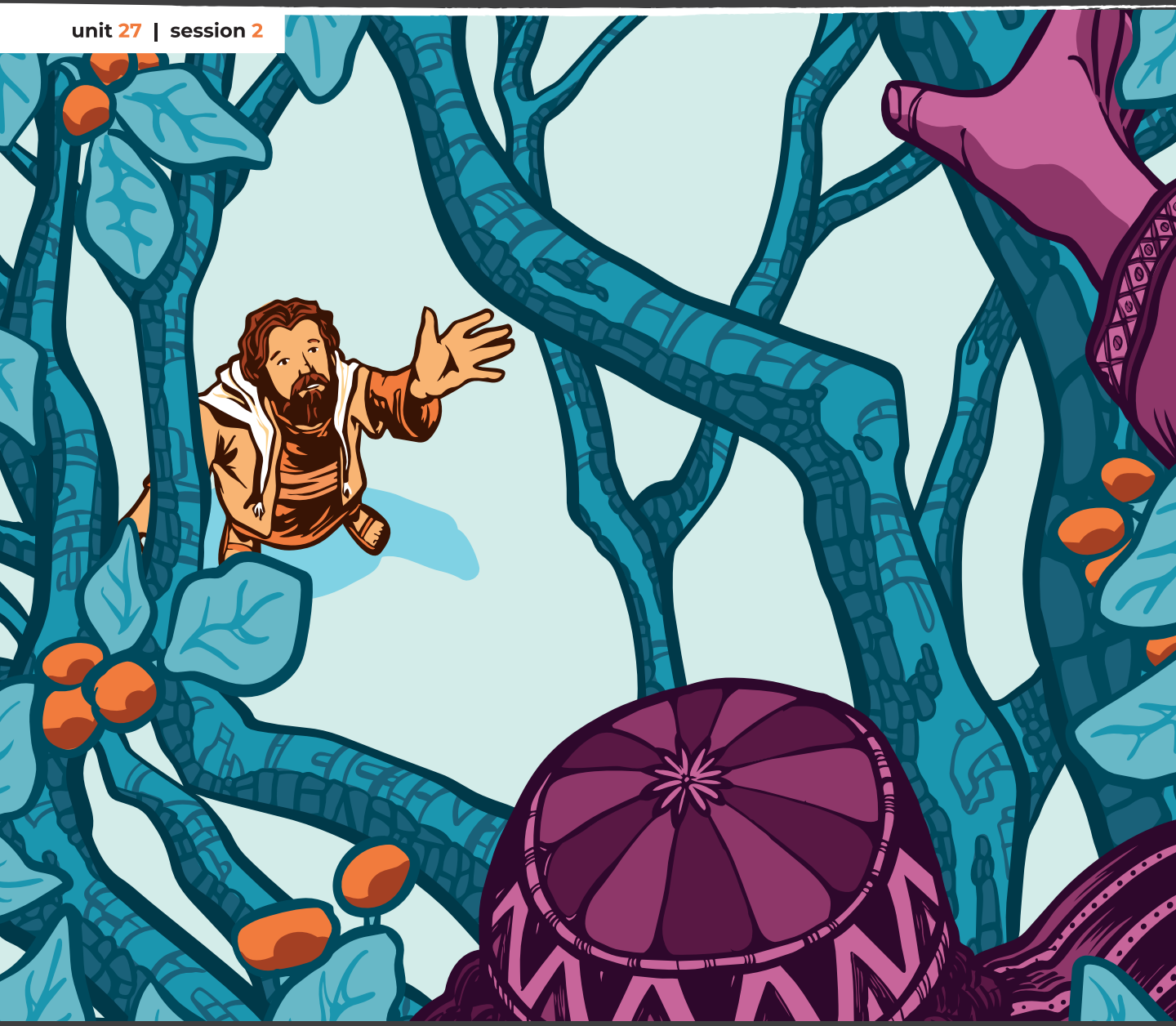
TO SEEK AND SAVE *THE LOST*

unit 27 | session 2



CHRIST CONNECTION

Just as Jesus saw Zacchaeus, He sees each of us. He calls us out of our sin and into a life of faithful obedience.

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CALLED BY NAME

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Luke 19

JESUS MEETS US WHERE WE ARE

LUKE 19:1-5

1 He entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 There was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able because of the crowd, since he was a short man. 4 So running ahead, he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus, since he was about to pass that way. 5 When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today it is necessary for me to stay at your house."

MEETING JESUS TRANSFORMS US

LUKE 19:6-10

6 So he quickly came down and welcomed him joyfully. 7 All who saw it began to complain, "He's gone to stay with a sinful man." 8 But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, I'll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord. And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I'll pay back four times as much." 9 "Today salvation has come to this house," Jesus told him, "because he too is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost."

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MAIN POINT.

A real encounter with Jesus changes our hearts and our actions.

THEOLOGY *CONNECTION*

GUILT AND SHAME

Guilt refers to the objective status of someone being found guilty for a wrong committed, as well as the incurring of punishment that comes with it (Matt. 5:21-22; James 2:10). Shame is the emotional pain that comes from sinful actions. Scripture teaches that humans are guilty before God and often experience deep feelings of shame.

DISCUSSION

JESUS MEETS US WHERE WE ARE

LUKE 19:1-5

- **Why do you think Luke included Zacchaeus's job and social status?**
- **What keeps us from making an effort to get to Jesus—to see Him and know Him?**
- **What's the significance of Jesus calling Zacchaeus by name?**

MEETING JESUS TRANSFORMS US

LUKE 19:6-10

- **How did the people in the crowd view Zacchaeus?**
- **Why was Zacchaeus willing to give away his money so freely? How is he an example for us?**
- **What difference has meeting Jesus made for you?**

WHEN HAVE YOU FELT STUCK BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T WANT TO LET JESUS CHANGE A PART OF YOUR LIFE? WHAT WOULD SURRENDERING IT LOOK LIKE?

CULTURAL *CONNECTION*

First impressions really do matter. Think of someone you didn't have a great first impression of: Has that carried over into how you view that person now? Once we put labels on people, removing them is difficult, even if we misunderstood their character. The label leaves a sticky residue that takes a lot of time and effort to remove. If someone we've labeled has something amazing happen, we may struggle to feel he or she deserves it. We tend to have a hard time forgetting first impressions, even when we're wrong and the labels are unfair. See if you can turn this situation around and put yourself in their shoes. Would you hope others would remove an inaccurate label much sooner if circumstances had changed in your life? If you changed? Sure. So, when we realize that our first impression of someone was wrong, or when we realize the person has changed, let's remove those labels and choose to see others the way God sees them. Let's take it one step further and resist placing labels at all.

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DAY ONE

EZEKIEL 34:16

Most of us have probably completed seek and find puzzles. You have to meticulously look for items within a larger picture, and these items may be hidden within other items or drawn in a way that disguises them as something else.

In our main lesson this week and in today's passage, we see that seeking and finding is what Jesus came to earth to do, but He seeks and finds us for salvation and a relationship with Him. When Jesus told Zacchaeus that He was going to stay at his house, the crowd following Jesus was displeased because Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. Tax collectors were Jewish men who collected taxes for Rome but also took above what was required to fill their own pockets. As a *chief* tax collector, Zacchaeus was the worst of the worst—a betrayer of his people and a crook. But Jesus explained to the crowd that He came "to seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

Jesus was quoting directly from today's passage. He answered the crowd's complaints with Scripture about the Messiah—about Himself. Those who made the connection would recognize that the Shepherd Messiah came to seek out the stray sheep—those who had lost their way—to heal and strengthen them. Zacchaeus was exactly that. Like a lost sheep, he had lost his way—extorted his fellow Jews, worked for the oppressing government, and lived for himself. But he repented and believed, and Jesus welcomed Zacchaeus into His flock.

Jesus, our Good Shepherd, sought Zacchaeus out, bringing salvation to him. Jesus does the same for us. He seeks us out and offers us salvation, but He doesn't just save us. He brings us into His flock, heals our wounds, and strengthens us.

- **WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE ABOUT THE SHEPHERD MESSIAH TELL YOU ABOUT JESUS'S CHARACTER?**
- **HOW DOES KNOWING THAT JESUS SOUGHT YOU OUT, LIKE ZACCHAEUS, DEEPEN YOUR LOVE FOR HIM?**

PRAY

JESUS, YOU ARE THE GOOD SHEPHERD. YOU SOUGHT ME AND FOUND ME. YOU BROUGHT ME INTO YOUR FLOCK, AND I AM SO GRATEFUL.

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DAY TWO

EPHESIANS 2:1-7

Zacchaeus's encounter with Jesus was life-changing. He was a new man, giving away his riches and attempting to generously right those he wronged. Encountering Jesus changes us in ways we would never even imagine. Paul explained in today's passage that before salvation, we were dead. But God loves us so much that, through Christ, He makes us alive!

So what does that mean? Without Jesus, we walk like the world. But in Christ, we walk according to His ways. For example, before knowing Jesus, maybe you didn't see the problem with a little gossip, but after Christ, you work to build others up (Eph. 4:29). Before Christ, obeying your parents wasn't cool, but after Christ, you really work to honor them (Col. 3:20). Before Christ, you used foul language, but after Christ, you choose words that honor the Lord (Col. 3:8). Before Christ, you may have cheated on your homework, project, or test, but after Christ, you do your work with integrity (Eph. 4:28).

Living in our new identities as Christ-followers can be difficult sometimes. Our lives are conformed to a different worldview. The Holy Spirit works in us, teaching, correcting, and growing us to be more like Christ every day. We must constantly say "no" to our flesh, which we used to say "yes" to. Growth can be painful, but God loves us too much to leave us in the state we were in. He doesn't just want us to live *barely* alive, but He wants us to thrive and to make an eternal impact. The good news? We don't do this alone. We do it with the power of Christ who lives in us (Phil. 4:13).

- **HOW HAS KNOWING JESUS CHANGED YOU? HOW DOES HE CONTINUE TO MAKE YOU NEW? WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GIVE TO THE LORD TO WORK ON?**
- **WHY IS IT SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW JESUS? HOW DO YOU KNOW A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM IS WORTH IT?**

PRAY

JESUS, YOU ARE WORTH ALL THE GROWING PAINS BECAUSE YOU HAVE BROUGHT ME FROM DEATH TO LIFE. GROW ME TO BE MORE AND MORE LIKE YOU EVERY DAY.

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DAY THREE

EPHESIANS 2:8-10

Zacchaeus promised to give half his possessions to the poor and pay back those he stole from, but this wasn't *how* he was saved; He did this *because* Jesus saved him. He believed Jesus was who He said He was—the Messiah. And because of this, the greed and selfishness that once defined Zacchaeus's reputation and life were immediately changed and he couldn't help but give his possessions away.

Paul, in today's passage, said that we are saved by faith, not works. Salvation is a gift from God; we can never do anything to deserve it. But, when we join the family of God, Jesus works in us, changing us to be more and more like Him. And the evidence of His work in us is good works. He continually molds and fashions us for His kingdom work.

You might be thinking, "I'm just a teenager. How in the world can the Lord use me for His good works?" The Bible is full of young people who God used for His glory—Joseph, David, Esther, Daniel, Mary, Jeremiah. He didn't save you just to say, "Okay, hang tight until you're an adult. Maybe I can use you then." God has prepared ahead of time and the Holy Spirit is working in you *now* for His good works. You weren't just saved *from* something but *for* something!

- **THINK THROUGH THE YOUNG PEOPLE NAMED IN THE BIBLE. HOW DID GOD USE THEM FOR HIS GOOD WORKS?**
- **HOW CAN GOD USE YOU *NOW* FOR HIS GOOD WORKS? WHERE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMPTING YOU TO JOIN GOD'S KINGDOM WORK THIS WEEK?**

PRAY

LORD, YOU CREATED ME FOR A PURPOSE. USE ME FOR YOUR GOOD WORKS. WHEN I DON'T FEEL READY FOR THE TASK, REMIND ME THAT YOU ARE THE ONE DOING THE WORK THROUGH ME!

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DAY FOUR

COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

Just as we saw in this week's main lesson, Zacchaeus's faith in Jesus transformed his mind and heart, and as a result, his actions. Likewise, our actions should reflect the transformation Jesus has done in us. Paul urged the Colossian church, and us, to "walk worthy of the Lord" (v. 10). And he tells us what that looks like in the following verses: bear fruit in good works, grow in the knowledge of God, be strengthened in endurance and patience, and give thanks to the Lord. This isn't a complete list, but Paul was encouraging Christ-followers to live their lives in a manner that shows we are citizens of Jesus's kingdom.

What does it practically mean to "walk worthy of the Lord"? Our actions should match our words. When we "walk worthy," we choose to live our lives in a way that brings honor and glory to God and points others to Jesus. We're kind, loving, joyful, patient, and gentle with others (Gal. 5:22-23). We study God's Word so that we can know Him better. The Bible is God's revelation of Himself and His work in this world. We must know it to know Him. When difficult times comes, we persevere and lean into Jesus. He will help us endure and develop patience. And we live a life full of gratitude as children of God. Because of our inheritance in the family of God, we aren't just saved from hell but we are coheirs of God's kingdom (Rom. 8:16-17)!

We were dead, headed to hell, entrapped in darkness, and hopeless, but God, in His great love for us, sent His perfect Son to exchange our punishment for His redemption. Our sins are forgiven and we are now part of the kingdom of Jesus. God's love is the only reason this happened, and in our overwhelming gratitude for our great rescue, we choose to walk in His ways. We choose to live a life worthy of His sacrifice. We choose to live a life that pleases Him.

- **WHAT DOES WALKING WORTHY LOOK LIKE IN YOUR LIFE?**
- **WHAT DAILY HABITS NEED TO CHANGE SO THAT YOU ARE LIVING A LIFE THAT PLEASES THE LORD?**

PRAY

LORD, HELP ME TO LIVE MY LIFE WITH GRATITUDE FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE. HELP ME WALK WORTHY SO THAT I MAY PLEASE YOU.

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DAY FIVE

COLOSSIANS 1:15-23

Zacchaeus climbed a tree to "see who Jesus was" (Luke 19:3), and later in the passage, Jesus told everyone exactly who He is—the Son of Man. Today's passage includes what many call a "Christ Hymn," which is simply a passage that magnifies Jesus and His work.

How would you answer the question, "Who is Jesus?" Paul wrote that He is the Lord and Redeemer of creation. He is the visible expression of God. He is the Creator—all things were made *through* Him. While God might be viewed as the architect of creation, Jesus is the foreman. Creation came about through His power and ability. All things were also made *for* Him, which means creation exists to display His glory. Jesus is the Redeemer of creation. Everything that was once warped by sin will now be touched by His grace—and He is the head of it. Creation had to be reconciled, or pay the penalty for sin, but Jesus paid the penalty instead. And because He did, we are reconciled back to God, back to the relationship that the Lord created us for way back in the garden of Eden.

What Jesus has done for creation through His death on the cross is the only way we could ever have true peace and true fellowship with God. We are now holy, faultless, and blameless before Him! This is the good news of the gospel! Paul dedicated his life to sharing the gospel because of its greatness, and we are called to do the same. We have the benefit of the New Testament writers and their explanations of who Jesus is, but Zacchaeus wanted to see who He was for himself. And with the eyes of his heart, he recognized Jesus as his Lord and Redeemer and chose to trust in Him. For those of us who have done the same, we must dedicate ourselves in service of the gospel, declaring Jesus's greatness throughout His creation.

- **FROM THIS PASSAGE, WRITE OUT HOW YOU WOULD DESCRIBE WHO JESUS IS AND WHAT HE DOES.**
- **WHAT DOES A LIFE IN SERVICE TO THE GOSPEL LOOK LIKE PRACTICALLY FOR A TEENAGER?**

PRAY

JESUS, YOU HAVE MADE ME HOLY, BLAMELESS, AND FAULTLESS. YOU HAVE REDEEMED YOUR CREATION FOR YOUR GLORY. TEACH ME TO LIVE AS A SERVANT OF THE GOSPEL.

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