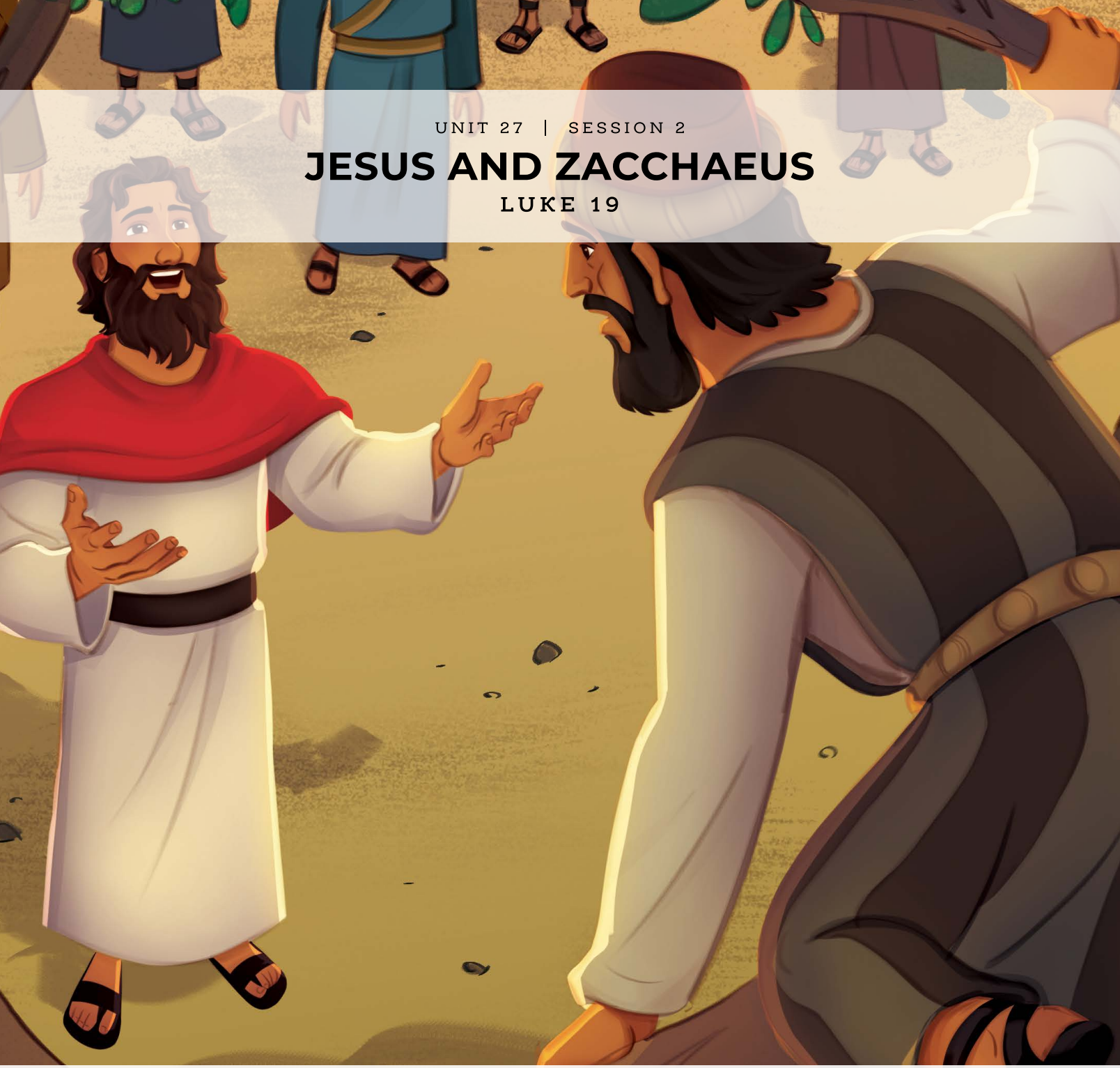
UNIT 27 | SESSION 2

# JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

## LUKE 19



**CHRIST CONNECTION**: We all sin, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven and live with God forever if we believe in Him.

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION**: *What is justification? Justification is when God says that our sins are forgiven.*

**KEY PASSAGE**: God made the one who did not sin to be sin for us. 2 Corinthians 5:21

**STORY POINT**: Jesus invited Zacchaeus to follow Him.


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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## **LEADER** Bible Study

"Zacchaeus was a wee little man … "

This line from a popular children's song is lighthearted and catchy, but it can make Zaccheus seem more innocent than he likely was. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. In Jewish culture, a tax collector was the kind of person families warned their children about. People thought of tax collectors as thieves and extortionists—people who had betrayed the Jews to work with the Romans.

And yet, chief tax collector as he was, Zaccheus became a conduit of one of Jesus' most beautiful moments of mercy and grace.

Luke writes that Zacchaeus "was trying to see who Jesus was." Something inside Zacchaeus was stirring, and he wanted answers. But the crowd blocked Zacchaeus' view, so he did something about it: he climbed a sycamore tree. He put himself in a place to see Jesus more clearly.

Our spiritual lives often require similar action. We must learn to constantly position ourselves to see Jesus more clearly by leaning into Scripture and spending time alone with God. We make time for prayer and for fellowship with other believers who encourage and challenge us. We guard our hearts as we choose what content to consume. These disciplines don't make Jesus love us more; they simply help us be in a better position to see and obey Him.

True obedience involves trusting Jesus and doing what He says. We don't negotiate the terms. We move when He speaks. Our obedience becomes a blank check, already signed, ready for Him to fill in however He desires. That kind of surrender is where transformation begins.

This week, similar to how Zacchaeus climbed the tree, help put your kids in the best position to see Jesus so that He might lead them to repentance and transform their hearts.




**THE WEEK PRIOR**

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session.




**10-15 MINUTES**

Greet preschoolers and open the session.




**25-30 MINUTES**

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel.




Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel.

**30-40 MINUTES**




Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel.




**60-65 MINUTES**

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour.




**Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.**



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PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## **GATHER** Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tip scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.

### WELCOME

**Guess what is in the bag**
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ large paper bag
- ☐ coins

### LEARN

**Find coins**
- ☐ coins, 1 per child
- ☐ small container
- ☐ brown and gray construction paper (optional)

**Tell the Bible story**
- ☐ "Jesus and Zacchaeus" video (optional)

**Review the Bible story**
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ coins and container from "Find coins" activity

**Learn and practice the key passage phrase**
- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

### LOVE

**Pretend to buy and sell**
- ☐ toy cash register
- ☐ play money
- ☐ shopping bags

**Make trees**
- ☐ cardboard tubes, 1 per child
- ☐ green construction paper
- ☐ artificial leaves

### LIVE

**Trace outlines**
- ☐ large sheet of butcher paper
- ☐ "Key Passage Phrase Label" printable, 1 copy
- ☐ measuring tape

**Missions activity**
- ☐ "Puerto Rico Photos" printable, 1 copy

**Snack and transition**
- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families

### BONUS

**Say the key passage phrase**
- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

**Make a coin rubbing**
- ☐ coins

**Measure classroom objects**
- ☐ measuring tools such as rulers, yard sticks, and fabric tape measures



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## **WELCOME** Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers opportunities to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, the story point, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

### GUESS WHAT IS IN THE BAG

Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Tape the Bible Story Picture Poster to a large paper bag. Place several coins in the paper bag. Greet kids as they come to the classroom and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Encourage children to reach into the bag without looking and feel what is inside. Invite kids to guess what it is. Look at the Bible Story Picture Poster as you talk about what is in the bag.

> **SAY** *"Welcome to church! What do you feel inside the bag? There are coins in the bag. Our Bible story today is about a man named Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus took people's money for taxes. He wanted to see Jesus. When Jesus walked by, He looked up and said, 'Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today.'* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.** *Jesus has the power to forgive Zacchaeus of his sins. Our big picture question and answer is,* **What is justification? Justification is when God says that our sins are forgiven.** *"*

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





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# LEARN the Bible Story

## 1 FIND COINS

Place coins around the classroom. If there are very young children in the group, consider cutting out circles from brown and gray construction paper to use as coins. Encourage kids to find a coin and place it in the container in the group-time area.

> **SAY** "*Zacchaeus had a lot of money. He took people's money for taxes. Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house.* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.**"

## 2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Luke 19 and tell the following Bible story:

### JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

> **SAY** "*Jesus was walking through a city where a man named Zacchaeus (za KEE uhs) lived. Zacchaeus took people's money for taxes. Zacchaeus had a lot of money.*
>
> *Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So, Zacchaeus climbed a tall tree. Now he could see over the crowd!*
>
> *When Jesus walked by, He looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today."*
>
> *Zacchaeus hurried down from the tree. He was so happy to see Jesus! But some people were upset. They said, "Why would Jesus go to Zacchaeus' house since Zacchaeus is a sinner"*
>
> *Zacchaeus told Jesus, "I will give money to people who need it. And if I took too much money from anyone, I will give it back with even more!"*
>
> *Jesus said, "You are saved today! I came to find people who are lost and save them."*"
>
> *Christ Connection: We all sin, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven and live with God forever if we believe in Him.*


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## 3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Place the Bible Story Picture Poster on the floor. Invite kids to take a coin from the container as they answer review questions such as "Who climbed a tree so he could see Jesus?" "Did Zacchaeus have a little bit of money or a lot of money?" "What did Zacchaeus promise to do with the money after he met Jesus?" "Was Zacchaeus happy to see Jesus?"

> **SAY** "*Zacchaeus was happy to see Jesus.* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.** *Jesus said, 'I came to find people who are lost and save them.' We all sin, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven of our sins and live with God forever if we believe in Him.*"

## 4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow":

God made the one who did not sin, did not sin, did not sin,
God made the one who did not sin,
To be sin for us.

## 5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Corinthians 5:21. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase together several times. Alternate between crouching down low and standing up tall as you say the verse.

> **SAY** "*Zacchaeus stood up tall and even climbed a tree so he could see Jesus. Jesus is the one who did not sin. We all sin, or act against God, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven and live with God forever if we believe in Him.*"

## 6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to live a sinless life for [*List each child by name.*] and save us from our sins if we believe in Him.

*Transition from* **LEARN** *to* **LOVE**





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# **LOVE** God because of what we learned

## 1 PLAY AN ACTION GAME

LOW PREP

Guide kids to do the following actions: jump three times, climb up high, look from side-to-side, point to the ground, climb down low, and cheer. Practice the sequence several times; then add in the words from the Bible story. "Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but he was too short." (jump three times) "Zacchaeus climbed a tall tree." (climb up high) "Now he could see." (look from side-to-side) "Jesus said come down." (point to the ground) "Zacchaeus hurried down from the tree." (climb down low) "Zacchaeus was happy to see Jesus. Jesus said, 'You are saved today!'" (cheer) Practice doing the actions very slowly, then very quickly, for an added challenge.

> **SAY** *You just acted out our Bible story. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, so he climbed a tall tree. When Jesus walked by, He looked up and said, 'Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today.'* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.** *Jesus came to find people who are lost and save them.*

## 2 PRETEND TO BUY AND SELL

Arrange a pretend store with a cash register, play money, shopping bags, and classroom items to pretend to buy and sell. Invite kids to take turns using the cash register to buy and sell items. Encourage older children in your group to count how many paper dollars or coins they have to spend at the store.

> **SAY** *Zacchaeus had a lot of money. He took people's money for taxes. Jesus told Zacchaeus that He was going to his house. Zacchaeus told Jesus, 'I will give money to people who need it. And if I took too much money from anyone, I will give it back with even more!' Jesus said, 'You are saved today! I came to find people who are lost and save them.' We all sin, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven and live with God forever if we believe in Him.*

## 3 MAKE TREES

Separate artificial leaves from their stems or cut green construction paper into triangles or simple leaf shapes. Place the leaves, cardboard tubes, and glue sticks on the table. Invite kids to glue the leaves to the cardboard tube to make a tree.

> **SAY** *Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So, Zacchaeus climbed a tall tree. When Jesus walked by, He looked up and saw Zacchaeus. Jesus said, 'Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today.' Zacchaeus was so happy to see Jesus.* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.**

*Transition from* **LOVE** *to* **LIVE**


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# **LIVE** for God out of love

## 1 TRACE OUTLINES

Print a copy of the "Key Passage Phrase Label" printable. Unroll a large sheet of butcher paper on the floor. Ask for a volunteer to lie down on the paper as you trace her outline. Next, encourage the entire class to decorate and add details to the outline including hair, facial features, and clothing. Encourage kids to place key passage labels around the tracing. Consider measuring the tracing to see how tall the child is.

> **SAY** "*Look how tall our friend is getting! Zacchaeus was not very tall. He climbed a tall tree to see Jesus over the crowd. Zacchaeus was a sinner, just like all of us. Jesus told Zacchaeus that He came to save him. Our key passage phrase tells us that God made the one who did not sin to be sin for us. Jesus is the one who did not sin.*"

## 2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Print a copy of the "Puerto Rico Photos" printable. Gather kids in a circle. Pass the printable around the circle as you talk about Puerto Rico.

> **SAY** "*Puerto Rico is an island surrounded by the ocean and sandy beaches. Many homes are painted in bright colors like pink, yellow, and blue. There are more than 3.4 million people who live on the island. About 40 towns on the island do not have a church yet. The capital city of San Juan has some churches that have been there a long time and some new churches. But with so many people living there, more churches are needed so people can learn about Jesus.*"

Pray for the people living on the island. Ask God to help more people in Puerto Rico hear about Jesus.

## 3 SNACK AND TRANSITION

Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

> **SAY** "*We all sin, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven and live with God forever if we believe in Him.*"

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child learned or did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.


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BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

# **BONUS** Teaching Hour Group Time

## 1 PRETEND TO CLIMB A TREE

Invite kids to pretend to climb a tree with you. Demonstrate how to reach for branches and step up on the limbs. Tell children that Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus so much that he climbed a tall tree.

## 2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Luke 19. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

### JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

- Jesus was walking through a city. A man named Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. Zacchaeus took money from people.
- Zacchaeus was too short to see over the crowd, so he climbed a tall tree. When Jesus walked by, He looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today."
- Zacchaeus hurried down from the tree. He told Jesus, "I will give money to people who need it. If I took too much, I will give it back and even more!"
- Jesus said, "You are saved today! I came to help people who are lost."

## 3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow":

God made the one who did not sin, did not sin, did not sin,
God made the one who did not sin,
To be sin for us.

## 4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Corinthians 5:21. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Encourage kids to jump up and down to get up high like Zacchaeus did as you say the key passage phrase together several times. Remind kids that Jesus is the one who did not sin.

## 5 PRAY

Allow children to list any friends or family members they want to pray for. Pray, thanking God for coming to help people who are lost.



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BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

# **BONUS** Teaching Hour Activities

## 6 PLAY WITH PLAY DOUGH




Place containers of play dough on the table for children to explore. Demonstrate how to roll the play dough into the shape of a rope. Guide kids to mold the rope into the letter Z or J.

> **SAY** *You made the letters Z and J with your play dough. Zacchaeus starts with the letter Z, and Jesus starts with the letter J.* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.** *Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. He climbed a tall tree to see Jesus. When Jesus looked up, He said, 'Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today.' Jesus came to find people who are lost and save them.*

## 7 MAKE A COIN RUBBING

Secure several coins to the table by using a looped piece of tape on the underside of the coin. Remove the paper wrapping from several crayons. Invite kids to place a piece of copy paper over the coins. Rub the crayon across the paper to reveal the imprint of the coin.

> **SAY** *Zacchaeus had a lot of money. He took people's money for taxes. Some of the people were upset that Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house because he had stolen from others. Zacchaeus told Jesus, 'I will give money to people who need it. And if I took too much money from anyone, I will give it back with even more!' Jesus said, 'You are saved today!' We all sin, but Jesus came to save us. Jesus died and rose again so we can be forgiven and live with God forever if we believe in Him.*

## 8 MEASURE CLASSROOM OBJECTS

Place measuring tools such as rulers, yard sticks, and fabric tape measures on the table for kids to explore. Demonstrate how to use the tools to measure items in the classroom such as markers, sheets of paper, blocks, and classroom furniture.

> **SAY** *You measured so many things in the classroom. Did you notice which items were tall and which ones were short? Zacchaeus was short. He climbed a tall tree to see Jesus over the crowd of people. When Jesus walked by, He looked up and said, 'Zacchaeus, come down! I'm going to your house today.'* **JESUS INVITED ZACCHAEUS TO FOLLOW HIM.**

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church's security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.



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