

Jesus in His own words #2: The seeker
Luke 19:1-10

Objectives: We want to see Jesus as the one who came to seek and save the lost. We want to see our need for Jesus. We want to see how we can respond to his offer of salvation.

Getting to Know You (5 minutes)

Launch (3 minutes)

We are taking the next 5 weeks to try to understand who Jesus is by looking at his own words on the subject. We will look at 5 different times in the Bible where Jesus reveals his character and purpose. Why do you think it is important to try to understand who He is? Why do you think it is important to look at the words he chose to describe himself?

Explore

Read Luke 19:1-10

To answer the question- "who is Jesus" we are going to look at his words as well as his actions in the story.

- **Who are the main characters in the story?**
 - **What do we observe about Zacchaeus in this passage- both in the description of him and how he is treated by the crowd?** (Seeking to see Jesus, short, chief tax collector, very rich, notorious sinner, hated, shameful person)
 - **How do you think people in the time of Jesus felt about tax collectors? Why?** (They worked for the Romans who occupied and oppressed the Jewish Nation. They got rich by charging more money than they had to. They were the most hated people in society because they were traitors who got rich by ripping off their own people.)
 - **What do we observe about Jesus?** (keep prompting the group to make more observations. This is the key to understanding the depth of the Bible) (He knew Z. by name, he ignored the crowd to interact with the one who is seeking Him, He was intentionally seeking Z. "I must stay with you," his mission is to seek and save the lost, to stay or eat with someone in those days was to be a part of their family).
 - **How would you describe the crowd?** (large, self-righteous, moralistic, judgmental, cultural majority, blocks Z from Jesus)
 - **How did Jesus describe himself?**
 - **Why do you think Jesus refers to himself as "Son of Man?"** (On one level he is identifying himself as fully human and therefore able to understand and relate to humanity. On another level he is referencing Daniel 7 where the term refers to an exalted heavenly being- God himself.)
 - **In your own words, what do you think it means that he came to seek and save the lost?**
 - **What prompted Jesus to share about his identity and mission?** (vs 7- the moral religious people were grumbling that Jesus would eat with and live with a sinner).
 - **Why was it so offensive that Jesus would eat with and stay with a notorious sinner?** (to eat with someone meant to share your life with them. It meant that you were deeply connected to them).
 - **How does it make you feel that God would leave heaven to seek and save people who are lost?**
 - **Is there any part of you that is offended that Jesus repeatedly says that good religious people are not able to get to heaven on their own? How does it make you feel that Jesus came to rescue you?**
 - **This story is about salvation coming to Zacchaeus. In your own words how does a person receive salvation from Jesus?**
- The order of the relationship between Jesus and Z tells us a lot about salvation.

1. Jesus asks to stay/eat with Z which is a sign of love, grace and honor.
 2. Z received him joyfully
 3. Then Z announces that he is going to repay those he robbed from and give his wealth to the poor.
 4. Jesus pronounces that salvation has come to Z's house
 5. Jesus shares that he came to seek and save the lost.
- **What can we learn from the order of this relationship?** (Jesus was seeking Z while Z was seeking Him. Jesus offers grace and honor to this shameful sinner. When Z receives the offer of grace then Z is changed and with joy changes by giving generously. It is important to note that Z wasn't saved because he fixed his life. He was changed by Jesus after inviting Jesus into his life.)

Summary

How do the words and actions in this story help us answer the question "Who is Jesus?"

In this passage we see Jesus as someone who is actively seeking to bring salvation to people who do not know him. He brings honor to a person who is shamed by his community.

Apply

- **What barriers do you need to overcome in order to receive Jesus' offer of love and grace?**
- **If you are already a Christ follower, what would it look like for you to live as if this passage is true?**
- **What other ideas about Jesus make it hard to view him the way He describes himself here?**
- **How does it impact you to know that Jesus is a seeking God?**
- **Who are the people in your life who you think would be encouraged to know that in spite of their sin Jesus wants to be with them and is actually seeking them?**

Announce