



Daily Reflections

October 30, 2016

Scripture

Luke 19:1-10

At that time, Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature.

So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way.

When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house."

And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord,

“Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor,
and if I have extorted anything from anyone
I shall repay it four times over.”

And Jesus said to him,

“Today salvation has come to this house
because this man too is a descendant of Abraham.
For the Son of Man has come to seek
and to save what was lost.”

Our Scripture Reflection

Ever wonder why Zacchaeus climbed the tree that day? Certainly, to see Jesus because he was, after all, incredibly short. But he also climbed the tree because he didn't want to miss this one chance to change his life forever. He would have been totally out of luck because of the size of the crowd and also because of their height. Jesus may have just passed on by. No, Zacchaeus was determined, resolved to see Jesus AND to repent. Notice how quickly he offers significant restitution for all of his wrong doing. Jesus' response? More than Zacchaeus could have ever dreamed. Despite the reaction of the mean-spirited crowd, Jesus stayed at Zacchaeus' house that day. And Zacchaeus' life would never be the same.

Food for your Journey

Pastor David Mansfield points us to Bill Hybel's book, *Just Walk Across the Room* (Zondervan, 2006) as an appropriate resource for this text.

The blurb on the back cover reads: “What if you knew that by simply crossing the room and saying hello to someone, you could change that person's life forever? Just a few steps to make an eternal difference. It has nothing to do with methods and everything to do with taking a genuine interest in another human being. All you need is a heart that's in tune with the Holy Spirit and a willingness to venture out of your 'Circle of Comfort' and into another person's life.”

Or, it could read, “What if you knew that by simply crossing the road to talk to that person in a 'tree'... ?”

Imagine this scenario: It's dinnertime and the family is called to the table. The kids have been outside playing in the sandbox, and are starved. They bolt into the house, sit down and start to fill their plates to eat while Mom is still getting things on the table. She notices they have not washed their hands, and sends them to go wash their hands before dinner. Grudgingly they do, but return with grumpy attitudes because they managed to get in a fight while washing their hands.

Rewind. Take two. It's dinnertime, and the family is called to the table. The kids have been playing outside in the sandbox and are starved. They bolt into the house and remember to go wash their hands before sitting down at the table to wait for everyone. The meal begins and pleasant dinner conversation follows.

Which scenario can you identify with? The children ignoring their dirty hands and rushing to the table, or the children willingly washing their hands before a meal? It's better for us to approach our heavenly Father with the attitude of knowing we have dirty hands and seek his cleansing, than rushing into his holy presence without being clean. While the Lord lovingly accepts us as we are, our part is to continually seek his forgiveness.

—Nancy K. Grace, "The hidden value of pH," *Just Between Us*, Spring 2007, 18.

Prayer from the Heart

Precious Lord, Even though I have turned away from You many times, You want me back. Please forgive the wrong I have done and help me turn my life around like Zacchaeus. Amen.