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Luke 19: 1-10 (Jesus meets Zacchaeus)

## Introduction

1/ How did Jesus know Zacchaeus?

No previous meeting, but divine omniscience (compare John ch 4 when J. met a Samaritan woman at a well).

God knows us all, and also chose his people before the world was made (Ephesians 1: 4)

This should not be a disincentive to evangelism, as the Bible also teaches free will, and the need for everyone to choose to become a Christian (opt in, not opt out).

2/ Why was Zacchaeus there at all?

Not idle curiosity, because he ran on ahead and climbed a tree. He had no illness or disability to be healed.

I think he was very dissatisfied with his life and thought Jesus could help him to change it.

Possible sources of dissatisfaction (but not applicable to Zacchaeus): poverty; a failed marriage; a bereavement; unemployment.

Probable explanation: guilty conscience at how taxes were collected, and an awareness that money cannot buy happiness. (Note Z's offer to give away half his possessions and to compensate those cheated).

3/ Who was J. talking about in "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost"?

N.B. The Son of Man is a title applied to the Messiah, and J. often applied it to himself).

Compare also Mark 2: 17 "People who are well have no need of a doctor, but only those who are sick".

Both statements by Jesus contain an irony, as they imply the existence of "those who are not lost" and "those who are well". However, in reality the Bible teaches that everyone is lost and spiritually sick unless saved by faith in Jesus (see Romans 3: 23 "everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence" and Romans 3: 12 "No-one does what is right, not even one").

Jesus is actually talking about those who think that they are well and are not lost (even though they are wrong). Note that other people in the crowd did not respond in faith and were probably happy in general with their lives, much like many people in our part of the world. They probably believe in God; have a good, steady job; have a happy family life; have good general health.

No magical answer to shake them out of complacency, but a couple of thoughts.

Firstly, with personal "front line" connections we should be alert for times when they are ready to re-assess and re-evaluate. Secondly, we should not neglect or overlook the opportunities to present the gospel to groups and crowds. We don't know what is going on inside people - our responsibility is to proclaim the gospel faithfully and trust the Holy Spirit. (The basis of the Gideons presenting and placing Testaments and Bibles is similar).

Little has been said about the transformation of Zacchaeus' life. To help redress this, we sing the hymn "What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought since Jesus came into my heart".