

## Standing Tall

### Scripture Reading — Luke 19:1-10

*“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”*

*Luke 19:10 —*

Zacchaeus was a tax collector who had grown rich at the expense of his townspeople. He had cheated his neighbors out of lots of money by collecting taxes for the hated Romans and by lining his own pockets with “service fees” that he could charge as he pleased.

“Because he was short,” Zacchaeus had a significant challenge to “see who Jesus was.” But Jesus saw Zacchaeus for who he was—and for who he would become.

Could he also have seen the struggle in Zacchaeus’s heart? “I must stay at your house today,” said Jesus. Considering how Zacchaeus would have been the last one chosen by any of his neighbors, this surprise invitation from the Master made the little man stand tall.

Jesus made people angry because Zacchaeus was far from a model of respect in his community. In fact, “all the people saw this and began to mutter, ‘He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.’”

But Jesus’ choice to associate with sinners is always a good thing. We would never be invited to God’s house on our own merit. Wise people have noted that we cannot earn grace, but we must acknowledge it. The gift of grace for Zacchaeus was that he was welcomed into God’s family. And Zacchaeus acknowledged this by giving away what he had gotten illegally. We stand tall because Jesus finds and saves the lost—like you and me.

### Prayer

*Jesus, we acknowledge your fierce love that seeks and finds us. Thank you for associating with sinners like us, and for inviting us into your house. In your name, Amen.*

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