



Life of Christ

Jesus & Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10

Younger Verse

Christ loves me and gave Himself to save me. Galatians 2:20

Older Verse

I do not live anymore—it is Christ living in me. I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God. He loves me and gave Himself to save me. Galatians 2:20

Lesson Goals

Explain how to become a Christian
 Show how following Jesus changes your life
 Tell some ways to grow as a Christian

Welcome Time

What is a boss? (wait for answers) What does a boss do? (wait for answers)
 Today's lesson explains what it means for Jesus to be boss of your life. Listen to the lesson and see if you can explain it.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Jesus was going through the town of Jericho. Many people wanted to see Him. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus too. Zacchaeus could not see above the people because he was a short man.

Zacc thought of a plan. It seemed kind of strange, but he did something that not many grown-ups do. He ran ahead on the path and climbed a tree. Yes, little short Zacc climbed up a tree! When he got in the tree, he waited for Jesus to walk by.

When Jesus got to the tree, He looked up at Zacc and said, "Zacc come down. I want to visit you at your house today."

Excitedly, Zacchaeus climbed down the tree. He felt glad that Jesus wanted to visit him and that He cared enough to talk to him. Jesus even knew his name!

The people couldn't believe what Jesus was doing. They told Jesus that Zacc was a mean man. Zacchaeus was a rich tax collector. He collected taxes from people. It's like when you buy candy at the store. You have to pay a little money to the cashier for taxes.

Sometimes, Zacc cheated people and asked for more than was needed. The people had to give him the money—even if he was wrong. This made them very mad at him. They hated him for cheating them. The people only noticed the wrong that Zacc did. Sometimes, we also ignore our wrong choices and point out others' mistakes. Jesus saw something good in Zacchaeus.

Jesus doesn't see us like people see us. When He looks at us, He

sees the person He created and He knows what we can become. Jesus loved Zacc. He didn't see a thief when He looked at Zacc. He saw His child and He knew that Zacc was choosing to change His life. Zacchaeus became a changed person. He let Jesus be the director of his life. He told Jesus that he would give half of what he owned to the poor. He would also repay people 4 times what he cheated them. So if he cheated them out of a dollar, he would give them four dollars!

Jesus said, "God loves Zacchaeus. Today he has believed in Jesus and has changed his ways."

Jesus was happy and very glad that Zacc was truthful. He loved Jesus with all his heart and wanted to do the right thing from then on. He wanted to change and be like Jesus. All the people saw that Zacc had changed. They knew that Jesus had made a difference in his life. Zacc no longer cheated people anymore. He followed Jesus and loved others.

Would you like to be changed like Zacchaeus? Jesus can change your life just like He did for Zacc. When we believe in Jesus and ask Him to come into our lives, He changes us into a new person from the inside out. If you want to know more, talk to me during activity time or snack time.

What do you think? What does it mean to grow as a Christian? (wait for answers) We want to do what Jesus would do. We want to be honest and do the right thing. It also means listening to God and talking to Him. We can do this by reading the Bible and praying.

What does it mean for Jesus to be the director of your life? Just as a director of a movie shows people where to go, what to say, and how to act, Jesus wants to direct our lives and guide us so we don't get into trouble or make wrong mistakes.

How can Jesus direct your life? You simply ask Him to be in charge of your life and tell Him that you will do things His way and not your way. Have you let Jesus be director of your life?

Learning Activities

Use the activities that will help your children apply the lesson to their lives.

Memory Verse Activities

Ask the kids what they think it means for Jesus to be "living in me." Share the story "My Heart Christ's Home" and tell them how Jesus wants to be in all the rooms of your heart not just one or two.

Prayer Time

Ask each child to say a sentence prayer. Give them examples like "God help my aunt," or "God I love you," or "Please help me be good." etc.

Snack Time/CleanUp

If the weather is nice, find a tree and act out the story. Take time to talk about what Zacc did and how his life was different when he met Jesus.

Planning for May 5th
How do I pray?
Matthew 6:5-8

Preschool Lesson
For
Jesus and Zacchaeus

Teachers: Bring a white or brown sock to use a sock puppet. The sock can be a tree, telling the story.

Hi! I'm a tree. I want to tell you the most amazing story that happened to me!

I was on a road in a town called Jericho. Far away there was a huge crowd. I couldn't tell what was going on. All the leaves knew that something wonderful was happening.

Suddenly, a little man came running up to our tree. Do you know what he did? He climbed up my trunk and sat on my branch! I had never seen a grown-up do that before!

Next, lots of people began to come our way. It was like a big parade.

Then, I saw why everyone was excited. Jesus, God's Son, was there! He was walking right toward our tree!

You won't believe what happened next. Jesus looked up at me and saw the little man. Jesus called him Zacc. He knew the man's name! Jesus asked Zacc to come down from the tree and have dinner with Him.

The little man jumped down and walked with Jesus to his home. All the other people started saying mean things about the little man. He was not always honest and they figured that Jesus did not know it.

Jesus cared for Zacc and wanted to visit with him. He did not listen to what the other people said.

That night Zacc's life was changed. Because of Jesus' kindness, Zacc believed in Him and knew that Jesus was God's Son.

To show all the townspeople that he really had changed, Zacc gave back all the money he had ever stolen from others.

When he did this, all the people saw that Zacc's life was changed. Jesus had changed his life.

Jesus loves you too! He knows your name just like He knew Zacc's name.

Let's pray and then sing a song that goes with the story.

Zacchaeus was a wee little man and a wee little man was he. (Measure a small amount)
He climbed up in a very big tree, for the Lord he wanted to see (make climb motion; look)
And as the Savior passed that way, He looked up in the tree (Move fingers as if walking)
and He said, "Zacchaeus, you come down, for I'm going to your house today,
Yes, I'm going to your house today." (point up with index finger)

Hands-on Activities for Jesus and Zacchaeus

Make “Treetop Hats.” Turn a bowl upside down and glue green construction paper leaves to it. Let the kids put the hats on and tell the story.

For toddlers, let them play a fun exercise game. When you say “Up a tree” they have to stretch high into the sky. When you say, “Down a tree” they have to sit down. Have fun calling out “Up” and “Down” and when you are finished, share how Zacc climbed down the tree to visit with Jesus.

Get a big box and let the kids cover it with green construction paper leaves (or real ones) Share the story and let “Zacc” crawl out of the box at the proper time in the story.

To help the kids see how Zacc shared his money with others, give each person a bag of Cheerios cereal. Let them share their cereal with everyone else in the classroom. For more fun, bring different kinds of cereal so that everyone has a variety in the end.

Cut out large “coins” from red, green, yellow and blue construction paper. Draw dollar and cent signs on them. Tape the coins to the floor in a circle. Call out a color and ask everyone to jump, walk hop or crawl to the color coin. After much fun, share how Zacc believed in Jesus and gave back all the coins that he had taken from others. Explain that Zacc’s kindness helped others see that he really did believe in Jesus.

Make paper plate faces. One side is a sad face. The other side is a happy face. Now, tell the story. In the beginning, Zacc will have a sad face. Then, when Jesus talks to him, turn the face over to be happy!