

Small Group Notes – 7th May 2017

Ice Breaker (optional)

Would you prefer to host a dinner party, or to be invited to one?

Theme: Zacchaeus

Reading: Luke 19:1-10

Sermon Outline

We heard and saw a dramatized reading – The ballad of the little man.

Neil told us that he answered Jesus' call after an argument with Josephine Collie's husband, and asked: When did God call you? What difference does it make having Jesus in your life? Who do you talk to about Jesus?

Zacchaeus was hated – he worked for the Romans, and made his money by collecting more tax than passed on to the authorities. As chief tax collector he would have been rich, with a large house, fine clothes and slaves. He was hated because people knew his lavish lifestyle was paid for by them.

He had heard about Jesus (who was on his way to Jerusalem via Jericho). Climbing a tree would have exposed him to ridicule.

Many people want to get close to Jesus but are afraid of ridicule. Pride stops us admitting we really need him.

In our culture, it is an honour to be invited to an important person's house; in the Middle East, it is an honour for them to come to your house. Jesus was honouring Zacchaeus. Jesus honours us by accepting our invitation to come into our lives when we accept him.

Bear Grylls also accepted Jesus while up a tree. "I remember praying up a tree ... God, would you be my friend again? All God asks is that we open the door, and he will do the rest."

Zacchaeus was regarded by society as the wrong sort of person. Because he was honoured by Jesus he repents, determined to compensate those he has wronged. From rich, he would have gone to having almost nothing, but had something more valuable. He was made right with God, he was accepted by God. He received peace and joy.

Anyone can accept Jesus, but they first need to know about Jesus; they need to be told about Him.

Zacchaeus didn't go with Jesus to Jerusalem; he stayed where he was, facing the people who knew him. We are also called to live a renewed life where we are, to be witnesses to the salvation that comes from having faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ, to the difference it makes having Him in our lives.

It has never been "cool" to be a Christian, but everyone wants to be forgiven, to know they are loved and accepted, to find peace and joy in their lives. The kindnesses we show can change someone else for ever. Jesus has honoured us by coming into our lives; we are called to show and tell others who Jesus really is.

Questions of Application

- 1) Where did Jesus first find you? How quickly did you respond?
- 2) Are you aware that Jesus honours you by being with you?
- 3) Have you been ridiculed for admitting to believe in or follow Jesus? If so, how did you respond?
- 4) How can you "show and tell others who Jesus really is" this week?
- 5) Don't forget to leave your "Big Questions" in the box in church!