

Harvest

Part 4

Luke 19:1-10

¹ Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. ⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." ⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. ⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'" ⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

- Where do people in our culture turn to for help, change or transformation?
Jesus is traveling through southern Palestine on his way to Jerusalem. This trip will culminate in his death and resurrection. Jericho, a rich agricultural town and popular resort for royalty and priests, was in Jesus' path. Zacchaeus was one of the last people Jesus met before his death.
- What does it say about Jesus commitment to building relationships that he would stop and spend time with Zacchaeus?
- Read Luke 19:1-10. In the first six verses (19:1-6), what are some things we learn about Zacchaeus?
- What kind of reputation might a chief tax collector develop in a town like this?
(Note: "The Romans farmed out the task of collecting the taxes in any particular area to the highest bidder. The man did not receive any salary for his work but collected as much money as he could so that he would have a handsome rake-off after paying the government the appointed sum" [The New Bible Commentary: Revised]. Tax collectors were despised not only by the Romans, but also by their own people.)
- What strikes you about the initial meeting between Jesus and Zacchaeus? What was the reaction of the crowd as they see this relationship develop between Zacchaeus and Jesus (verse 7)?
- Jesus is a master at building relationships and communicating with people. What does Jesus do to build a friendship with Zacchaeus?
- What seems to be going on inside Zacchaeus by the end of this encounter (verses 8-10)? How is he transformed by meeting Jesus? What might be some of the far reaching effects of this transformation on both Zacchaeus and the other people in his community?
- How do the words; *intend*, *include* and *inspire* help us understand the message of this story?
- How does this passage illustrate Jesus' life mission as stated in verse 10?
- Has this Harvest series challenged you in any way?
- What changes in your life would you like to make in response?