



# ZACCHAEUS

Nursery • February 2025

## Concept

Jesus loves everyone.

## Goal

The children will learn that Jesus loves everyone.

## Passage

Luke 19:1-10

Key Verse: "Jesus wants to know everyone." Luke 19:10 (paraphrase)

## Planning Ahead

### Lesson Supplies

- The Rhyme Bible Storybook for Toddlers, Sattgast, pp. 224-233
- The Beginner's Bible for Toddlers, Mission Press, pp. 134-138
- *Laminated, magnet-backed pictures of:*
  - *Zacchaeus*
  - *Jesus walking into the crowd*
  - *Zacchaeus looking through crowd*
  - *Zacchaeus climbing the tree*
  - *Jesus talking to Zacchaeus*
  - *Jesus eating with Zacchaeus*

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information/Teacher Helps

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In Luke 19 we read about Jesus' encounter with a man named Zacchaeus. Little information is given about Zacchaeus other than that he was a rich man and a chief tax gatherer. Therefore his prosperity was certainly a result of his dishonest collecting (Luke 19:8). The Jews viewed the tax gatherers as social outcasts and referred to them as "sinners." They were outcasts not only because of their dishonest practices (Luke 3:12-13) but also because they were considered traitors who worked for the pagan government that was oppressing the Jewish nation. Jesus was often criticized for associating with sinners and tax gatherers, as is the case when Jesus stayed with Zacchaeus. Jesus' response was, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17). The story of Zacchaeus is an excellent example of God's unconditional acceptance, based not on what we do but what He did. We are counted righteous because He has forgiven us by His sacrifice on the cross for our sins.

We read in Luke 19:8 "Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much.'" This is a beautiful picture of one who has genuinely repented and received forgiveness. Overwhelming gratitude compels one to give up all and to live for Christ rather than ourselves.

## Prayer

Pray for the children

- With your team before class
- During the week

Pray simple short prayers with the children

## Lesson Lg. Group

**Instructions:** Use the laminated figures and the story bibles to tell the story.

**Main Points:**

- Jesus loves everyone
- Zacchaeus only loved himself and made bad choices
- Jesus loved Zacchaeus and wanted to be his friend
- Zacchaeus decided he wanted to be Jesus' friend
- Zacchaeus wanted Jesus to help him be a good friend
- Jesus wants to be your friend

## Activity

### Game – I Want You to be My Friend

**Instructions:** Have children and a teacher sit in a circle on the floor. The teacher will start by rolling the ball to a child at the same time saying, "<<name>>, I want you to be my friend." Then, the teacher says to the child, "Roll the ball to someone you want to be your friend." When the child rolls the ball to another child, the teacher will say for that child, "<<name>> wants <<name>> to be his/her friend." Continue around the circle until each child has an opportunity to roll the ball and/or to have the ball rolled to him or her.