

THE MAN WHO WANTED TO SEE JESUS

Luke 19:1-10



EVERYONE was excited in a little town one day. Many, many people were standing all along the road. What was happening? Jesus was coming to town that day and everyone wanted to be sure and see Him.

Jesus had made sick people well, blind people see, lame people walk; and no one else could do these wonderful things. My, but it would be wonderful to be able to be close to Jesus.

Someone possibly called: “Here He comes! Here comes Jesus!” Jesus was walking along the dusty road. He had walked a long, long way that day. He was probably tired.

In that town there lived a man who had lots of money. His name was Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was so short he would never be able to see over the heads of all those people. He was not as tall as the other men and he did want to see what Jesus looked like. What could he do? He tried to look through the big crowd of people but he could not see anything that way either. Zacchaeus did not just go home and say he could not see Jesus. He wanted to see Jesus and he was going to find a way, somehow. What could he do?

Zacchaeus looked around to find some way to climb up higher. All at once he saw a sycamore tree. It was near the road where Jesus would have to walk. If he could climb up in that tree and sit on a limb way out over the road he could not only see Jesus but he would be real close to Him, too.

Zacchaeus ran on ahead of the crowd. The people were making a lot of noise so he knew Jesus was coming closer. Quickly, the little, short man ran to the tree. Up the tree he climbed as fast as he could. Now he could see Jesus, and Jesus would not know that he was there.

Jesus came closer and closer until He stood right under the tree where Zacchaeus was hiding. Zacchaeus could see Jesus. He could see how He looked. All of a sudden Jesus stopped. Yes, Jesus stopped right under Zacchaeus.

Jesus just looked right up into that tree at Zacchaeus. He looked at Zacchaeus and said, "Zacchaeus, come down. I am going home with you." Jesus may not have seen Zacchaeus climb that tree but He knew he was there all the time. No one can hide any place that Jesus cannot find him. Jesus knows just where every boy and every girl, every man and every woman is all the time.

How surprised Zacchaeus must have been when Jesus looked up at him and called his name. How did Jesus know his name if He had never seen Zacchaeus before? Jesus knows everybody's name. Jesus knows your name, too. If you could see Jesus today He could call you by name, too.

When Jesus called Zacchaeus to come down out of that tree He had such a nice soft, kind voice that Zacchaeus loved Jesus right away. No one had talked to him so kindly for a long, long time.

Zacchaeus loved Jesus more every minute. The other people did not like it very much because Jesus was going home with Zacchaeus, but Jesus knew that Zacchaeus' black heart had been made white, for he told Jesus that he was sorry for all the bad things that he had done. Zacchaeus said he wanted to give back all the things he had taken that did not belong to him. And he was going to give half of everything he had to the poor people.

Jesus was so glad to hear Zacchaeus say that, because He knew that the little, short man who had climbed the tree really loved Him. It is a good thing that Zacchaeus did see Jesus that day and listen to Jesus and get his black, sin heart changed into a white, clean heart because Jesus never did come to that city again.

After Zacchaeus had met Jesus and loved Him, no doubt he was so different in the way he acted that everyone liked him now. Possibly even the little boys and girls loved Zacchaeus because he was so good to them. Maybe if they did not have a coat he would get them one. If they needed food he would get some for them.

Before Zacchaeus saw Jesus he took tax money from the people. Zacchaeus was the man who told the people how much money they had to pay and sometimes he would be mean and make them pay too much money, and he may have kept some of the money for himself. That is probably how he got so much more money than anybody else and why he did not have many friends.

Now Zacchaeus was kind to everybody. He gave back all the money he had taken away from them and even gave them more than he took. He did that to show them he was sorry.

Jesus' love in the heart can make a boy or girl or man or woman so different from the naughty person he used to be. Even when little children pray and ask God to help them be good, they become so sweet that everybody loves them.