**A Tree with a View**

**The Passage**

Read together Luke 19:1-10

**The Big Idea**

Zacchaeus was a lonely man who found a love from Jesus that transformed his life. We all live with corners of our lives marked by loneliness and brokenness, but when we look for Jesus in those places, we can find grace and healing to live transformed lives.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. The story of Zacchaeus is a familiar one to many of us. What from Sunday’s message was new or gave you a new appreciation for the story?

2. On Sunday, Zacchaeus was described as not only sinful but also lonely and looking for Jesus. How much of an issue is loneliness today? Do you think a lot of people are living lonely lives? How do you experience loneliness in your own life?

3. The following statement was made on Sunday: “The people we try to avoid may be the very people God wants us to reach out to.” Is there a specific person or a type of person who comes to you mind when you consider that? That is, who are the “Zacchaeuses” of your life?

4. On Sunday we discussed how Jesus desired to stay with Zacchaeus because he genuinely cared for him. That is, Zacchaeus wasn’t simply a “project” for Jesus. Talk about the difference between genuinely loving people vs. viewing them as a project. How would they feel that difference, and how would you feel that difference in your own heart?

5. On Sunday, three responses to our conviction when encountering Jesus were mentioned: denial, wallowing, and genuine repentance. Talk about those three responses (you might want to discuss where you see these various responses in the culture, in the church, or in your own life).

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Zacchaeus: Lonely and looking for Jesus

A. Zacchaeus was a Jewish “chief tax collector”: a traitor to his people who worked for the Romans, extorting people to get rich.

B. He was an outcast among his people: lonely, isolated, rejected

C. But he was looking for Jesus and was willing to do something rather undignified (climb a tree) to get a glimpse of Jesus

D. Key take-away: Many of us harbor places of loneliness (even in the midst of wealthy, successful, busy lives). Go looking for Jesus in those places of loneliness. Look to him, seek him in your loneliness.

II. Jesus: loving Zacchaeus and wanting to stay with him

A. Jesus knew Zacchaeus by name

1. That must have been pretty profound for Zacchaeus since they had never met

2. Calling people by their first name in that culture was only done when there was a close relationship established

B. “I must stay at your home today”

1. This may not have implied just a 2-hour dinner, but rather a stay over night

2. This implies Jesus doesn’t just see Zacchaeus as a project but actually cares about him

C. Key take-away: The people we try to avoid may be the very people God wants us to reach out to, not as a project, but simply as people to be loved and cared for

III. The transformation of an encounter with Jesus

A. Zacchaeus expresses true repentance: selling half his possessions and paying back what he owed.

B. His response is not required in the law but is simply a beautiful expression of his sense of conviction

C. An encounter with Jesus can bring that kind of true repentance and conviction

D. Key take-away: When we encounter Jesus and experience conviction, we have three options

1. Denial: suppress the feelings of guilt and shame. It is very culturally popular to say guilt and shame are inherently bad emotions and to seek to avoid them

2. Wallowing: sit and soak in the guilt and shame and punish ourselves

3. Repentance and renewal: take full responsibility for what we’ve and accept Jesus’ mercy and forgiveness