**Jesus and Zacchaeus**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 19:1-10

**The Big Idea**

Jesus models a beautiful heart for the lost and a Spirit-led posture of seeking and noticing people who are lost. Zacchaeus models true repentance which is a turning from sin and a turning to the Lord.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. On Sunday we talked about Jesus’s “ministry of availability.” He was open to the Spirit, prayerful, paying attention, and moving towards Zacchaeus with grace and truth in remarkable ways. When was the last time you sensed the Spirit moving you towards a person to engage them with love and care in a way that was unexpected or surprising to you? How can we as a church move towards this Spirit-led ministry of availability?

2. The following statement was made on Sunday in regards to Zacchaeus: poverty and lostness can take so many different forms. As you consider the call of Scripture, do you think there are certain forms of poverty that the church should prioritize over others in terms of its care and concern?

3. On Sunday we explored the joy and delight God has when his children repent. Consider your own experience with repentance. What are some of the dynamics that keep you from repenting more regularly or more wholeheartedly? What have you learned about repentance over time?

**Digging Deeper**

Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son is a story of repentance and restoration. As you consider the dynamic between the younger son and his father in Luke 15:11-24, what’s one thing you notice about the dynamics of repentance?

**Sermon Outline**

I. On the road through Jericho

A. Zacchaeus

1. His name means “pure, clean” which is ironic

2. He’s a chief tax collector

a. Tax collectors were Jews who cooperated with the Roman occupation in taxing their own people. They were experienced as traitors to their own people and part of the Roman oppression

b. The only thing worse than a Roman was a tax collector, and the only thing worse than a tax collector was a chief tax collector

 3. He’s wealthy

 Tax collectors would skim off the top, so it was a very lucrative career

4. He was “lost” and poor in his own way

 a. Behind the wealth and success was a lonely shame-filled life

 b. He was unworthy to be called a “Son of Abraham”

 c. Lostness/Poverty takes many different forms

5. But he wants to see Jesus and is willing to do whatever he can to see him (v. 3-5)

B. Jesus: “The Son of man came to seek and save the lost”

1. Jesus has such a remarkable ability to be attuned to the Spirit, to listen to his Father, to pay attention, and to notice people and move towards them in unexpected ways

 a. He calls Zacchaeus by name

b. He desires to be in Zacchaeus’ house. In ancient cultures, to dine in someone’s home is an expression of intimacy, trust, and affection

c. No other self-respecting Jew would have asked to be in Zacchaeus’ house

 d. Zacchaeus’ is overjoyed and all the people are grumbling

2. Jesus is such an example for us: to prayerfully go through our days with our eyes open to people and opportunities and our hearts ready to move towards people with the grace and truth of the gospel. This is a ministry of availability.

II. At the home of Zacchaeus’

 A. Zacchaeus’ repentance (v. 8)

1. Clearly he had felt seen, noticed, and accepted by Jesus. It’s the kindness of God that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4)

2. Clearly in some way he heard call: “repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Repentance is a change of mind and a change of behavior

 4. Zacchaeus’ repentance was two-fold

a. He was too wealthy and selfish, so he gave away half his money to the poor.

 b. He had cheated people, so he paid them back fourfold

5. Oftentimes we rationalize, justify, or theologize away our sin, but Zacchaeus doesn’t do anything of that. He faces it head on and makes changes.

B. Jesus’ joy in his repentance (v. 9)

1. He affirms Zacchaeus as a “Son of Abraham”

2. Repentance shows Jesus that Zacchaeus has experienced salvation

3. There is almost nothing that brings God more joy than when his children repent. Consider the parables of Luke 15 that all portray the celebration that takes place heaven when sinners repent