

# Jesus and Zacchaeus

A chancel drama based on Luke 19:1-10

*Two By-Standers are standing between the choir pews and the front pews. A step-ladder is in front of the organ. In front of the ladder are Zacchaeus and members of the Crowd. Jesus and a Disciple are in the narthex, just beyond the doorway to the sanctuary.*

**By-Stander #1** “Wow, I can’t wait to see Jesus. Pretty cool that this famous — and controversial — rabbi comes all the way down here to Jericho to visit us.”

**By-Stander #2** “Yeah, this is a big deal for our town. People have been talking about him and wondering if he’ll *do something dramatic* — you know, change someone’s life by healing him. Or her.”

**By-Stander #1** [*Points to Zacchaeus*] “Well, that Zacchaeus is one guy even *Jesus* couldn’t change. It’s bad enough that he, a Jew like all of us, is *collaborating* with our Roman *conquerors* by collecting *taxes* for them, but everyone in town knows he collects ‘a little extra’ [*rubs her fingers together*] on top of what the Romans want — ‘a little extra’ just for him. [Other By-Stander nods.] Look how rich he’s gotten. No way that’s just on a civil service salary.”

*[Jesus starts to walk into the nave and up the outside aisle on the organ side, accompanied by his disciple. Zacchaeus tries to see him over the crowd but can’t.]*

**By-Stander #2** “Look, the little shorty can’t see Jesus over the crowd! Well, no way Jesus is going to pay any attention to him *even* if Zacchaeus climbed that sycamore tree and waved at Jesus.”

*[Zacchaeus climbs two steps up the ladder and waves at Jesus.]*  
“Well, does that rip-off artist have gall or what.”

**Crowd** “Hurrah for Jesus!”

**Disciple** [*Tugs Jesus’ robe and leans towards him.*] “Lord, just so you know, see that short guy up in the tree? That’s Zacchaeus, the *tax collector* for the *Romans*, and I hear he’s the most *corrupt* person in all of Jericho. Definitely someone you don’t want to have anything to do with.”

**Jesus** [*Smiles to his disciple, then turns and addresses Zacchaeus.* ]  
“Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”

**Crowd, By-Standers and Disciple** “WHAT??!!”

[*Zacchaeus eagerly climbs down.* ]

**By-Stander #1** “He has gone to be the guest of one who is a *sinner!*”

**Crowd, By-Standers and Disciple** “Grumble, grumble, grumble.” [*Then they stop.*]

**Zacchaeus** [*Meets Jesus. Speaks loudly.*] “Look, half of my possessions, LORD, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.”

**Crowd, By-Standers and Disciple** ““GASP!”

**By-Stander #1** “WOW! Are you kidding me? Now *that’s* a miracle. Now let me see, Zacchaeus would owe me...” [*Starts counting on her fingers.*]

**By-Stander #2** “I wouldn’t believe it unless I were listening with my own ears. I guess there are lots of different ways Jesus can change someone’s life.”

**Jesus** [*Looks fondly at Zacchaeus.* ] “Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”

**Zacchaeus** “I once was lost, but now I’m found, LORD. As your follower, I will always have *more than enough.*”

[*Jesus and Zacchaeus walk off-stage to the room behind the organ.*]

[*Entire cast takes center stage and bows, then returns to their seats.*]