

PREPARE HIM ROOM "ROOM FOR JESUS' COMPANY" LUKE 19:1-10

This Week's Core Competency

Personal God – I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life. Psalm 121:1-2

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills-
where does my help come from?
- 2 My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

Personal invitations are powerful forces for both good and evil. The invitations we accept and even those we reject change our lives for better or for worse—sometimes forever. Our best friends become our worst enemies when they invite us to do bad things, and we accept their invitations. In the opening chapter of the book of Proverbs, a wise father prepares his son for life in the world by warning him of this. "My son," he says, "if sinners entice you, do not give in to them." Along the same line in 1 Corinthians 15:33, Paul quotes a proverbial saying of his day, "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character.'"

On the other hand, invitations to do good are doors of opportunity that open to reveal countless chances to grow spiritually and to transform the world around us—but only if we accept them. A number of years ago I listened to Dr. Robert C. Andringa, the President of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities from 1994-2006, give his testimony at Trinity Western University in British Columbia. By the time he finished, the following dawned on me: how he had responded to crucial invitations in his life had determined who he was

Our personal God extends personal invitations that transform lives.

and what he was doing. While attending Michigan State University he was invited to run for president of his sophomore class and later the Inter-fraternity Council. He accepted both invitations and was elected to both positions. As a student leader he was invited to have a Coke with the President of Campus Crusade. He accepted the invitation, and Bill Bright invited him to receive Christ as his Savior. He did. He spent eleven years in government after accepting an invitation from a congressman to work in his office for one year. In 1980 he was asked if he would be interested in becoming the executive director of the Education Commission of the States, where he worked with the nation's governors, legislators and state boards of education. When the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities was looking for someone with extensive experience in government to be its new president, a contact invited him to consider the possibility. He had been the CCCU president for nearly four years when I heard him speak.

His testimony caused me to think about how invitations had impacted my life. I remember being invited to go to youth group by a friend. I went with him, and accepting that invitation ultimately led to my salvation. Before I graduated from high school, my youth pastor saw something in me and invited me to think about entering the ministry. Accepting that invitation took me to Bible college where one of my professors invited me to consider continuing my education at Dallas Seminary. Again I responded to his invitation, and after graduation I returned to that same Bible college where I in turn invited my students to attend seminary—some did.

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While I was completing my doctoral degree, a friend invited me to consider applying for a position at Trinity Western University where Ruth and I subsequently spent twelve years until being invited to join the pastoral staff at Pantego Bible Church in Texas in 1998.

Our personal God extends personal invitations. Jesus invited Zacchaeus to invite him home. The ostracized tax collector joyfully accepted the Savior's invitation, and it changed his life forever—something to think about as we look forward to 2015, the "Year of Invitation."

For Discussion

Talk about *personal invitations* you have received and how God has used your response to them to transform your life.

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

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."

Cf., another translation

1 Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. 2 There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. 3 He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.

5 When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today."

6 Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. 7 But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled.

8 Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!"

9 Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man[a] came to seek and save those who are lost." (NLT)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Underline "entered Jericho" in v. 1 and in the margin write "Cf., 18:35."
- * Circle "chief tax collector" in v. 2
- * Number the details given about Zacchaeus in vv. 2-4.
- * Box "but" indicating *contrast* and "because" indicating *reason* in v. 3.
- * Box "so" indicating *result* and "since" indicating *reason* in v. 4.

- * Box "when" indicating *temporal connection* in v. 5.
- * Circle "must" in v. 5.
- * Draw a line from "immediately" to "at once" in vv. 5 and 6 respectively.
- * Underline "has gone" in v. 7.
- * Box "because" and "for" indicating *reason* in v. 9.
- * Highlight "son of Abraham" in v. 9.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. We read that Zacchaeus "wanted to see who Jesus was" (v. 3); that he wanted "to see him" (v. 4). What do these words suggest to you about his quest—do you think he just wanted to catch a glimpse of Jesus? Explain.
2. Describe what hindered him in his quest.
3. Zacchaeus was a man of influence and means—why would the crowd not make room for him to see Jesus?
4. Describe how he overcame his hindrance.
5. Why *must* Jesus stay with Zacchaeus?
6. Explain why you *agree* or *disagree* with the mutterers' opinion of his spiritual condition.
7. Put the significance of Zacchaeus's announcement in your own words.
8. What made Zacchaeus a "son of Abraham" or a true Jew? (See "for," v. 10; cf. Rom 4:12)
9. **Discussion:** Talk about the purpose or purposes served by what Jesus said regarding the Son of Man.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

The Gospels contain stories that some scholars call *pronouncement stories*. These are brief narratives that report how Jesus responded in words (and sometimes also in actions) to something said or observed on a particular occasion. According to one scholar, *quest stories* are a particular type of pronouncement story. "In a quest story someone approaches Jesus in quest of something very important to human well-being. This quest is a dominant concern of the story; its importance is shown by the fact that the episode does not end until we are told whether the quest is successful or not. While many pronouncement stories simply end with Jesus' pronouncement, with no indication of how the other person responded to this, the quest story indicates how the encounter comes out for the person who approaches Jesus. We are shown that the person was either successful or unsuccessful" (Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 1:111).

The label *quest story* is not particularly important. What's important is the fact that certain stories in the Gospels can be classified based on the features they have in common. In the quest story, the major character, apart from Jesus, is in quest of something. The story opens by introducing the questing person and closes by telling us whether that person was successful in his or her quest. Furthermore, the story usually includes some difficulty or conflict that hinders the questing person. Dialogue in the story usually highlights this difficulty or conflict. For example, Jesus may pose a difficult condition or raise an objection, or another party may express an objection. In some cases, contrasting characters represent conflicting ways of acting or judging. Through these devices the Gospel writer focuses his readers' attention on a particular issue that is crucial to the success or failure of the quest and presents Jesus' words at the end to persuade his readers to accept Jesus' teaching on the matter (112).

The story of Zacchaeus is one of seven quest stories found in Luke's Gospel. In each of the stories a needy person has some characteristic that led some in Jesus' day and might lead some in our day to believe that he or she was beyond salvation. The story in Luke 5:17-26 is about a sinful paralytic, in 7:1-10 a Gentile, in

7:36-50 a sinful woman, in 17:11-19 a Samaritan leper, in 19:1-10 a chief tax collector, and in 23:39-43 a crucified criminal. The only quester to seemingly fail in his quest is the rich young ruler, a person of high social status in contrast to his ostracized counterpart, wealthy Zacchaeus, who succeeded (18:18-30). These stories dramatically portray Jesus as the one through whom God reaches out to save sinners—to accept those that society had rejected.

Zacchaeus is despised—a tax collector lumped together with sinners by his fellow Jews due to his collaboration with Rome. He wants to see Jesus, but can't because he's short and can't see over the crowd surrounding Christ. So when he spots an easy-to-climb sycamore-fig tree, he runs ahead and climbs it to get a better view. And when Jesus spots him in the tree, he invites himself to stay at Zacchaeus's house. The tax collector who only hoped to catch a glimpse of Jesus is going to dine with him! What's more, unlike the story of the rich ruler in verses 18-29, this one appears destined for a happier ending. Jesus and Zacchaeus head off together despite the vigorous objection of a handful of muttering bystanders. Perhaps Zacchaeus's joyful response to Jesus' invitation implies a nascent faith on his part. In any case, the tax collector's salvation is made obvious following his pledge in verse 8, the key verse in the story. Jesus says as much: "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham" (v. 9).

The key interpretive issue in the story is found in the key verse: "The key issue in this account involves the interpretation of the verbs found in 19:8. How should the present tense (in Greek) of the verbs 'give' and 'pay back' be interpreted? Are they 'customary presents' that reveal what Zacchaeus had been doing for some time? Was Zacchaeus claiming 'I have been in the habit of giving half my goods to the poor and paying back fourfold'? If so, Jesus' words in 19:9 serve more as a vindication of Zacchaeus' faith than as a statement of his conversion. On the other hand, the verse can be translated as 'futuristic present,' which reveals what Zacchaeus was about to do, because of his encounter with Jesus, i.e., due to his conversion. Then we should translate these verbs '[As

a result of my coming to faith] I shall give half of all I own . . . and restore fourfold.' The grammar permits either interpretation" (Stein, 466). While the grammar may permit either interpretation, the context clearly favors the latter interpretation. For example, Jesus' statement suggests that something had just happened to Zacchaeus. Otherwise, why would he say, "today salvation has come to this house"? (see Stein, 466 for six other reasons).

The *upper story* of this delightful narrative is about Jesus, who he is and why he came. The *lower story* is

about Zacchaeus, a sinner who welcomed Jesus gladly and found salvation in him. Coming at the end of the story, Jesus' statement in verse 10, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost," forms a fitting conclusion not only to the story of Zacchaeus in verses 1-10 but also to Luke's travel narrative in 9:51-19:10, as well as a fitting summary of his entire ministry.

The Message of the Passage

Believing that the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost, accept Jesus' invitation to receive salvation through faith in him.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 1 **Jericho** Located about 17 miles east of the city, Jericho was a stopping place for travelers who had to ascend from 600 feet below to nearly 3,000 feet above sea level on their way to Jerusalem. "The opening verse links with the preceding story of the blind man which was located outside Jericho" (I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 695). "Luke tied this account closely to the preceding (18:35) and to the whole travel narrative in which Jesus was passing through to Jerusalem (cf. 17:11)" (Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, 467). Luke's "travel narrative" begins in 9:51.
- v. 2 **Zacchaeus** A Jew who ironically didn't live up to his name, which meant "just one," or "righteous one," a fact that would have been missed by Luke's readers who were likely unfamiliar with the root meaning of the name.
- v. 2 **chief tax collector** The Gk term (*architelones*) occurs only here in the NT. Zacchaeus was the head of the tax and customs department, which employed numerous tax collectors to collect the tax, e.g., tolls, tariffs, imposts, and customs, on goods passing through Jericho on their way to and fro between the Roman province and the dominions of Herod Antipas. "Zacchaeus is a 'chief tax collector,' which means he stands at the top of the collection pyramid, taking a cut of commission from those who collected taxes for him. He is therefore a wealthy man, though many consider his wealth ill-gotten" (Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, 478). "Since the [chief tax collector] usually had to pay the expected revenue to the Romans in advance and then seek to recoup the amount, plus expenses and profits, by assessing and collecting the tolls [or taxes], the system of toll-collecting was obviously open to abuse and dishonesty" (J. A. Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*, AB, 470).
- v. 2 **wealthy** After meeting Jesus, he readily admitted that, like others in his profession, he was none too scrupulous in making sure that he made a good living off of all his collections (cf. v. 8)—all the more reason his neighbors despised and rejected him.
- v. 5 **must** Lit., "it is necessary" implies a divine rather than circumstantial necessity (cf. Jn 4:4 Jesus "had to go through Samaria"). Jesus could have requested hospitality from someone else in the crowd. "Jesus' stay with the tax collector is a necessity because it pictures what his ministry is all about—to lead to God those whom others have given up on, to call those who, like the tax collector Levi, needed to repent (5:31-32). His mission is to reclaim the prodigals (cf. 15) and justify the humble (18:9-14)" (Bock, 479).
- v. 5 **stay** The Greek verb can mean, "to rest," "to find lodging," or "to spend the night."
- v. 7 **has gone** The tense of the verb suggests a scene change. Zacchaeus came down from the tree and took Jesus home with him.
- v. 7 **sinner** As far as the Jews were concerned, staying in a sinner's home was tantamount to sharing in the sinner's sin.
- v. 8 **stood up** "We are not told if this took place after Zacchaeus came down from the tree, in Zacchaeus's home, or after dinner" (Stein, 468). A scene change implied by verse 7 suggests this takes place later. At the meal in his house or outside in the presence of others Zacchaeus stood up to announce that he had repented of his sins.
- v. 8 **if** The grammar indicates that the subject views the condition as real. Zacchaeus knew that he had cheated others. The sentence might be translated "and whomever I have cheated out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." "It is difficult to interpret this as a customary act of Zacchaeus in the past. It is best understood as a futuristic present, which along with his giving half of his goods to the poor reveals in Zacchaeus's actions what 'I repent' says in words" (Stein, 468).
- v. 8 **cheated** The same word is translated "extort money" in 3:14 where it refers to a common sin of soldiers who may have worked in cahoots with tax collectors.
- v. 8 **four times** He apparently considered what he had done theft (cf. Ex 22:1; 2Sa 12:6).
- v. 9 **son of Abraham** Not just a physical descendant of Abraham. He was that before he met Jesus. But also a spiritual descendant of Abraham, a man of faith like him.

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

A little girl stood near a small church from which she had been turned away because it was 'too crowded.' 'I can't go to Sunday School,' she sobbed to the pastor as he walked by. Seeing her shabby, unkempt appearance, the pastor guessed the reason and took her inside and found a place for her in the Sunday school class. She was so happy that they found room for her, and she went to bed that night thinking of the children who have no place to worship Jesus. Two years later, this child fell ill and passed away. Her parents called for the pastor who had befriended their daughter to handle her funeral. A worn red purse was found which seemed to have been rummaged from some trash dump. Inside was 57 cents and a note, scribbled by the girl. It read: 'This is to help build the little church bigger so more children can go to Sunday School.' For two years she had saved for this offering of love. Once word got out of the girl's sacrificial gift, others jumped in to help build a bigger church building where all kids were welcome. Today, the church still stands in Philadelphia and many children have come to know Jesus because of a little girl's gift of 57 cents. What small thing is God asking your family to give this year?

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Matthew 2:1-12

1. What led the Wise Men to Bethlehem?
2. What did they find there?
3. What did they give the baby Jesus?

What Do You Think

The Wise Men, just like us, were filled with joy to bring gifts and worship Jesus. How do you feel when you give someone a gift? How do you feel when you worship God?

What R U Going To Do

Don't underestimate the value of a small gift. You may not be able to give much but God can use something small in a mighty way. Make a list of things you could do this holiday season to bless others. Now, do it!

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Worship - I celebrate God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Memory Verse

Acts 20:35b - It is more blessed to give than receive.

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.