

Daily Devotion For July 9, 2022

‘For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.’ Luke 19:10

Last Sunday, I spoke on an encounter that Jesus had with a tax collector by the name of Zacchaeus. Are there any modern day “tax collectors?” I often think of the corrupt televangelist who have amassed millions of dollars by taking advantage of their viewers. It’s shocking that people who claim to love Jesus and the Bible deceive others into giving away their savings. Instead of praying for the needy, these false teachers prey on the impoverished and get rich.

As I mentioned on Sunday, tax collectors had a scandalous reputation in Israel. Working for the Romans, they not only collected government taxes but also padded their own pockets by charging a ridiculous surplus. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and very wealthy man whose reputation was well known. After climbing the tree to get a better look, Zacchaeus finally saw Jesus. He must have been shocked when Jesus stopped, looked directly at him, and called him by name.

How did Jesus know Zacchaeus? He must have been one of the most corrupt tax collectors if we judge by the crowd’s reaction (v. 7). Jesus not only welcomed the interaction with Zacchaeus but also went to the man’s house as “the guest of a sinner” (v. 7). After conversing at the dinner table, Zacchaeus realized his sin. He confessed and committed to helping others, instead of taking advantage of them. He swore to give to those in need, instead of stealing from them.

Jesus’ response to Zacchaeus would have stunned Luke’s readers. First, they would never have eagerly welcomed a corrupt person like Zacchaeus. Second, it would have been difficult for them to admit that anyone from Abraham’s family could be lost. But Jesus was in the business of seeking out and saving all those who have gone wayward and giving them salvation. Through Jesus, even a corrupt tax collector was given a second chance.

**Thought For Today.** Zacchaeus’s story is a reminder that our family lineage does not earn us salvation, neither do church attendance and good works. Only faith in Jesus can help lost people find forgiveness and a second chance.

**Today’s Prayer Focus:** Give praise to God that he is the God of second chances. Anyone you know that is beyond God’s reach? Take time to pray for them today. Deo Volente.