

Sunday 21st June 2020 10 am

“Lost - and found”

Online service sheet during the coronavirus.

Reading Ps 116

Reading Luke 19:1-10 (also read Luke 18)

Sermon Title: “Lost - and found”

Listen to today’s sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.The audio file is [20_05_21_Zacchaeus.mp3](#) in the sermons directory

Reflective prayer what does this mean for me Lord.....

Close -----

Welcome

Welcome to you again to KNBC. We are really looking forward to being able to meet together again. However, the Lord gives us both His presence and His word to sustain and feed us. Today we are looking at Zacchaeus in our series of those Jesus met. It is found in Luke 19:1-10. Read & Pray

- Being lost is a terrible experience. Has that happened to you? It can have terrible consequences. Like a couple who ended up in the Australian Outback, away from their broken down car walking around lost, not knowing where they were. They were found dead. For Australians it is an all too familiar story.” The Australian paper recalls “They didn’t know where the water was and walked to their deaths”. It was too late when people found their dead bodies. What is so sad is that they were less than 10 minutes away from water.

The title of this message is ‘lost - and found’. It is about being lost – but then being found. You might at this point be thinking poor chap he’s got the wrong passage the prodigal son is back in Ch 15, there’s the prodigal who was lost and was found. However here Zacchaeus - is lost - but found. x2

Any Sunday school child will know the story of Zacchaeus. You may even remember the song, no solo from me today. It is a powerful story of rescue.

1 **Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.** He is on his way south to Jerusalem to be betrayed, beaten and suffer greatly through death on a cross.

1a

It is easy to focus on Zacchaeus rather than Jesus, but this account starts with Jesus, - the first word (as do many) so let’s ask what is His purpose in meeting Zacchaeus? We have, as is often the case, a summary line at the end: v.10 **For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.** x2

In other words: Zacchaeus was lost, Jesus found him, and saved him. Has he done that for you? “has Jesus found - and saved - you?”

Zacchaeus

So the 1st Question: ‘is Zacchaeus lost? And if so how is he lost?’ Is he like those searching for water in the Australian Outback? 2 **A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus;** His name tells us he is a Jew, the Hebrew “Zaccai” means “pure”. But as **a chief tax collector** he was far from pure.

Romans farmed out the task of collecting the taxes in any particular area to the highest bidder. The man did not receive any salary for his work but collected as much money as he could so that he would have a handsome rake-off after paying the government the appointed sum.

Zacchaeus was such a tax farmer. **As chief tax collector** he was at the top of the tree.

So what did he have lots of? Money. He **was wealthy.** *Boy was he rich!* But it was stolen money. He had used his ability not for the good of others, or the public good, but for himself. He had feathered his nest. He was looking after No.1, and had no thought for those he robbed.

Zacchaeus cheated others out of their money by demanding extra. This brazen dishonesty was known by all. He was out of favour with absolutely everyone. What a strong motivation greed is. Greed is a powerful sin that is never satisfied. It showed he hated his fellow man - who in turn hated him.

He did two terrible things: he stole from them and he worked for the enemy.

Not that he saw it like that, not at all. He was just better at getting on than others. His life was a success, he had the big house and car to show for it.

- **Bob Marley lyric: “nothing is wrong if it makes you happy”**

He and his family were living comfortably and his wife was not going to let him give up any of it. They were soon to move to a better neighbourhood...

In the film 1917 - A regiment marches off to defeat the enemy not realizing an ambush had been set and they were walking straight into it

Zacchaeus didn’t realise the seriousness of the sin that had taken hold of his heart. He didn’t see that sin was a trap and lead him to death, eternal death.

1b

He had swapped his soul for treasure, he had swapped his bible for his bankbook, He had swapped eternity for time. Living contrary to what God had made him for - left him far from God, under God's anger and heading for judgment, and certain banishment to hell. Lost for eternity.

The snare of money and wealth

Beware of the love of money, money can be a snare. The previous rich man went away sad for he loved other things more than God. It is so serious that Luke makes it the theme of his gospel. Luke only wrote one gospel, and money is his theme:

Let me point out a few passages: Just before is the rich young man (ch 18), straight after our passage (and connected to it) is the parable of the ten Minas weights of money. Earlier there's Levi the tax collector, the parable of the lost coin, the shrewd manager, the rich man and Lazarus, the widows offering, and Judas betrays Jesus for money Why? Did he do this? Presumably for the sake of Theophilus for whom he wrote his gospel. Theophilus is an honorable man, a man of rank, but was he also wealthy? Most likely.

Zacchaeus ensnared by the things of this world was heading for disaster.

- At 6.40 in the evening on 12th Nov 1996 a pilot flying Flight IL-76 was approaching Delhi airport from Kazakhstan. It was supposed to be flying at 15,000ft but was instead at 14k. At 14k ft was a Boeing 747 flying in its direction. They were both flying at the same altitude and heading towards disaster with every passing moment. Would he be warned before it is too late? If he did nothing then there would be the most almighty crash and all would die.

Zacchaeus is like the airline pilot who was rushing headlong towards disaster - but didn't know it.

But there is hope Zacchaeus..

Zacchaeus like Bartimaeus the blind man had heard that Jesus was coming to Jericho. Zacchaeus we are told **wanted to see who Jesus was**, He wanted to see Jesus. They had heard of His miracles and His claims - and wanted to see. Do you have that desire? Is it a God given desire? What do I mean by that? Christ is about to do a work of Grace in this man, and he first puts a desire in his heart. Has he put a desire in your heart? Will you now *seek Jesus* with an eye of faith, to see *who he is*?

If so you will have obstacles to overcome

He wanted to see – but he couldn't. **being a short man he could not because of the crowd.** You could say he was hindered by himself - and others. How often other people can obscure your view and block the way to Jesus. What do you do when that happens? Isn't it a test of your resolve? just how determined are you? Will you give in, is it too much trouble? If it's not easy - will you give up? "Oh well it's just not that important". Yes, it is important, it's the most important thing you face. Zacchaeus is short and has people all around him – but does not give up.

- Many do, there's a chance to hear of Jesus, you are invited to a church event, but the date clashes with your other plans.

Or you have been invited to church on Sunday and have been meaning to go, but you are late to bed and too tired in the morning, or the time comes round too quickly so you say to yourself "I'll leave it for this week" and that is the end of it.

- Many over the years have said they will come on Sunday, - and yet don't - they give in, their weak interest is easily overcome. They have the offer of a lift, but when you get there they don't answer the door. I can think of several, just empty words.

Not Zacchaeus when he is put off it makes him more determined. He is even willing to embarrass himself. **He ran ahead**, like a boy, **and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see Jesus.**

If you really desire a sight of Christ you will make an effort.

- Yes there have been a few who, when go to pick them up, are ready, they are looking out of the window for you, and quickly in the car, perhaps even with an old bible they've found in the house.

There's the test. So many in past years have been up early and ready and prepared, even walking miles to come to church, they will not miss the word of God and the chance to receive Christ. And they have found Him!

Now Christ calls Zacchaeus

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

5 When Jesus reached the spot, why there? why did Jesus stop there?

It's a large crowd, people are everywhere, couldn't Jesus set up his soap box and preach to all? like many preachers do. No Jesus unlike anyone else knows whom he calls. **When Jesus reached the spot**, he stops, here is the man,

this man God has a purpose for *this man*, “he is to be a witness for me”. This bad man will display God’s amazing and good grace. Jesus **looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus”**, Everyone who is called - is called by name. Has he called you? x2 have you heard him call you? Can you speak of it? Christ looked up to him in the tree “**come down**”. Those that Christ calls must *come down*, must humble themselves, do not think you can climb to heaven by any righteousness of your own! **NO come down.** and quickly. The Grace of God comes to those who are at the bottom, who have **come down** from their high place. There is what we call the: The gravity of grace. That is grace comes down from on high to those lowly.

6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly

He had a big house but I wonder how many local people enjoyed his company and hospitality. Not many. Can you imagine walking through the door and realizing everything that adorned his house was stolen? Jesus would have seen all this, and know all about it. Jesus knows everything about you, what you have, where it came from, how you got it. Do you hide things away when visitors are coming? Yes? Easily done. Zacchaeus must have felt terrible sensing Jesus knew everything about him.

✚ Jesus is the one who goes into homes and lives, he goes into the dirtiest of homes - to change the dirtiest of lives.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, OWW "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner'."

Did they not think “I too am a sinner would he come to my house instead” No it is the sneering of the proud blind hypocrite. Jesus left the glories of heaven to seek and to save the lost. Jesus is “**a friend, the friend, of tax collectors and "sinners."** Matt 11, Luke 7:34

Jesus did not come to bring judgment but salvation. The cross speaks of God’s amazing love for the lost, the judgment for sin, my sin was borne by Christ. He took it. He has taken it for me and for many others and he can take it for you. Does not the cross show how wonderfully loving God is.

Jesus had come to Zacchaeus, and His spirit had opened his eyes so he could see. The first thing Christ does is open the eyes. Just like blind Bartimaeus,

✚ When Christ calls it’s an irrevocable call – it has effect not return empty
The man who the Lord calls – will come – despite and through the obstacles

Zacchaeus could now see. He could see two things: he now saw Jesus in all his holiness. – and he now he saw his sin in all its ugliness.

✚ O lord open my eyes that I may see!! Have you prayed that?

Zacchaeus who was blind can now see in Christ loving acceptance.

Here this *chief of tax collectors saw himself as the chief of sinners*

Zacchaeus saw his sin, was convicted of his sin – he can do nothing about it – but Christ has, he has done everything about it - on the cross in great pain he bore it away. Now not only can I see – but I can enter. Have you? S & E?

Jesus can save even the rich!

Earlier the rich man went away sad, **How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God** to which the disciples shout “**who then can be saved**” The answer is acted out for them in Zacchaeus, here’s a rich man and he is saved

Has Zacchaeus entered the kingdom of God? “Where is the evidence?” how can you know?

Here v.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."** He’s repentant !

Three things about true repentance: 1st Repentance is public

Here the evidence of Zacchaeus’ change is obvious. It must be. Repentance must be public **Zacchaeus stood up**. Zacchaeus gave public proofs that, though he had been a *sinner*, - he was now *penitent*, - and a true *convert*.

He made this declaration *standing*, that he might be seen and heard by those who murmured at Christ for coming to his house;

Notice - He addressed himself to Christ, not to the people (they’re not his judges), but to the Lord, and he *stood* as it were at his bar.

Zacchaeus’s repentance corresponds to the penitent Tax Collector in Luke 18:13 “**But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’**” Lu 18:13

✚ The work was an inner work of – and before God – but the evidence of it, - the expression of it - was external and for all to see.

Does it take time trying to work out if this or that person is saved or not? Then the clear answer is no. You cannot enter the kingdom of God without repentance. If you are to follow Christ, then you must renounce and turn from your own way. There has to be a change. A breaking down of me as

the Spirit does His work in me, revulsion of my life as it is and a spirit lead desire to seek holiness, for without this no-one will see the Lord.

✚ You who profess faith – can we see the evidence of it?

2nd Repentance is practical

Zacchaeus had a house full of goods, but with Christ the glue had gone. His riches saved for himself are now the Lord's. **Look Lord** moving his hand around, **Look Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.** Not sometime in the future or after I die, but "I give it now."

The rich man earlier went away sad, he wasn't willing to give up his wealth for the poor. This rich man has had a change of heart and he was willing.

This is no small amount, half of all he had is a very large proportion to be set apart for the poor.

This is a sure sign of repentance. The Spirit of Christ in him has filled his heart and he is now the owner of everything. Here is the fruit of his repentance; love for Christ. He is overflowing with love for Christ. Like Naaman who when Gehazi, said: "please give me a talent of silver and two sets of clothing." Replied: "By all means, take two talents," x2 2K 5:23

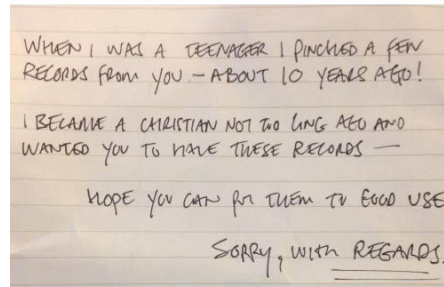
3rd True Repentance seeks to put things right before others

and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

- I used to be a thief and once converted returned things to the company I worked for.

To be truly repentant is to be concerned for the effect of my sin upon others - and do everything to put it right.

- Letter from someone who stole from me.



✚ That might be material – or it might be relationships

That is what repentance looks like. It is only seen in action. It is not just wishful thinking but action. It will start in the mind but end up action. Many don't make it that far, the intention never materializes, it is snatched away.

No repentance = No salvation. You will remain guilty before God with only the fearful prospect of disaster to come:

- In 1917 film - A soldier tries to warn the regiment, reaching them just as they face the enemy - but they don't listen and it is too late.

4a

- What of those two planes hurtling towards each other? The Delhi control tower takes 30 crucial seconds to respond with details of the fast oncoming aircraft – but it is too late. They crash, it's amongst the worst of air disaster - and all are lost.

But for Zacchaeus it is different - his clear repentance lead to his Salvation
9 **Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house,**

He is *converted*, he is *saved*, saved from his sins, from the guilt of them, from the power of them; all the benefits of salvation are his. Christ has come to his house, and, where Christ comes, he brings salvation with him.

What is it to be saved?

- Like the dark storm has passed - and a wonderful peace has come.
- Like a child who has had a miserable childhood as an orphan but is now adopted into a wonderful family with a wonderful father. I saw a young child on Thursday climbing up on Dad, and kissing his head.

Christ is, and will be, the *Author of eternal salvation*. Will you own him as Zacchaeus did? Christ had come to his home and found a home in his heart!

because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

Zacchaeus is by birth a son of Abraham the man of faith. But unless someone lives as Abraham did that meant nothing. To be a son of Abraham is to have received saving faith, the great gift from God - and to live it out.

- "Father Abraham had many sons, I am one of them and so are you."

How about you? Are you one of them too?

Jesus Christ who called Zacchaeus to leave his ways also enables him to do so. He went on to Jerusalem to die on the cross for not only for Zacchaeus but for many who are lost today. If that is you listening to this, you can now receive forgiveness of sins through Christ's death on the cross.

Jesus is the seeker after the unworthy, he **came to seek and to save what was lost.**

✚ **Jesus is God's great gift for you and I. He seeks the lost - in order to save the lost.**

He came from heaven to earth on that great rescue mission, to *seek* those who have gone astray. Have you gone astray? Christ can bring you back. Are you far from God? He came to rescue those far from God.

Don't remain lost, make sure Christ has found you - as he found Zacchaeus – that he might give you – as he gave him - true and lasting riches. *Amen.*

4b