

Zacchaeus: I Can Do What's Right

Welcome

Welcome children and introduce or remind them of Bible story time rules.

Opening Song

Jesus Wants us to be Friends: <https://youtu.be/8V39P3QxssY>

Prayer

Bible Story (Luke 19:1-10)

Below I have listed two ways to tell this story. The first option uses a puppet and the second is reading the story from *The Jesus Storybook Bible*.

Option 1: Puppet

Teacher: Hello friends. I have a wonderful story to share with you today. This story is from the book of Luke which is in the New Testament.

Puppet: Luke! I love that book!

Teacher: Well, hey *Puppet's Name*! So good to see you again! Did you come to hear our story today?

Puppet: Yes! I love hearing a good story from the Bible.

Teacher: You've come to the right place! In this story Jesus was entering the city of Jericho. There was a man there name Zacchaeus, he was a tax man and very rich. He really wanted to see Jesus, but there was a problem.

Puppet: A problem! Why couldn't he see Jesus?

Teacher: There was a big crowd there and Zacchaeus was a short man, he couldn't see over them.

Puppet: I have the same problem! I'm really short. That's why I always have to sit up high. I can't see over the kids in this room, I'm too short!

Teacher: *Puppet's Name*, just like you figure out a solution to your problem, so did Zacchaeus. He climbed up a tree so he could see Jesus when he came by.

Puppet: That's a good idea!

Teacher: Then when Jesus got to the tree, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down! Today I'm going to come over to your house as a guest."

Puppet: Wow! I want Jesus to come to my house!

Teacher: So did Zacchaeus! So he scrambled down the tree & couldn't believe that Jesus wanted to go with him to his house....But there was another problem.

Puppet: Oh no! *Teacher's Name* what happened?

Teacher: Zacchaeus wasn't very liked because he was a tax collector—he took people's money, more than he should have. He was (low voice) “stealing”.

Puppet: He stole from them?

Teacher: Yep, and the people in the crowd didn't like that Jesus was hanging out with a thief. Zacchaeus heard the people talking about him, that he didn't deserve to have Jesus come to his house. Right then and there he decided to change, he looked at Jesus and said, “Lord, right here and now I give back half of everything I have to the poor and if I have stole from anyone, I will pay them back four times as much back.”

Puppet: Wow! Zacchaeus really did change! He started doing things right.

Teacher: Yes, he did. And Jesus was happy that he did. You see, Jesus came to find and save lost people so that they would know Him and their lives would be different.

Puppet: Mrs/Mr *Teacher's Name*?

Teacher: Yes, *Puppet's Name*?

Puppet: I don't always do the right thing. One time I stole a toy from my brother and when my mom asked me if I took it, I lied.

Teacher: *Puppet's Name*, I know that was hard for you to tell me, but I am glad that you did. Jesus loves you and all you have to do is ask for forgiveness. Tell him that your sorry and then go and tell your mom and brother you are sorry. Jesus wants us to do what is right.

Puppet: I will! I can do what is right! I'm going to talk to them as soon as I leave here!

Teacher: I'm so proud of you *Puppet's Name*. And I think that's what we learned today. Jesus wants us to do what is right. Let's say it all together! “Jesus wants us to do what is right!” Thanks for visiting us today *Puppet's Name*! Can all my friends say bye?

Puppet: Bye friends! (Puppet Leaves)

Teacher: Let's pray.

Option 2: Jesus Storybook Bible

Good Morning friends! I love our Bible story time together each week! Before we get started, have you ever not been tall enough for something? Maybe a ride or reaching high up in a cabinet? (*Let the kids share*)

Then today our story has something we can all relate to, being too short! This story is from the book of Luke which is in the New Testament, but I'll be reading it out of our *Jesus Storybook Bible*. It's called “The Man Who Didn't Have Any Friends” (pages 264-270).

Read the Story

Zacchaeus had a bad reputation, he was known as a cheat and a thief. People didn't want Jesus hanging around him, but Jesus saw past his mistakes. He loved Zacchaeus even though he was a sinner. Zacchaeus saw Jesus wanted to be his friend and that he loved him no matter what choices he made. So what did Zacchaeus do? He changed! Right then and there. Zacchaeus decided to make the right choices and live a life that made Jesus happy.

Yes, Jesus will love us even when we make mistakes, but he wants us to do what is right. I think that's what we learned today. Jesus wants us to do what is right. Let's say it all together! "Jesus wants us to do what is right!" Try really hard this week to make the right choice.

Let's pray.

Memory Verse

Luke 19:10 *"The Son of Man came to find lost people and save them"*

Closing Songs

"Zacchaeus Was A Wee Little Man" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_QgANy5U1I

Story Reinforcers

Find Zacchaeus Game & Tree Craft

Materials Needed:

- Green tissue paper
- Brown construction paper
- Printable Zacchaeus cut-out.

Before kids arrive hide several paper Zacchaeus' around the room, one for each child. After the lesson, have kids make the sycamore tree that Zacchaeus climbed using strips of construction paper (trunk) and green tissue paper (branches). Ask the kids "what are we missing in our tree?" Have the kids search for their Zacchaeus and add him to their tree. Explain that just like our Zacchaeus was "lost", Jesus came to find the lost. Go on to say that this kind of lost means they don't know who Jesus is. That day Zacchaeus met Jesus and his life was never the same and he began to live his life right. Children can add the memory verse to their picture at the end.

Zacchaeus in the Middle

This game is played like Monkey in the middle, except with Zacchaeus. Blow up a balloon and have children line up in two lines facing each other. Have one child be Zacchaeus. Tell them Zacchaeus wanted to meet Jesus, but the people in the crowd didn't want him to, they tried to keep Jesus away from him. During this game the balloon represents "Jesus" and Zacchaeus is trying to grab it while it bounces between the crowd. If Zacchaeus grabs the balloon, the last child who touched it is now Zacchaeus. At each switch of Zacchaeus, have the children practice the memory verse.