

LUCKY LEMONS ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

“The Man in the Tree and the Crowd in the Street”

Luke 19:1-10

Complete 45-Minute Teaching Script

Bowdon Baptist Church | Dr. Bobby Gaines

THE BIG IDEA (write this on the board before anybody walks in)

The crowd wanted to know if Zacchaeus could be saved. Jesus wanted to know if the crowd could stand it.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Whiteboard or easel pad
- Bibles, and ask them to keep them open the whole hour
- Optional video: see **Appendix E** for the verified clip and the Stanley message. Read that appendix before you promise anybody a video.
- Handout: the “Four Words” card (Part 4 below). One per person.

TIMING AT A GLANCE

Minutes	Segment
0:00-0:05	The Hook
0:05-0:15	Section 1: Verses 1-4. The man nobody would sit with
0:15-0:25	Section 2: Verses 5-6. The word “must”

0:25-0:40	Section 3: Verses 7-10. The grumble, the ledger, the verdict
0:40-0:45	The Close and the Invitation

Word-for-word lines are in > **blockquotes**. Everything else is your outline. Adjust to your own voice, but I would not soften the blockquotes. They are built to land.

0:00-0:05 THE HOOK

Do not open a Bible yet. Do not announce the passage.

Stand up front, quiet, and say:

Before we open anything, I want you to do something for me, and I want you to do it silently.

I want you to think of one person. Not a category. A person. Somebody real, with a name, who lives within about thirty minutes of this building. Somebody who, if they walked through that door right now and sat down in that empty chair, would change the temperature of this room.

Maybe it is what they did. Maybe it is who they voted for. Maybe it is what they took from somebody you love. Maybe it is a last name in this county that comes with a story attached.

Do not say the name. Just hold it.

Alright. Hold onto that person, because in about twenty minutes, Jesus is going to invite Himself over to their house for supper, and I want to see how you feel about it.

(Beat. Let it sit.)

Turn with me to Luke chapter 19.

[TEACHING NOTE: Do not explain the hook. Do not soften it. Let them sit in it. The whole lesson is a slow-motion detonation of that first exercise.]

Then set the scene in three sentences, no more:

Jesus is about a week from the cross. He is walking the last road up to Jerusalem. And He is not planning to stop in Jericho. Verse one says He entered and He was **passing through**. Jericho is a rest stop on the way to a crucifixion.

One man changed His itinerary.

0:05-0:15

SECTION 1: LUKE 19:1-4

“The Man Nobody Would Sit With”

Read verses 1-4 aloud. Then teach.

Point 1. Luke stacks the deck against him on purpose

Verse 2 gives you three facts: chief tax collector, rich, short.

Here is what a first-century reader heard, and what we have completely lost.

In Luke’s Gospel, “he was rich” is not a description. It is nearly an obituary.

Watch this. Luke chapter 6, “Woe to you who are rich.” Luke 12, the rich fool, dead before breakfast. Luke 16, the rich man with the crooked manager. Luke 16 again, the rich man who ends up in torment. Luke 18, one chapter ago, the ruler who was “very rich” and walked away sad.

By the time you get to chapter 19 and Luke says “and he was rich,” you have been trained. You know how this ends. This fellow is going to walk away.

Which means Luke has set us up. Our Sunday school songs taught us to like Zacchaeus. Luke’s readers were taught to write him off. And if we do not feel that, we will not feel verse nine when it hits.

[TEXT for the pattern. INFERENCE for Luke’s intent, but a strong one.]

Point 2. Set the city. Give them the number.

Do not just say “Jericho was wealthy.” Give them the arithmetic. They are adults, and some of them run businesses.

Jericho was not a dusty little wide spot in the road. It was a warm-weather resort town below sea level, and it was sitting on money.

It grew **balsam**, the most expensive perfume resin in the Roman world. Pliny the Elder wrote that at times it sold for twice its weight in silver. It grew the famous Judean **dates**. And it sat on the road where goods crossed the Jordan and went up to Jerusalem, which

means a customs house, which means tolls.

Here is the number. Mark Antony gave the Jericho balsam groves to Cleopatra. Herod the Great then **rented them back from her for two hundred talents a year.**

A talent is roughly six thousand denarii. A denarius is roughly a day's wage.

Two hundred talents is about one million two hundred thousand days of a working man's wages. **Thirty-three hundred years of labor. Every year. Just as rent.**

That is what one little oasis was worth. And Zacchaeus's toll booth sat right on top of it.

(Sources for your notes: Josephus, Antiquities 15.96 and War 1.361-362 on the 200 talents. Pliny, Natural History 12.111-123 on balsam. The Herodian winter palace complex at Tulul Abu el-Alaiq has been excavated, most famously by Ehud Netzer. Herod died there in 4 BC.)

[PROBABLE. Josephus is our best source and he lived close to it, but he inflates elsewhere. Say the number confidently; do not build doctrine on it.]

Point 3. Correct two things, quickly and cheerfully

This is the "myth-busting minute." Adults love being told the truth about what they have been told.

Two quick corrections, and then we move on.

One. The tree is not our sycamore. It is *Ficus sycomorus*, the sycamore fig. Big, low, wide branches, easy to climb. But here is the part nobody tells you: in the Bible, that tree is the **cheap** tree. First Kings 10 says Solomon made cedar as common as **sycamore**. Amos calls himself a **dresser of sycamore figs**, which was hired-hand work, because the fruit will not ripen unless you cut it. The sycamore fig is poor man's fruit and poor man's lumber.

The richest man in Jericho climbed the poor man's tree.

Two. The tree they will show you in Jericho today is a nice tree. It is not **his** tree. It is a memorial, not a relic. When somebody sends you the photo, be kind and be honest.

Point 4. Why he could not see

Verse 3. Two reasons.

"He was seeking to see Jesus, **who He is**, and he could not, **because of the crowd**, because he was short."

Now, the Bible does not tell us the crowd blocked him on purpose. I suspect they did. I

cannot prove it, so I will not preach it. But read that verse again and let it be about us for a second.

He could not see Jesus because of the crowd.

[ASK - first discussion question, 3 to 4 minutes. This is a warm-up. Keep it moving.]

Question one: When has the church been the crowd?

Not "when has the world been the crowd." When have **we** been standing in the way of somebody's view?

[TEACHING NOTE: If nobody talks, prime the pump with something small and true about yourself. Adults will follow honesty. They will not follow a lecture.]

Point 5. The line that ends Section 1

Here is the detail that ought to bother you.

There are exactly two men in Luke's Gospel who "sought to see Jesus." Luke uses the same phrase for both of them.

One is Zacchaeus, in chapter 19.

The other is **Herod**, in chapter 9. "And he was seeking to see Him."

Herod finally got his wish. Luke 23. Jesus is standing in front of him in chains, and Herod laughs at Him and sends Him back in a fancy robe.

Two men wanted a look at Jesus. One had a palace. One had short legs and a tree.

Guess which one got saved.

[TEXT on the verbal parallel: Luke 9:9 and 19:3 both read *ezetei idein auton*.

INFERENCE on the contrast, but the wording is exact.]

0:15-0:25

SECTION 2: LUKE 19:5-6

"The Word That Changes Everything"

Read verses 5-6 aloud. Then teach.

Point 1. Jesus does the seeing

Zacchaeus climbed up that tree to get a look at Jesus, and Luke never says he got one.

Look at verse five. **Jesus looked up.**

And here is a little thing that will pay you back all week. The Greek word for “looked up” is *anablepo*. Luke has used that exact word three times in the last four verses, back in chapter 18, and every time it meant one thing: **“receive your sight.”** It is the blind man’s word.

Luke uses the blindness-healing word, and he hands it to **Jesus**.

The Savior is standing at the bottom of a tree, looking **up** at a sinner. Let that sit for a second.

[TEXT. Luke 18:41, 42, 43 and 19:5, same verb.]

Point 2. “I MUST stay at your house today”

This is the heart of Section 2. Slow down. Write **MUST** on the board.

Everybody has always noticed that Jesus invited Himself over. Nobody notices the word “must.”

In Greek it is *dei*, and in Luke’s Gospel that word is not a scheduling word. It is a **divine necessity** word, and Luke saves it for the biggest things in the whole book.

Luke 2: “I **must** be about my Father’s business.” Luke 4: “I **must** preach the kingdom.”

Luke 9: “The Son of Man **must** suffer and be killed.” Luke 24: “The Christ **must** suffer and rise from the dead.”

And Luke 19: **“Today I must stay at your house.”**

Church, hear what that means. Jesus used the **same word** about supper at the tax collector’s house that He used about **the cross**.

Nobody in Jericho thought that meal was a necessity. Nobody. Jesus said it was the same kind of necessity as Calvary.

[TEXT. This is straight vocabulary and it is airtight.]

Point 3. “Today”

And notice **today**. Luke’s favorite salvation word.

"Today in the city of David a Savior is born." **"Today** this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." **"Today** salvation has come to this house." **"Today** you will be with me in paradise."

When Jesus says "today," somebody is about to get saved.

Point 4. He came down rejoicing, and he had not paid a dime yet

Verse six. "He hurried and came down and welcomed Him **rejoicing**."

Look at the order, because this is where a lot of good church people get it exactly backwards.

He did not clean up and then get invited. He got invited and **then** he cleaned up. He did not pay first and then get joy. He got joy first, and then he opened the books.

Charles Stanley put it about as well as it can be put. He said Zacchaeus did not **buy** grace with half his wealth. Grace **broke wealth's grip** on him.

Grace went first. Grace always goes first.

[ASK - second discussion question, 4 to 5 minutes. This one has teeth.]

Question two: Jesus said "I MUST stay at your house today," and He used the same word He used about the cross.

Whose house has that word attached to it in your week?

Not to fix them. Not to witness at them. **To eat with them.**

[TEACHING NOTE: Do not let them answer in the abstract. If somebody says "well, we should love everybody," gently push: "Give me a name. Not out loud. But in your head, give me a name." Then move on. The silence is the lesson.]

0:25-0:40

SECTION 3: LUKE 19:7-10

"The Grumble, the Ledger, and the Verdict"

Read verses 7-10 aloud. This is the longest section. It carries the freight.

Point 1. Verse 7: it was not the Pharisees. It was everybody.

Read verse seven again, slowly. "And when they saw it, they **all** began to grumble."

All. Luke does not say the Pharisees. He does not say the scribes. He names no party, no faction, no political side. He says **all**.

Which means the disciples were standing in that crowd too.

This is not a story about **those** people. There is no "those people" in verse seven. There is just a street full of folks who were fine with Jesus right up until He walked into the wrong man's house.

[TEXT. He says *pantes*. All.]

Point 2. The two-chapter gut punch

Write on the board: **18:43 = praise. 19:7 = grumbling.**

Now flip back one page. Luke 18, verse 43. Jesus has just healed the blind beggar on the way into Jericho. And what does the crowd do?

"And **all the people**, when they saw it, **gave praise to God.**"

Same crowd. **Sixteen verses later** they are grumbling.

They praised God for a poor blind beggar. They grumbled about a rich crook.

So let us just say the quiet part out loud. There are sinners we find it **easy** to love, and there are sinners we have quietly decided are beyond help. The difference between the two usually has nothing to do with how much sin there is. It has to do with whether the sinner is **sympathetic**.

The blind man could not help it. Zacchaeus could.

And that is exactly why the blind man is easier to love. And it is exactly why grace, real grace, is so offensive.

[ASK - third discussion question. This is the center of the lesson. Give it 5 minutes and let it breathe.]

Question three: What kind of sinner do we find it easy to love, and what kind do we quietly believe is beyond reach?

Be specific. Name the categories. Not names of people. Categories.

[TEACHING NOTE: This is where the class either becomes real or stays polite. Have

two ready yourself, and go first. When a teacher confesses first, adults will follow. If it gets quiet, that is fine. Do not rescue the silence.]

Point 3. The name and the label

Here is the sentence I want you to take home from verse seven.

The crowd looked at him and said, "**a sinful man.**"

They gave him a **category**.

Jesus looked up in that tree and said, "**Zacchaeus.**"

He gave him a **name**.

And one more thing, and this one will get you. The phrase the crowd spits out, "a sinful man," shows up one other time in Luke. Chapter five. Peter falls on his face in the boat and says, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am **a sinful man.**"

Same words. Peter said it about **himself** and Jesus made him an apostle. The crowd said it about **Zacchaeus** and used it to lock the door.

The difference between an apostle and an outcast, in Luke's Gospel, is **who gets to say the sentence**.

[TEXT. Luke 5:8 and Luke 19:7 use the same phrase.]

Point 4. VERSE 8. THE LEDGER. (This is your money segment. Do not rush it.)

Write on the board: **LAW REQUIRED: 120% ZACCHAEUS PAID: 400%**

Alright. I teach finance for a living, so bear with me, because this is the part of this passage that almost nobody preaches and it is the best part.

Zacchaeus stands up in his own dining room, in front of a house full of witnesses, and he makes a **public financial declaration**. Half to the poor. Fourfold to anyone he defrauded.

Now. What did the Law of Moses actually **require** of a man in his position?

Leviticus chapter 6. Numbers chapter 5. When a man commits fraud or extortion and then **voluntarily confesses it**, the Law says: pay back the principal, **plus twenty percent**, and bring a guilt offering.

One hundred and twenty percent. That is the bill.

Zacchaeus is voluntarily confessing. He qualifies for the one hundred and twenty. He had a plea deal sitting right there on the table.

He paid **four hundred percent**.

Where does fourfold come from? **Exodus twenty-two**. Fourfold is the penalty for a **convicted thief** who stole a sheep and then slaughtered it so you could not get it back. That is the guy who got caught **and** destroyed the evidence.

Zacchaeus reached past the plea deal, reached past the confession discount, and filed himself under the **maximum sentence**.

And here is one more thing they never tell you. Under **Roman law**, the penalty for a tax collector who wrongfully seized your property was also **fourfold**. It is in the praetor's edict.

So when Zacchaeus says "four times," he is naming the number that **his religion** and **his own profession's regulatory law** both reserved for the worst case.

He did not negotiate. **He prosecuted himself**.

(Your citation for the Roman piece: Digest 39.4.1, the edict "Quod publicanus," from the jurist Ulpian. Caveat honestly if asked: the Digest is a sixth-century compilation of earlier Roman law, so we cannot prove that exact edict was in force in Judea in AD 30. Fourfold as the penalty against abusive tax collectors is well attested.)

Now land it:

So write this down, because this is the whole lesson in one sentence.

The crowd thought Jesus lowered the standard when He walked into that house.

Zacchaeus raised it.

Grace did not excuse the debt. Grace produced the first man in Jericho who was **free enough to pay it**. And he was **smiling** when he did it.

Point 5. The half to the poor is not charity. It is restitution.

This is the insight that will make somebody in your class sit up.

One more thing about verse eight, and this is the piece I have never heard preached.

Everybody teaches verse eight as two things: he was **generous** to the poor, and he was **honest** with his victims.

I do not think that is what is happening.

The rabbis had a problem with tax collectors, and it was not just a moral problem. It was a **paperwork** problem. There is a rabbinic tradition that says repentance is nearly **impossible** for a tax collector. Not because God will not forgive him. Because **he cannot find everybody he robbed**. Twenty years at a toll booth. Thousands of transactions. Who do you pay back?

Now look at verse eight again with that in mind.

"Half of my goods **I give to the poor**." That is restitution to the people he **cannot** name. "If I have defrauded anyone, I restore **fourfold**." That is restitution to the people he **can** name.

He is not being generous and then also being fair.

He is being fair twice. Once by name, and once by category.

[TRADITION on the rabbinic material, which is later, roughly AD 200 and after. But say it, because the underlying problem is obvious and ancient and any honest crook understands it immediately.]

Point 6. Be honest about the scholarly fight in verse 8

Thirty seconds. Do not skip it. Adults trust a teacher who shows his work.

I owe you an honest note. In the Greek, those verbs in verse eight are **present tense**. "I give." "I restore." Not "I will give."

And there are real scholars, good ones, who argue that Zacchaeus is not repenting at all. He is **defending** himself. As in, "Lord, I **already** give half to the poor, and I **always** pay back four times when I mess up. These people have misjudged me."

I want you to hear that, because it is not a stupid argument.

Here is why I do not buy it. **Verse ten**. Jesus says He came to seek and to save **the lost**. Jesus does not call vindicated righteous men "the lost." And He says "**today** salvation has come." If nothing changed today, "today" means nothing.

Also, and this is the practical objection nobody makes: a man who **habitually** gave away half his estate and paid quadruple damages on every complaint would not still be described in verse two as **rich**.

The best way to read those present tense verbs is what grammarians call a **performative present**. It is the tense you use when the saying **is** the doing. Like a wedding vow. "I **take** thee." Like a will. "I **give** and bequeath." Like a courtroom. "I **plead** guilty."

Zacchaeus was not reporting a habit. He was not making a promise for later.

He was signing.

Point 7. Verses 9-10. The verdict.

"**Today** salvation has come to this house, because **he too** is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Two things, and then we are done.

First, "he too." Two little words. The crowd had written this man out of Israel, and Jesus writes him back in. **He too.**

And this is not just about his bloodline, because everybody already knew he was Jewish. Go back to Luke chapter three. John the Baptist is preaching, and he says to the crowd, "Bear **fruits worthy of repentance**, and do **not** start telling yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'"

Then the tax collectors come to John and ask, "What do we do?" And John says: "**Collect no more than you are authorized to.**" And to the soldiers: "**Do not extort, and do not accuse falsely.**"

Now listen. That word "accuse falsely," or "defraud," in Luke chapter three? It is a rare word. In the whole New Testament it shows up **exactly twice**.

Luke chapter three, in John the Baptist's mouth.

And Luke chapter nineteen, verse eight, in **Zacchaeus's** mouth.

Luke ties a string between those two verses. John said, "Do not claim Abraham. Show me fruit." And Zacchaeus produced **every single fruit John named**: he shared with the poor, he stopped over-collecting, and he made good on the false charges.

And then Jesus hands him the title the crowd was standing there **presuming** on.

He too is a son of Abraham.

[TEXT. The Greek verb is *sykophanteo*, and Luke 3:14 and Luke 19:8 are its only two New Testament occurrences.]

Second, verse ten, and this is the one that will change how you read the whole thing.

"The Son of Man came to **seek** and to save **the lost**."

That is not a nice summary line. That is a **quotation**. Open **Ezekiel chapter thirty-four**. God is furious at the shepherds of Israel, the leaders, because they fed themselves off the flock and never went after the strays. And He says, in verse four, "**the lost you have not sought.**" And then in verse sixteen, God says, "**I Myself will seek the lost.**"

The words in Luke 19:10 and the words in Ezekiel 34:16 are, in the Greek Old Testament, essentially **the same words**.

So when Jesus says "the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost," He is not being poetic. He is saying: **I am the God of Ezekiel 34. I have come Myself, because the shepherds would not go.**

And where are the shepherds in this story?

They are **standing out in the street, grumbling.**

0:40-0:45

THE CLOSE

First: the Four Words. Hand out the card. This protects people.

[TEACHING NOTE: Do not skip this. There is someone in that room who has been genuinely hurt by somebody, and if you preach grace without this, you will hand an abuser a crowbar. Say it plainly and say it slowly.]

Write on the board:

GRACE. REPENTANCE. RESTITUTION. TRUST.

Before we close, I have to give you four words, because grace gets abused in churches and I will not do that to you.

Grace is free. God gives it. Nobody earns it. Jesus walked into that house before Zacchaeus said one word.

Repentance is costly. Zacchaeus paid.

Restitution is owed. And notice who he paid. **Zacchaeus did not pay Jesus.** He paid **the people he robbed.** Getting right with God did not close his accounts with his neighbors.

And **trust is earned.** It belongs to the **victim's** timetable, not the offender's.

So hear me. **Grace opens the door. Grace does not hand over the keys.**

Jesus went into Zacchaeus's house. Jesus never once commanded Zacchaeus's **victims** to invite him into theirs. Not one word of obligation is put on the people he robbed. The

Bible does not shame them. It does not tell them to hurry up and feel better. It just makes sure **the check clears**.

If you are sitting in this room this morning and somebody really hurt you, this passage is not a crowbar to be used on you.

And church, here is how you know the difference between real repentance and a good performance. Look at Zacchaeus. His was **unforced. Public. Specific. Costly. Immediate. And joyful**. Nobody made him. He stood up. He named a number. He paid more than he had to. He did it today. And he was smiling.

An apology that is private, vague, cheap, delayed, dragged out of somebody and resentful is **not Zacchaeus**. That is public relations.

Then: the close. Two houses.

(Slow way down. This is the last ninety seconds. Do not rush and do not add anything after it.)

I want to close in Luke nineteen, and I do not even have to leave the chapter.

Luke 19, verse 9. Jesus walks into the house of a man who made his living taking what was not his, and He says: "**Today salvation has come to this house.**"

Luke 19, verse 45. Thirty-six verses later. Same chapter. Jesus walks into the **temple** in Jerusalem, and He says: "**You have made it a den of robbers.**"

Two houses.

He walked into the **crook's house** and found a **temple**. He walked into the **temple** and found a **den of robbers**.

Now here is the last thing, and then I am going to hush.

Luke never tells us what the crowd did.

He does not tell us they repented. He does not tell us they came inside. He ends the scene with a saved man at a table, and a crowd standing out in the street with their arms crossed, and then Luke just walks off and **leaves them there**.

Which means he leaves **us** there.

So the question this passage puts to you and me this morning is not whether Zacchaeus could be saved. Jesus settled that.

The question is whether we can stand to see him saved.

Whether we could walk in that door, sit down at that table, pass the bread to a man we have spent twenty years despising, and **be glad about it**.

Because the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. And on the day He did it in Jericho, He did not have to go looking for the lost man.

The lost man was **up a tree**, hungry for Him.

He had to go looking for the crowd.

(Pray. Do not preach after the prayer.)

THE INVITATION (say this while they are gathering their things)

One thing before you go. That person you thought of at the very beginning of the hour? The one who would change the temperature of this room?

I am not going to tell you to go get them. That would be cheap and it would probably be manipulative.

But I would like you to notice something. **You already know their name.**

Jesus knew Zacchaeus's name too.

Next week we are going to talk about what it actually costs to be the person who **cashes the check**. Because somewhere in Jericho, a farmer opened his front door and found the man who ruined him standing there with four times what he stole. And he had to decide whether to take it. Whether to say his name. Whether to ever sit down at his table.

Nobody makes that easy. And the Bible does not pretend it is.

Bring somebody with you. There is a chair.

APPENDIX A: THE HANDOUT CARD

(One per person. Half sheet. Print it.)

LUKE 19:1-10 | FOUR WORDS

GRACE is free. God gives it. Jesus went in before Zacchaeus said a word.

REPENTANCE is costly. The Law required 120%. He paid 400%.

RESTITUTION is owed. He did not pay Jesus. He paid the people he robbed.

TRUST is earned. On the victim's timetable. Never on the offender's.

Grace opens the door. Grace does not hand over the keys.

Six marks of real repentance (all six are in verse 8): Unforced. Public. Specific. Costly. Immediate. Joyful.

This week: "Today I must stay at your house." Whose house? Not to fix them. To eat with them.

APPENDIX B: THE FULL DISCUSSION QUESTION BANK

Use three in class. Keep the rest for overflow, for a second week, or for the folks who linger.

The three in the script:

1. When has the church been the crowd? He could not see Jesus **because of the crowd**.
2. Jesus said "I **must** stay at your house today," using the same word He used about the cross. Whose house has that word attached to it in your week? Not to fix them. To eat with them.
3. What kind of sinner do we find it easy to love, and what kind do we quietly believe is beyond reach? Name the categories.

Held in reserve: 4. The crowd praised God for a blind beggar in 18:43 and grumbled over a rich crook sixteen verses later. Why is a sinner who **could not help it** so much easier to love than a sinner who **could**? 5. The Law would have let Zacchaeus settle for 120%. He paid 400%. Why would a forgiven man volunteer for the maximum sentence? What does that tell you about what forgiveness actually **does** to a person? 6. Jesus told the rich ruler in chapter 18 to sell **everything**. Zacchaeus gave **half**, and Jesus said "today salvation has come." Why no number for Zacchaeus? What was actually being asked of each man? 7. Zacchaeus did not pay Jesus. He paid the people he robbed. Where have you made peace with **God** about something and never made it right with the **person**? 8. If you were one of the families he defrauded, would a check be enough? What else would you need? How long would you need it to take? 9. Is there anybody whose repentance would actually **disappoint** you, because you would rather see them punished? 10. Grace across differences: race, politics, class, nationality, a record, a bankruptcy, an addiction, a family name in this county. Pick the hardest one **for you personally**. Not the hardest one in general. What would it cost you to

have that person to supper?

APPENDIX C: LEADER'S CHEAT SHEET

(Keep this beside your Bible. Everything is labeled so you never overstate.)

Claim	Status
Jesus was "passing through" and not planning to stop (v.1)	TEXT
"Rich" is a danger word all through Luke	TEXT for the pattern, INFERENCE for the intent
Jericho = balsam, dates, customs post, Herod's winter palace	PROBABLE , well attested (Josephus, Pliny, Strabo, Netzer's excavations)
Herod leased the groves back for 200 talents/year	PROBABLE (Josephus, Ant. 15.96)
<i>Architelones</i> ("chief tax collector") is a one-off word	TEXT . No secure attestation elsewhere. Which means every confident description of his exact rank is a guess.
Zacchaeus supervised subordinate collectors	PROBABLE , from the word's shape
He was a Roman <i>publicanus</i> who bid on a tax franchise	OVERSOLD . Modern work (Fabian Udoh, <i>To Caesar What Is Caesar's</i> , 2005) argues direct-tax farming by publicani is not well attested in Judea in this period. He was more likely a customs and tolls contractor.
The sycamore fig is easy to climb, fruits on the trunk, is a cheap common tree	PROBABLE / TEXT (Amos 7:14; 1 Kings 10:27)
The tree in Jericho today is <i>the</i> tree	FALSE . Memorial, not relic.

A wealthy man running was undignified	PLAUSIBLE , but Luke never says anybody mocked him for it. The scandal Luke names is the meal (v.7), not the tree. Do not manufacture a shame the text does not report.
The crowd blocked him on purpose	INFERENCE , not text. Say "I suspect."
The grumblers were the Pharisees	FALSE. Luke says " all. "
The Law required principal + 20% for confessed fraud	TEXT (Lev 6:1-5; Num 5:5-7)
Fourfold is the Exodus 22 penalty for a slaughtered stolen sheep	TEXT. (Note: it is fivefold for an ox. Fourfold was not the "maximum penalty in the Law.")
Roman law imposed fourfold on extorting tax collectors	PROBABLE (Digest 39.4.1). Caveat: the Digest is a 6th-c. compilation.
The half to the poor is restitution to unidentifiable victims	INFERENCE , but strong. Rabbinic background is later (b. Bava Qamma 94b).
Verse 8's present tense is a live scholarly debate	TRUE. Vindication reading: Alan Mitchell, <i>Biblica</i> 71 (1990). Conversion reading: Dennis Hamm, <i>JBL</i> 107 (1988); Bock; Fitzmyer; Marshall; Green.
Zacchaeus quit his job	THE TEXT SAYS NOTHING. Do not fill the silence.
Zacchaeus became bishop of Caesarea	TRADITION (Apostolic Constitutions; Pseudo-Clementines). Late, pious, unverifiable.
Zacchaeus = the apostle Matthias	SPECULATION , and it does not even work. Acts 1 requires Matthias to have been with Jesus from John's baptism.
<i>The Chosen</i> filmed a Zacchaeus scene	NO , not through Season 5. Videos titled that way are usually church sermon series.
Matthew 18:11 ("the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost")	If a KJV reader raises it: that verse is absent from the earliest manuscripts. Scribes borrowed it from Luke 19:10. Which tells you how much the early church loved this verse.

APPENDIX D: IF YOU RUN LONG OR SHORT

If you are running long, cut in this order:

1. Point 6 in Section 3 (the scholarly debate on the present tense). Painful, but cuttable.
2. The Herod parallel at the end of Section 1.
3. The Ezekiel 34 material. Shorten it to one sentence: "Verse ten is a quotation from Ezekiel 34, where God says the shepherds would not go after the strays, so He would go Himself."

Never cut: the 120% versus 400% ledger, the Four Words, or the two-houses close. Those three are the spine.

If you are running short, add Question 5 or Question 9 from the bank, or add this:

Twenty verses after Zacchaeus, Jesus tells a parable about a nobleman who went off to a far country to be made king, and whose own citizens sent word after him saying, "**We do not want this man to reign over us.**"

Everybody in that room knew exactly who He was talking about. **Archelaus**, Herod's son, sailed to Rome to have his crown confirmed, and a delegation of Jews chased him there to beg Rome not to give it to him.

And Archelaus's palace was **in Jericho**.

So Jesus stood in the shadow of that palace, on the day He saved the town's most hated money man, and told a story about **what you did with what you were given**.

Jesus does not tell stories in a vacuum. He tells them on a **street**.

(Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.299-320 and 17.340. **PROBABLE**. Luke never names Archelaus, but the identification is widely held.)

SOURCES YOU CAN NAME OUT LOUD IF SOMEBODY ASKS

Ancient: Josephus (*Antiquities* 15.96; 17.299-320). Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 12.111-123). Strabo (*Geography* 16.2). Justinian's *Digest* 39.4.1. Mishnah and Talmud (all later than Jesus, use for attitude not fact).

Modern: Darrell Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53* (BECNT). Joseph Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV* (Anchor Bible). Joel Green, *Luke* (NICNT). I. Howard Marshall, *Luke* (NIGTC). Fabian Udoh, *To Caesar*

What Is Caesar's. Ehud Netzer, *The Palaces of the Hasmoneans and Herod the Great.*

Devotional: Charles Stanley, "Encountering Jesus on the Jericho Road." In Touch's three words: **awareness, availability, acceptance.** Worth one sentence at the close of Section 2 if you want him in the lesson by name.

Soli Deo Gloria.

APPENDIX E: VERIFIED VIDEO AND CHARLES STANLEY SOURCES

(Searched and confirmed July 2026. Do not trust anything here that I have not marked confirmed.)

THE CHOSEN: CONFIRMED, THERE IS NO ZACCHAEUS SCENE.

Do not go looking for one. Here is what the record shows:

- **Season 4** covers the Capernaum-to-Jerusalem stretch. A Bible-study companion guide written for Season 4 states flatly that **Luke 18:31 through 19:27 is skipped by the series**, and it names both Blind Bartimaeus and **Zacchaeus climbing the tree** as the events the show left out.
- **Season 5** ("The Last Supper," released 2025) is Holy Week only. Triumphal entry, temple cleansing, the Upper Room. Zacchaeus is behind that on the timeline and was already passed over.
- Where people get confused: **Season 1, Episode 7**, when Jesus calls **Matthew** the tax collector, deliberately borrows Zacchaeus overtones. Reviewers noticed it. Matthew, however, never makes restitution in the show, which is exactly the point one reviewer made when comparing him to Zacchaeus.
- **Do not click** any link titled "Danny DeVito Cast As Zacchaeus in The Chosen." That is the **Babylon Bee**. It is satire. Somebody in your class will have seen it and believed it, so you may want to have a little fun with that.

THE VIDEO TO USE INSTEAD: CONFIRMED

Jesus Film Project, "Jesus and Zacchaeus" (from the 1979 JESUS Film). Short, live action, and it follows Luke closely: the crowd, the climb, Jesus stopping, the crowd's indignation, Jesus going home with him.

- Watch/embed page: <https://www.jesusfilm.org/watch/storyclubs.html/storyclubs-jesus-and-zacchaeus/english.html>

How to use it: show it **cold, before you say one word about the lesson**. Then pause and ask:

"Whose face did you find yourself in? Zacchaeus, Jesus, or somebody in that crowd?"

Then the follow-up, which is the whole lesson in one question:

"Did that crowd have legitimate reasons to dislike him? If they did, then what exactly made their response wrong?"

That question does more work than anything else you could ask, because it forces the class to separate **a fair judgment about his past** from **an unfair judgment about his future**. That distinction is the difference between grace and approval, and it is the thing your class most needs to walk out with.

Timing note: if you use the clip, it goes in the Hook slot and replaces about two minutes of it. Keep the "think of one person" exercise. Do the exercise **first**, then roll the clip.

CHARLES STANLEY: CONFIRMED

"Encountering Jesus on the Jericho Road." A real In Touch message on Luke 19 and Zacchaeus.

- Listen free: <https://www.intouch.org/listen/radio/encountering-jesus-on-the-gericho-road>
- Also available as a CD from the In Touch store.

Where to drop him into the script: at the end of **Section 2, Point 4** (he came down rejoicing before he paid a dime). Say it like this:

Charles Stanley preached this passage in a message called "Encountering Jesus on the Jericho Road," and he made a point I have never been able to shake. He said Zacchaeus was **not** saved because he promised to give away money. The money was the **evidence**, not the payment.

Zacchaeus did not buy grace with half his wealth.

Grace broke wealth's grip on him.

Good works were not the **root** of Zacchaeus's salvation. They were the **fruit** of it.

In Touch's three words (awareness, availability, acceptance) fit neatly in the same spot if you want them:

Jesus was **aware** of one man in a mob. Jesus was **available**, even though He was walking toward a cross. Jesus **accepted** him before the cleanup was finished.

And then grace did what acceptance alone could never do. **It changed him.**

APPENDIX F: THE THREE SCRIPTURE READINGS (ESV)

Print these. Hand them to three different readers. Let the class hear three voices, not just yours.

READING ONE: Luke 19:1-4

He entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.

Listen for: *passing through ... rich ... on account of the crowd*

READING TWO: Luke 19:5-6

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.

Listen for: *he looked up ... Zacchaeus ... I must ... today ... joyfully*

READING THREE: Luke 19:7-10

And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods

I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Listen for: *they all ... a man who is a sinner ... stood ... I give ... I restore ... Today ... he also ... seek ... the lost*

[TEACHING NOTE: The ESV keeps the present tense in verse 8, "I give" and "I restore," rather than smoothing it out to "I will give" like some translations do. That is honest, and it is why your class will be able to see the debate for themselves when you get to Section 3, Point 6. If somebody is reading NIV, they will have "I will give." Point that out. It is a two-second illustration of why translation matters, and adults love catching it.]

OTHER VERSES YOU WILL QUOTE (ESV)

Luke 3:8 - "Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'"

Luke 3:13-14 - "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." ... "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

Luke 5:8 - "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Luke 18:26-27 - "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with man is possible with God."

Luke 18:43 - "And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God."

Luke 19:45-46 - And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

Ezekiel 34:4 - "The strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought."

Ezekiel 34:16 - "I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed."

Leviticus 6:4-5 - "He shall restore it in full and shall add a fifth to it."

Exodus 22:1 - "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep."

2 Samuel 12:6 - "And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

