



The Life of Jesus (67)

The Story of Zacchaeus (4)

Luke 19:5-10



#1 Immediacy of Salvation

When Zacchaeus told Jesus that he would give half of his possessions to the poor and pay back four times the amount of what he had cheated, Jesus answered,

“Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham” (Lk 19:9)

Here, we see the immediacy of salvation again. Just as Zacchaeus came down from the tree right after hearing Jesus calling to him, Jesus’ response to Zacchaeus’ confession was also immediate.

Salvation doesn’t depend on our past decisions or decisions we may make in the future. No matter the terrible mistakes you’ve made and no matter how badly you’ve messed up, God gives us a new chance to return to Him and be saved every day.

“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentation 3:22–23)

#2 Immediacy of Salvation

However, we also need to know that regardless of any good decisions we have made in the past, we can lose our salvation if we don't maintain our faith in God daily.

The Bible continually warns us that we must make every effort not to lose our faith in Jesus as long as it is called 'today.'

“So, if you think you are standing firm, **be careful that you don't fall!**” (1Co 10:12)

“Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Php 2:12)

The reason we need to have fear when we work on our salvation is because **there's always the possibility that we might lose it.** Our enemy, Satan, will do his best to take salvation from us.

Even now “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1Pt 5:8)

He will use every method he can use to deceive us and blind us so that we won't see what the truth is. He will tempt us using all kinds of worldly things to alienate us from God.

#3 Immediacy of Salvation

Regardless of whatever good choices we've made in the past, if we fall down today, we will begin to drift away from Jesus and His salvation and end up losing it.

That's why we must keep working on our salvation with fear and trembling. We should always think about how precious the salvation Jesus gives us is so that **we can continuously hold our faith firmly to the end.**

Keep in mind that your salvation depends not on your past decisions or your future choices, but **what you determine to do now, today.**

Zacchaeus decided to come down and welcome Jesus on the very day he heard His voice calling to him. That's the decision we must make today. We're to hear Jesus calling to us, knocking on the doors of our hearts, and welcome Him, receiving Him as our Savior and Lord every day.

#4 Salvation Has Come to This House!

When Zacchaeus met Jesus and welcomed Him, he was saved that day. All the sins he had committed in the past were forgiven and he became a new creation.

But that's not the end. Now, he hears that **salvation is declared not only to him but to his house**. Here the word house refer to those who live in the house—Zacchaeus' family.

It doesn't mean that one's faith automatically saves his or her family members. What Jesus saw was how Zacchaeus' repentance and his return to God would affect those around him—especially his family members. **Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus would bring huge blessings to his family as well.**

From the moment Zacchaeus received God's blessings when he met Jesus, **he would serve as the vessel of God's blessings to those around him**. That's why Jesus declared salvation not only to Zacchaeus, but to his household.

#5 Salvation Has Come to This House!

We find a similar example in the apostle Paul's life.

One day, when Paul was traveling in Philippi, he was severely flogged and put into prison. But, Paul didn't stop praying or singing hymns to God even in prison.



Then, suddenly, there was a huge earthquake, and all the prison doors opened. Seeing this, the jailer tried to kill himself because he thought his prisoners had escaped.

But Paul called to him and stopped him, saying, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" (Ac 16:28).

Then the jailer fell trembling before Paul and asked,

"What must I do to be saved?" (Ac 16:30)

Paul answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household" (Ac 16:31)



#6 Salvation Has Come to This House!

Then the jailer took Paul to his house, washed his wounds, and gave him food to eat. And all his household were baptized that night.

“The jailer… was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God – he and his whole household.” (Acts 16:34)

This tells us the kind of role we should play in our families as Christians. We should know that **we’re called to deliver God’s blessings**—the joy of salvation, complete forgiveness and acceptance, and true transformation of life in Jesus—to those around us, **especially to our family**.

It may take longer than you think, but if you don’t give up and constantly work on it, I believe a time will surely come when you see the fruit.

#7 A Son of Abraham

After declaring salvation to Zacchaeus' house, Jesus added, "Because this man, too, is a son of Abraham" (Lk 19:9).

This might have sounded weird because Zacchaeus was a Jew, one of the descendants of Abraham. The name Zacchaeus itself was a Jewish name that means "pure or righteous" in Hebrew.

Zacchaeus was undoubtedly a Jewish man. Then, why did Jesus say that as if Zacchaeus had just become a son of Abraham?

There are two possible reasons for this. First, it might have referred to the recovery of Zacchaeus' reputation or identity as a Jew.

Even though Zacchaeus was Jewish, he wasn't considered part of Jewish society because of what he had done. But now, since he had departed from all his past wrongdoings, he could be accepted into Jewish society again.

#8 A Son of Abraham

But, what Jesus put more emphasis on here was Zacchaeus' changed spiritual status.

In the Bible, the expression “a son of Abraham” doesn't only refer to someone's biological or racial status. Rather, **it refers to those who have the same faith as Abraham.**

“Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham... in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith... **If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal 3:7, 26, 29)**

Even though Zacchaeus was a descendant of Abraham biologically, he wasn't considered to be a true son of Abraham spiritually because he had left his faith and had done many wrong things.

But now, since Zacchaeus returned to God through Jesus, truly repented of his past sins, and decided to live according to God's will for him, **Jesus declared that he had become a true son of Abraham not only biologically or racially but also spiritually.**

#9 A Son of Abraham

The expression “a son of Abraham” gives us important insight into what it means to become a Christian.

Many people go to church on a regular basis, but not all of them are considered true Christians.

Christians can't be defined as those who go to church on Sundays. Christians can't be defined as those who are acquainted with church culture. Christians are not defined by their religious acts.

The most important element in being a true Christian lies only in one's faith and the fruits that accompany it.

No matter how many years you've been in the church, no matter how earnestly you've served at the church, and no matter how many good, religious works you've done in the church, if you don't have faith in Jesus, you're not a Christian.

#10 A Son of Abraham

But regardless of what you've done in the past, if you believe in Jesus today, you are considered to be a true Christian, a spiritual child of Abraham, who joins in and enjoys all the great blessings and promises Abraham received from God when he believed in Him.

We must try to build our faith and our identities upon the truth of God's word, not other things. We shouldn't be just cultural Christians who go to church but have nothing to do with Christ in their daily lives.

Memory Verses

“Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham” (Lk 19:9) (1)

“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentation 3:22–23) (2)

“Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Php 2:12) (1)

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household” (Ac 16:31) (1)

“Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham... in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith” (G1 3:7, 26) (2)

Reflection Questions

1) Why do you think the Bible emphasizes the importance of the present state of salvation? What makes your heart hardened before God and what makes you have stronger faith in Him? What decisions do you think you need to make in order to work on your salvation every day?

2) What do you think makes Christians true Christians? What's the most important element of being a Christian? Please define the meaning of being a Christian in your own words. Who are they? And what roles should they play in the world?