it was a village like Jericho or our world: he came seeking those who were lost in sin to offer them a new kind of life.

Sometimes we think we have to go out of our way to evangelize--to impact people with the truth of the gospel. But Jesus was "just passing through." As you pass through today... the halls of your school, the office where you work, where you shop, your neighborhood, keep your eyes, ears and heart open. You never know who you might discover "just passing through." And if you see someone curled up on a branch in a tree looking down at you? Take that as a sign!

### **PRAYER**

God, help me to notice people who need you--people chasing all kinds of false gods like money, power, etc that will never satisfy the hunger of their soul. Help me take the time as I go through my day to see the unforced opportunities to share your love with people. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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