

The Jesus Affect- Interruptions

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Preacher: Dr. Ralph Carter

[0 : 0 0] If you have your Bibles, I want you to open them this morning to Luke's Gospel, chapter 19, and I want to continue the series we began last week, the Jesus Effect. We're thinking about how Jesus impacts our lives, how he changes them.

Everyone he ever came in contact with was different after having had a Jesus encounter, and so that's the line of thinking we're following again this morning. As we look at chapter 19, the Gospel of Luke, and we're going to examine the first 10 verses this morning in this passage.

Now, it will seem unrelated, but just bear with me for a moment, and you'll see how it ties in in a second. Some of you are retired, and others of you, most of you, are still in the workforce, right?

When you go to work, how many of you work off an agenda? You, in the morning when you get to the office, you make out a to-do list. Can I just see your hands? How many of you have a to-do list?

Maybe at home you do that. How many of you don't have a to-do list? A lot of you in this service apparently don't have one, but I see some who are doing this. A lot of you are not going to say, right? You just don't know whether you do or you don't.

[1 : 0 9] When I was working all the time, every day when I would get to the office, I'd get there about an hour or four, most folk in our office, and when I'd get there, I'd use that quiet time to establish an agenda.

I'd write out everything I wanted to accomplish that day, and then because I'm so OCD, I would go through at the end of the day, and I would check off those things that I had done even as I went through that list.

I also meshed that with my calendar. I'd look at my calendar and say, well, I've got to be here at 10 or there at 12, or this is going on this afternoon, and so I'd blend those together, and some days were pretty light, and some days were average, and some days were really, really heavy, and it's that way.

It don't matter what you do in life. We all have those kind of days, right, where they're kind of pressure packed, and we know I've got to be here at this time, and I've got to get this done, and so what's the enemy of the person who lives by an agenda?

What's the enemy? You know what that is? Single word I'm looking for. Anybody know? It's the word interruptions. You know it. You probably just didn't say it, right? It's that interruption, that thing you hadn't planned for, that thing you hadn't counted on.

[2 : 1 5] It wasn't in your agenda, but it happens nonetheless, and at times it's a mild, annoying interruption, and every other time it can just devastate the schedule you may have laid out.

Sometimes you recognize in the end that interruption was a godsend. It was a blessing, but oftentimes we're honest about it. They're annoying when we get interrupted in what we plan to do for the day.

Well, I want to just say to you, I don't think anybody knew more about interruptions to what their agenda was than Jesus. I mean, Jesus just every day of his life, when you read the Gospels, you find he's interrupted.

Mark is my favorite Gospel, and Mark uses one word, the King James translates it one way, others' translations another, straightway or immediately, and that's because Mark is the action Gospel, and so when you come to the Gospel of Mark, it says straightway Jesus did, blah, blah, blah, and then straightway Jesus did, blah, blah, blah, and then straightway Jesus did, and it's because he's moving from one thing to another, to another, to another.

You probably have difficulty finding this, and a better example of it, than in the Gospel of Mark, chapter five. Jesus, it's the story we looked at last week, he goes on the Sea of Galilee, to the southeast region of Gadara.

[3 : 41] There, he's got something he wants to do, obviously, or he wouldn't have gone to that place. When he steps out of the boat, he's confronted by this demoniac. Remember the story we looked at last week? Jesus didn't go looking for the demoniac, the demoniac came rushing to Jesus.

Jesus spent several hours there in that location, he talked to the man, he cast the demons out, they go to town, they get the townspeople, a big crowd comes back, they see what's happened to the man, they're now more afraid of him than they were before, and they ask Jesus to leave.

Have you ever thought about that? Why was he going to Gadara? And then they ask him to leave, and he accommodates him, he gets back in the boat, and he goes away. Whatever he had gone there for, at least in his mind, or the disciples man, it never gets accomplished, unless he had the foresight to know, this demoniac is my business there.

He made it his business, but it appears to be an interruption, right? He leaves there, and he goes back across the sea, and this time he comes to Capernaum, and when he gets to Capernaum, guess what?

There he meets this man named Jairus, who is frantic. He comes running up, huge, massive crowd, apparently thousands, that's not an exaggeration, apparently thousands, certainly hundreds, but probably thousands of people, had gathered to see him, as they so often did.

[5 : 05] That first year of his ministry, I mean the masses just came out of the woodwork, to see Jesus. And so when he gets there, Jairus comes running up, I've got a little girl, she's sick at home, she's about to die, would you come to my house?

Well, I don't know what his agenda was for the day, but no doubt he had one in his head, here's where I'm going, but Jairus suddenly interrupts him, and he's off to Jairus' house.

On the way, this crowd is so massive, they're pushing and shoving, a woman reaches down, and touches the hem of his garment. Jesus immediately knows, power has left him. He turns to the crowd, and he says to his disciples, somebody here touch me, who touched me?

Peter turns and says, Lord, who hasn't touched you? Peter thinks, you've got to be kidding, right? I mean, everybody, they're about to stampede us to death. And so, he deals with the woman, with the issue of blood, he later then, has someone come and say, hey, no need to go to Jairus' house, she's dead.

Another interruption, right? Keeps him from getting to Jairus' house, what appears to be on time. But he goes anyway, and then he raises this girl from the dead. Can I tell you something? That's typical, I believe, of what Jesus' life was like.

[6 : 18] I think he spent most of his time dealing with people who interrupted his agenda. I want to show you another illustration of that. Look with me to Luke 19, verse 1.

He entered Jericho and was passing through. The only thing you can make out of that, if Luke is telling us accurately, and I believe he is, Jesus didn't really have business that was on his schedule in Jericho.

You agree with that? That's yes and no and don't know, right? He's come to Jericho, he's simply passing through. You don't know this yet, but in a second you're going to find out there is a huge crowd again that is assembled to see him.

If you look on down to verse 28, just look down the page of verse 28, you see the heading there above verse 28, the triumphal entry. That's where he's headed.

He's going to Jerusalem. He's going there to die. This is his ultimate purpose. He's been sent to die for humanity, to save humanity from their sins by dying on the cross.

[7 : 30] He's going to fulfill his father's command. It's the most urgent business he has. So he's passing through Jericho and was passing through, verse 2 says, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector and he was rich.

So out of nowhere, Luke introduces us to this character who's not named anywhere else in scripture and his name is Zacchaeus. This is what we know about him. He's got lots of money.

He's rich. And the other thing is, he's a tax collector. Can I tell you something? That one fact gives us a pretty clear picture of who Zacchaeus is.

Imagine that in years to come, I pray this never happens, but imagine 100 years from now, 20 years from now, the Chinese somehow overtake America and they are dominating our land.

They're occupying our land. They have a military presence here. They're not interested in moving to the United States, but they're going to dominate our country. And so they set up a government and they want to raise taxes in America not to support the American government, but the Chinese government.

[8 : 53] And so they find agents in America who are willing to raise taxes be responsible for gathering taxes from Americans to send to China. That's what is happening in chapter 19 with this man, Zacchaeus.

The Greeks had overthrown Israel. The Romans had overthrown the Greeks. It's occupied by foreigners. There were certain blessings. They were protected.

They were able to do business. They were able to travel. They were protected by their neighboring enemies. But the downside was they have no voice in government. The Romans are appointing the leaders and the Romans are raising taxes and they're doing it through their Hebrew fellow citizens.

The Hebrews would go and apply to the Romans to be these tax collectors and they would make bids and whoever would get the bid would get the job. This is a chief tax collector, Luke tells us, which means he has other tax collectors who are under him.

Can you imagine that there's someone here in Pickens County and he's the person who is assessing taxes and he's taking the money, putting a cut in his pocket and sending the rest of the money to China?

[10 : 10] How do you think you'd feel about that guy? That's how they feel about Zacchaeus. He's a traitor. He's a cheat. He's a scoundrel.

And so whenever you read about tax collectors in the New Testament, it always puts them right in there with the most immoral of the immoral. They're sinners in their thinking in the eyes of God.

Well, look, if you will, the very next verse, verse three. He was trying to see Jesus, speaking of Zacchaeus, he was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able because of the crowd since he was a short man.

Now, here's where you understand there's a huge crowd. He's not able to see Jesus. He wants to see Jesus. We also find he's a short fellow. Now, why the curiosity about Jesus?

Well, I want to tell you something. That's the reason for the crowd. Everywhere he went, everybody wanted to see Jesus. If Jesus were alive today and doing the things he did in the New Testament era, I want to tell you something.

[11 : 16] Everybody in this auditorium, whether you're a believer or not, everybody in Pickens County would want to meet Jesus. Well, why? He calls people with withered hands to suddenly have a whole hand.

He took people who were verifiably crippled and he made them walk again. He calls people who were blind and could not see a thing. Their eyes were open and they were made whole.

People who were deaf could hear. And remember Jairus? His daughter is graveyard dead and Jesus raises her back to life again.

You can understand clearly why anyone who heard about Jesus coming to town would immediately flock out to see Jesus. His only problem is he's short.

Now, I want to just say there are advantages at times to being short. This last week, we were staying at these friends' house down at the lake and they got a dock and I don't know why they built it this way, but they put an iron bar across this dock that's about five feet, eight inches tall.

[12 : 20] Unfortunately, I'm six feet tall. And so, twice, I banged my head in that thing, right? There's an advantage at times to being short, but there are also, obviously, some disadvantages at times to being short.

If you're in a crowd and you're wanting to see over the crowd, it's a disadvantage. It's an advantage to be tall. Last night, we had our 51st reunion in Seneca and high school reunion and when we gathered at the end, they said, let's get a picture of everybody.

So, you know how that went down, right? All the short people get on the front. Some of them kneel down. The mid-sized folk, they're in the middle. The tallest ones, they're in the back and they're looking over the tops and everybody is cool with doing that because it's the courteous thing.

It's what you normally do. Here's the question. Why didn't they let Zacchaeus come to the front of the crowd? I mean, y'all ever go into a parade? You look behind you, there's a kid behind you, there's somebody short behind you.

What do you do? Sure, would you have to come up here and stand? And they get in front of him. Why didn't they do that with Zacchaeus? Because they hate Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus is not, they don't even want him in the crowd.

[13 : 26] They don't want him to be a part of this parade, let alone to give him a front row seat. Well, what does he do? Look at verse four. So running ahead, he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus since he was about to pass that way.

Now that's pretty clever, don't you think? He wants to see Jesus. He wants to maybe speak a word to Jesus. We don't even know that. He just wants to see him. Just all these tales he's been told.

Who is this Jesus? What does he look like? What's he doing? So he thinks, hey, you know what? He's moving in this direction. I bet if I run down here a distance and I climb up in that tree, he's going to pass by and so he puts his plan into effect.

He goes down, he climbs the tree. Now it's a clever plan, but let's just be honest about it, right? It's a little bit, what? Weird, right? I mean, what grown man climbs trees to get to see people pass by?

So it's a clever plan, but it's a little bit on the weird, unusual side. Well, look at verse five. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today I must stay at your house.

[14 : 45] So Jesus is walking through this crowd. I mean, they're talking to him. They're wanting to reach out and touch him. They're asking him questions, no doubt. He's moving along slowly and he gets down the way and finally he comes to the place where here is Zacchaeus perched up in this tree and I can just see Jesus.

Now you got to use your imagination and this is not adding to the scripture. It's just allowing it to come alive because all these are real stories. If you'd have had a camcorder, you could have videotaped everything I'm talking about if they'd had a camcorder in that day.

It's real history unfolding for our eyes. So he gets down to this tree and he looks up and I can just see Jesus thinking to himself. Can't you? Boy, that's kind of weird. Little short guy is up in the tree and he looks up at him and he calls him by name.

As far as we know, he'd never been introduced to Zacchaeus. Didn't know Zacchaeus. Could be God just instantly because he is the son of God told him this is Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus could be, could be that he's heard the crowd laughing at Zacchaeus. Look at that little nut up in the tree. Look at that little guy up in the tree.

[15 : 57] He is so crazy. Zacchaeus would do anything. But you know what Jesus says? Zacchaeus, why don't you, and listen to this, not just come down, quickly come down.

Boy, get out of that tree. I need to go home with you and lodge with you today. Well, I just got to tell you, I don't know how it was at your house.

If you were one of my children and you were coming along and you asked to go to somebody's house and they hadn't invited you, boy, you got to talk into, right? My son used to be the world's worst.

He'd come and say, Daddy, Jonathan Dierman's mom, Elaine, said that I could go home with him today. My first question always was, did they invite you or do they invite you? And if he said, well, I kind of asked him if I could go, then the answer's always going to be no, right?

If Mary had been there and Jesus had been a little boy, he'd have got scolded. You don't invite yourself to somebody's house. I mean, that's a little weird seeing a guy up in a tree, but it's also a little weird to say, hey, buddy, I haven't met you yet, but come down and take me to your house today, right?

[17 : 07] How about feed me? If you don't think it's weird, send me out to church because I'm going to go to your house for lunch, right? So, a little bit weird, but that's what Jesus does. Look at verse 6.

Quickly he came down and welcomed him joyfully. You know what Luke's saying to us? I mean, you put that, those phrases, quickly he comes down, joyfully.

Yes, Jesus. Yes, Jesus. By all means. I live down on South Main. Let's go there now, right? I mean, he's thrilled. It's his way of saying, Zacchaeus was giddy.

I mean, he's past just being okay with it. He's excited. In fact, I can almost see him puff his chest out a little bit, can't you? I mean, of all the people here in Jericho, Jesus is coming to my house, right?

And so, off they go to Zacchaeus' house. Well, how'd the crowd react? They weren't nearly as thrilled. Look at verse 7. All who saw it began to complain.

[18 : 16] He's gone to lodge with a sinful man. Jesus actually loses some credibility at this point with the religious folk of the day. Can I tell you something? And you already know this because I know you've read the New Testament many times.

When you read the New Testament, the Gospels especially, you're bombarded by this same idea that you find here in this verse we just read. They're always giving grief to Jesus over the company he kept.

And they're always raising suspicion. Did you not know this man was a sinner? Jesus, I thought you knew everything. I thought you, some say you're the Son of God, you're the Messiah. Now, don't you know who this man is?

This man is the tax collector. He's the chief of sinners. Why are you going home with him? Now, I'm just gonna throw this in as a free bonus, okay? Isn't it amazing how lost people were attracted to Jesus?

Have you ever thought about it? I've thought about it a whole lot. Because I gotta be honest with you, I'm fearful lost people are not always attracted to me. In fact, I look at a lot of church people throughout my ministry and we seem to kinda repel them, don't we?

[19 : 29] But Jesus was like a magnet to them. There's something about Jesus, he was so comfortable with them. I don't mean he liked their lifestyles, no indication of that. But I'm gonna tell you something.

There was something about Jesus, they saw something in him, he was so loving, so kind, so compassionate. He didn't let their actions and attitudes get in the way of his loving them to the point that they were comfortable with him.

And I got news for you, I've seen a lot of people who are not very comfortable with church people. I mean, we kinda give them the hives at times. Have you ever noticed that? You can see it when you begin to ask them, would you come to church?

Eh, no, I don't want to. You have them over for hot dogs, they're okay. You go out in the backyard and you have a cookout, they're okay. But go to the church? Eh, I don't know, man. So, Jesus was comfortable with lost people and then as a result, lost people were comfortable with Jesus.

Look at verse eight. They're home now, they've had dinner, a conversation has ensued, we don't know what it was, but I want you to notice verse eight.

[20 : 34] But Zacchaeus stood there, they would eat their meals in a lying position on the floor. Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, look, I'll give half of my possessions to the poor Lord and if I have extorted anything from anyone, I'll pay back four times as much.

Now, I'm fearful that when we read these stories, we become so accustomed to reading them, we've heard them so many times, this is one you've heard since you were a little bitty kid, that it goes in one ear and just out the other.

But I really want you to think about it and I want you to think about putting yourself in Zacchaeus' shoes. We're not talking about a tithe, we're not talking about half of his weekly income that week, we're talking about a man who is an adult who's worked all of his adult life and he has been amassing wealth, just like all of us in this room.

Now, some of you are better at that than others and some of you have amassed more than others but all of us, especially those my age, you've worked your whole life to surround yourself with a lot of stuff, right?

He's giving away half of his stuff. Half of my possessions I give to the poor. If you have children and you have a will you thought real carefully about, now what do I want to do with my money?

[22 : 00] When I die, I'm going to give half to this child and half to that child or I'm going to divide it into thirds if I've got three children or you know what you're going to do with your money but I'm going to tell you something, that's a major decision.

You don't come about that flippantly because you recognize this is my life's earnings. We're talking about his 401k, we're talking about his checking account, his savings account, money's got hid out there in the shed.

We're talking about everything he's got, all of his possessions, his houses, his land, if he owns land. Half of everything I'm going to give away.

Big deal. But then he says this, Master, I'll tell you something, if I've cheated anybody, now understand he's not talking about that which he was paid by the Roman government to perform this service of collecting taxes, but he's talking about that additional that he just stiffed them for, okay, where he took advantage of them.

He says, anything I've taken advantage of anybody, I've extorted them of their money, I'm going to pay back four times out of that remaining half, I'm going to pay back four times what I took.

[23 : 13] Now here's a guy, here's what's phenomenal about it. Here's a guy who all his life, he's been in the amassing mode. He's been in the collecting mode, no pun intended.

He's been gathering for himself and only for himself and now suddenly, suddenly, he's in the giving mode. You can't just say he's generous, I mean he's given away half of everything he got and he's making restitution four times what he's taken.

It's incredible. I mean, who does that? How does that happen? Look at the very next verse, if you will. Verse nine.

Today, salvation has come to this house, Jesus told him, because he too is a son of Abraham.

There's the explanation. Jesus says to these people who are standing there with their mouth agape, what did Zacchaeus just do? I mean, he just gave away almost every, what did he do?

[24 : 21] Jesus said, let me tell you what he did. Salvation has come to this house today. Now, I want you to be sure to get this. Jesus is not saying, wow, Zacchaeus, you gave away half to the poor.

You're now concerned about the poor and not just yourself. You've become an honest man, a man of integrity. You're giving back four times what you've stolen, you've extorted.

Wow. You know what? You've earned your salvation. Not what he's saying at all. What he's doing is giving explanation to why Zacchaeus has done what he's done.

Salvation, Jesus has this ability that we don't have. He looks into Zacchaeus' heart. He doesn't have to see him walking out. He didn't have to see him take a pasture out of the hand.

He doesn't have to see him kneel. He knows Zacchaeus has had a change of heart, that something has transformed him. He's a new man. He's not the same Zacchaeus that Jesus walked home from that sycamore tree with.

[25 : 27] He's different in every way. He's got a different heart, a different soul, a different spirit. And so now he says to Zacchaeus and to those watching, let me tell you what's happened here.

Salvation has occurred here. This man has been saved. God has transformed his life. He's not the same old tax collector he used to be. He is a son of Abraham.

Now finally look at verse 10. For the son of man has come to seek and to save the lost. Jesus says I know about the salvation thing.

That's why I've come. I've come for people just like Zacchaeus. Can I tell you something? Jesus is telling us this is my agenda.

My agenda is to see people radically transformed for God. To see people who are godless become filled with God. To see people who are lost be saved.

[26 : 27] Can I just tell you quickly in passing that ought to be the mission of this church and every church that bears the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our mission is not to fill buildings to build buildings. Our mission is not just to see how much money we can give to missions. Our mission should always be this.

Our mission should be to see people radically changed by the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. To see Jesus somehow touch people's lives and make them different creatures all together.

together. I was a pastor full-time pastor for 40 years. You know one of the things the long-eyed pastor that disheartened me the most? Every year you're probably not aware of this as a church member but pastors and staff will know this.

Every year you get a letter from the association and they say give us this information and you pass it to the association and the association passes it to the state convention and the state convention passes it to the national convention and they ask you things like this how many people were baptized?

[27 : 36] How many people joined the church? How much money did you give? How much money did you give to the cooperative program? How much money did you designate to missions? How many were involved in music ministry?

How many were involved in youth ministry? How many were in since you get the picture? You know of those forms that we filled out for 40 years I never had once them ask this question how many people's lives did you see miraculously changed?

Maybe they just thought well pastors wouldn't be able to answer that because it's rather subjective but I want to tell you something when somebody is radically changed like Zacchaeus has changed you got to see that don't you?

Don't you? Have you ever seen anybody change like Zacchaeus? I've seen people change like that I can begin to list people who I've seen were changed like that we know them here's the problem they don't want to know that you know why?

Because that's going to be a much smaller number than those other numbers we like to report those people that are really radically I mean Jesus comes in their heart and he saves them and change them that's going to be a lot smaller but we're aware of it when we see it you've seen it right here at Pickens First you've seen that person who they came in they trusted Christ and boom boy God just did a work a marvelous work in their life so here's what I want you to do with this message and I want you to do something with it I want you just to hear it I'm going to give you four assignments today okay here's the first I want you to start reacting to interruptions to your agenda differently than you ever have in the past now I hope you'll write these down because if you don't write them down you won't be able to do them and I want you to do them okay I don't want you just to hear them I want you to do them I want you to go out beginning today as soon as the service is over I want you to begin to do them I want you to start reacting to interruptions to your agenda differently and here's how

[29 : 38] I want you to do that when an interruption in your agenda your plan for the day occurs I want you to immediately ask yourself instead of getting mad instead of getting a little peeved instead of being annoyed I want you to ask yourself this question could it be that God is singling me out through this interruption because this person is my agenda for the day could this be a divine appointment could this be the reason God has put me exactly in this place that I am now I mean God knew I had these plans God knew this is what I was going to be doing today right he always does so if that interruption occurs shouldn't we be asking ourselves if we want to be somebody who is on God's agenda rather than our own agenda could it be that God has allowed this interruption to occur because this is the new plan that God has given me today I mean this guy right here on the side of the road this gas can in his hand who needs some help maybe he's my agenda maybe God's redirecting my path and this guy has become my agenda for the day

I'll tell you this and I'll pass on to the second thing I'll have you do I know you think your agenda is important and I think my agenda is important and I want to get it done I like checking off those things but I want to tell you something God's agenda always trumps our agenda do you know that you may think you know best about you but I'm going to tell you something God's agenda always trumps your agenda here's the second thing I want you to start and you're going to think I'm crazy when I tell you this but write it down anyway I want you to start looking for men up in trees I want you to start everywhere you go looking for people up in trees Jesus saw Nicodemus or rather Zacchaeus forgive me Jesus saw Zacchaeus and he immediately knew that's a needy guy right there I mean he put it all together in just a matter of moments and he knew Zacchaeus needed him so Zacchaeus come down out of that tree

I need to go to your house you need to take care of me today I want you to start looking for people in trees you say what are you talking about preacher well how many of you when you were kids looked for four leaf clovers now some of you young ones are going to probably say what's he talking about right when you're an old guy like me when we were kids we didn't have a lot to do so we'd go in the yard and we'd look for four leaf clovers you got a yard that had a lot of clover I've seen kids that spend hours looking for four leaf clovers how many of you ever found a four leaf clover a lot look here a lot of people good for you I think some of you are lying okay I feel like a real dummy because I want to tell you something I've never found one I was at a picnic the reason I use this illustration I was at a picnic with some church folk a long time ago and somehow we're in an area where there's a lot of clover and we got this blanket on the ground and me and Regina and this other couple sitting there and I said look at all this clover I wonder if we could find a four leaf clover and this woman says oh sure we can find some easy and I said really and she said oh yeah she stands up

I stand up and she looks here at this patch of ground about three or four foot wide and she says I see two right now and I said where she says I'm not going to tell you you find them so I looked for about ten minutes I ain't found nothing right and so I said where are they and so she bent over and she picked up two four leaf clovers and gave them to me I got another friend friend at Brushy Creek he's got a bag full of Indian arrowheads I've occasionally looked for those from places I'd be places battlefields or something where I think maybe there would be some I don't have one arrowhead and you got any arrowheads here's somebody got one there in the back can I tell you something I am good at finding one thing well several things food for one but another is I'm pretty good at finding deer because my wife and I started years ago in the evenings we had a place down the lake for 13 years and we would get out on

Friday nights about 7 o'clock and we'd ride to 8 and I knew I'd found some in one area and I'd go back to those areas and I found new areas and we got pretty good at finding deer and so those years we lived the lake one Saturday night I found Friday night I found 43 deer okay I was down the lake this last week staying at a friend's house I found 50 deer one night 15 of them were bucks 8 of them 8 points or better big deer right you say that's a lot of it it is my wife's good at it she's as good at it as I am you know why because we look for deer just like that one guy looks for arrowheads just like that one guy has spent a lot of time looking for clovers I'm going to tell you a truth in life you can believe this you find what you're looking for did you know that you will find what you really and truly look for Jesus said the same in

[35 : 02] Matthew 7 7 about prayer you will find what you seek for what you look for you know what I believe about Jesus you know why he had so many interruptions because he was willing to be interrupted and he was always looking for people up in trees he was always looking to that guy who seemed out of place he was always looking to that guy that others thought man that guy's a little weird that guy's been cast aside by society you know where you'll find them you'll find them in school cafeterias they're the guy or gal over there eating by themselves it's that guy at work you'll look at when you look at him he looks down she looks down when you look back up and move on they look back and they're watching you they isolate themselves there are people with needs in their life and they want somebody to reach out to them but they're afraid to ask

I want you to start looking for people who are in trees third thing I want you to learn to use Jesus approach to helping people and I just got to tell you this will be the hardest one for you to do because it's so foreign to our thinking here's how we want to help people we see somebody with a need and we rush in and try to be their savior let me buy you groceries let me do this for you let me do that for you come over here to this come to my house come to my cookout instead of letting people know man I need you when you do for somebody you know what happens it leaves them thinking boy he is such a nice guy they think better of you when you help them but when you enlist the help of people you know what always happens I've seen this being a pastor so many times it makes them feel important it makes them feel good about themselves it makes them feel needed it feels to them like he wants me to be a part of what he's about so when he says would you let me go home with you and you feed me today he's thrilled to death he's thrilled to death because it's

Jesus coming to his house and he's going to be able to help Jesus but in Jesus allowing him to do that for him by Jesus saying I really do want to be involved to you not just superficially it opened the door for Zacchaeus to receive Christ into his heart and finally here's the last thing I want you to examine your salvation I know a lot of you are thinking well preacher that's pretty easy I've been a member of first pickings for X number of years I was baptized right up in that baptismal pool or I was baptized out at this place Lake Hartwell somebody told me last night I was talking to and you can recall the date and the time and everything about it but that's not what I'm asking you did you join the church or did you sing in the choir or are you a deacon or have you taught in school what I'm asking you to do is we're going to require a lot of soul searching and transparency but it's in your best interest you do it and that's to ask yourself has a change like occurred in

Zacchaeus ever occurred in me because I'm going to tell you something when salvation comes to a house to us it always leaves breathtaking changes I don't mean that everybody comes from a moral background and suddenly becomes moral but I'm going to tell you something if you're the most moral person to ever live in pick in South Carolina when Jesus comes in your eye it still radically changes the most moral of people it's an inside change you've heard me show my testimony when I got saved I was only 14 years old so when a ton of weakness that I had to get rid of in my life and I'm going to tell you that day I received Christ I became a different person it was as radical as the changes in Zacchaeus life I knew going forward I would sin against God and

I did and I have and I'm ashamed of that but I'm going to tell you something there's never been a moment in my life that I've ever thought for a second that I wasn't different than I was before I received Christ he changed me he changed Zacchaeus and that's what Jesus saw I'll tell you ladies and gentlemen Jesus turns to the crowd you've just witnessed salvation salvation is cut this is a child of Abraham he has faith in God do you is there anything about your life that is just radically changing people and it doesn't even matter what other people do you know that change has occurred you know if not I want to tell you something you ought to really be talking to God about your salvation because the older I get the more I'm convinced when Jesus comes into a man or a woman's life a young person's life it's not just a handshake and a fill out card and a dunk in a pool it leaves a lasting effect you think differently your heart's different you're different because God now lives in you let's pray Lord I pray you would convict men and women today who may be delusional of their salvation I would not cause anyone Lord purposefully to doubt for a moment that they know you if they really know you but if they have been duped into believing they have been saved when they have not been saved when they just Lord embraced an idea but they didn't embrace you I pray oh

[41 : 12] God that you'd convict them and bring them to the stark realization they need you and they can find you this day Lord you're just as available to anyone in this room as you were to Zacchaeus so if there are men and women who turn in these next few moments and they cry out to you and say God save me I pray you do that I know you will hear their prayer Lord save them today and for those of us who have been changed and we've been transformed and we know that help us to make your agenda our agenda to not be out there just doing our thing but to make people sinners our agenda in life to bring them to faith in Christ have your will and way in this service we ask it in your name the instrument■■ love you love you won't say love you alright