

House Church Gathering Discussion Questions

Sunday January 11, 2026

““You Belong Before You Believe””

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. **5** When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. **7** All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.” **8** But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Summary: This past Sunday pastor David explored a profound truth found in the story of Zacchaeus: that belonging precedes believing. Jesus entered Zacchaeus' life before Zacchaeus changed his life. This powerful truth invites us to reflect on our relationships and our church community.

Discussion Questions:

1. In the story of Zacchaeus—and in the illustration of Maria—Jesus sees people others ignore. Who are the “Zacchaeus” figures in our lives or community today? What keeps us from truly seeing them, and what is one simple way we could change that this week?
2. Zacchaeus' transformation began with Jesus' decision to enter his home. Can you share a time when someone's welcome or kindness helped you feel like you belonged? How can our small group or House Church practice hospitality that opens hearts without pressure or judgment?
3. Zacchaeus and Derrick both experienced transformation after they were accepted, not rejected. Why is it sometimes hard for the church to lead with acceptance instead of expectations? What would it look like for our church to be a place where people feel they belong before they believe?