

The Story of Zacchaeus

Sermon Topic: The Story of Zacchaeus

Bible Verse: Luke 19:2-7

Sermon Theme: Of all the people who lined the streets to see Jesus, Jesus picked the lowly publican Zacchaeus to visit and to share a meal. The observers murmured that Jesus would choose a “sinner” as his host. Somehow, Zacchaeus attracted the attention and heart of Jesus; and by his doing so we can gain a valuable ad important lesson in the life of faith.

Main idea: Jesus is entering Jericho, and news of his arrival has preceded him. The people have lined the streets in order to have a first-hand look at this prophet from Nazareth. One man, a publican named Zacchaeus, is too short to stature to see over the press of the crowd. But because of his desire to see Jesus, he decides to climb the nearest sycamore tree. From that vantage point, Zacchaeus gains a clear view of Jesus, and likewise Jesus gains a clear view of him. Jesus stops by the sycamore tree, looks up, and says “Zacchaeus, come down, for I must stay at your house today.”

Why should Jesus have chosen Zacchaeus? Zacchaeus did something that no one else there had done. He went to the public place to see Jesus. The others merely lined the streets and were casual observers, but Zacchaeus went to place where all could see him and, as a result, see his desire to see Jesus. It didn’t matter if the observers ridiculed him; his single-minded intent was to see Jesus. It didn’t matter if he compromised his dignity (climbing a tree wasn’t what a person of honor would do); he just wanted to see Jesus. It didn’t matter if his sin became a matter of public record and scorn; he just wanted to see Jesus.

Because Zacchaeus acknowledged his desire in the public place, Jesus could acknowledge him. Jesus expressed this principle in Luke 12:8 – “I tell you, he who

acknowledges me in front of men, I will acknowledge in front of the angles of God.” From this standpoint, public life is major duty of the Christian. We have to be public witnesses for the Lord.

Summary: Social action and public life are a key aspect of Christian life. In order to have a living relationship with the living, public God, we have to be moving in the same direction. God is living for the public well-being. John 3:16 – “...for God so loved the world, that he gave His Son...” When we accept Christ, then we have to accept all whom he has accepted, which means the world, even my enemy. I must love and forgive in order to be a truly public person.