



A Heart Prepared to Meet Jesus **Luke 19:1-10**

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” (Luke 19:8-10—ESV).

Zacchaeus was a tax collector for the Romans in Jericho near the Jordan River, so he may have heard John the Baptist preach. Zacchaeus may have been baptized when John proclaimed, “a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Luke 3:3). Luke recorded, “Even tax collectors came to be baptized. ‘Teacher,’ they asked, ‘what should we do?’ ‘Don’t collect any more than you are required to,’ John told them” (Luke 3:12-13). By previously submitting to John’s baptism, Zacchaeus may have prepared his heart to meet Jesus, because Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus gladly and told Jesus and the crowd that if he had cheated anybody, he would make restitution or amends to them. Zacchaeus rightly knew and applied to his situation the Law of God in Exodus 22:1, “Whoever steals ... a sheep ... must pay back ... four sheep for the sheep.” He may not have cheated anyone, but if he had, he was willing to pay them four times the amount he had cheated them. His willingness to make restitution or amends was a sign he had repented. Zacchaeus also promised to give half of his possessions to the poor, another sign he had faith in Jesus and Jesus had cleansed his heart from the love of money. Jesus proclaimed to the crowd, “Today, salvation has come to this house” (Luke 19:9). Jesus also told everyone about Zacchaeus’ changed life and faith when Jesus declared that Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham, spiritually a son of God. From the Apostle Paul, we learn what Jesus meant: “Just as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham” (Galatians 3:6-7). Before a crowd who hated him, Zacchaeus proclaimed his faith in Jesus with both his words and actions.