

# Church Together

Zacchaeus - Come As You Are

29th August 2021





# Welcome

Welcome to **Church Together**.

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together.

Our flexible Sunday worship patterns blend together on – line services, home deliveries and emailed copies of Church Together.

Today's service will be looking at: **Luke 19 v. 1 – 10**

The theme for today's service is: **Zacchaeus ~ Come As You Are**



Today's service that is set out in this edition of **Church Together** is looking at **Zacchaeus ~ Come As You Are**

We hope that you will be able to engage with what has been produced for our **Sunday Service** and that you would indeed

Like Zacchaeus, Be Able To Meet With Jesus

No Matter Who You Are . . .

# Call To Worship

## Psalm 100 v. 1 – 5 NLT

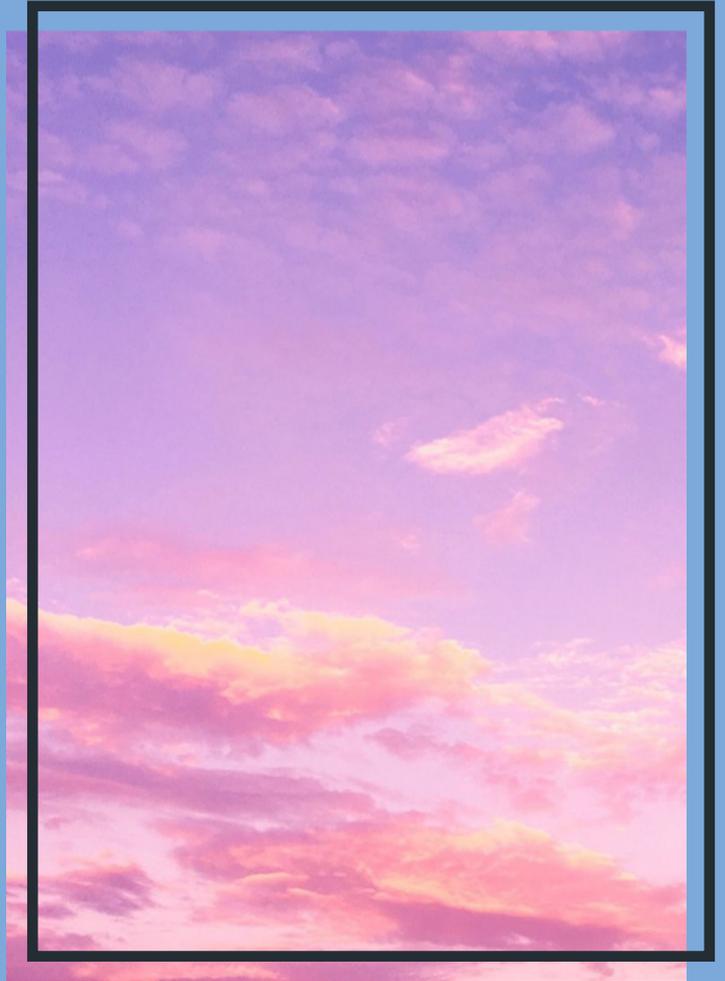
Shout for joy to the Lord, O earth!  
Worship the Lord with gladness.  
Come before him, singing with joy.  
Acknowledge that the Lord is God!  
He made us, and we are his.  
We are his people, the sheep of  
His pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;  
go into his courts with praise.  
Give thanks to him and bless his name.  
For the Lord is good.  
His unfailing love continues forever,  
And his faithfulness continues to  
each generation.



---

# Song Suggestion

Bless The Lord, O My Soul



# Opening Prayer

Father God thank you that you have brought each of us safely to this place this day. We gladly surrender our lives to you heavenly Father, in worship and praise this day.

We invite Your Holy Spirit to move freely amongst us. Come dwell in each of our hearts. Equip us, challenge us, comfort us and teach us. As we read your word today, inspire us as we learn more about your majestic ways. Father, as we meet now may we behold Your beauty and encounter your grace and love. Thank you that today we dwell in your kingdom and live in your presence and love. Thank you that as we gather together we join with all Christians across the world to glorify your Holy name.

Loving Lord Jesus, as we gather here we thank you for fellowship and friendship. We ask that you will strengthen us, restore us and inspire us as a church with your love. Lord, would you fill us here today with your peace so that as we journey onwards we would pour out your love and grace to

others.

Loving Lord Jesus, we confess to you that we have often failed to live up to the reasonable expectations that you require of us. In your name, we ask you to forgive us for what we have done and what we have made of ourselves.

Today we celebrate your great love for us Lord, may we rest in Your presence bathe in Your goodness and celebrate your eternal life this day and always. Refresh our faith we pray, in your willingness to accept us, help us enjoy our standing as your much loved children, and enable us to live lives in which you can take delight today, we pray.

We ask these prayers as we come to you this day, in the precious and glorious name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

**Amen**

# The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth,  
as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever.

**Amen**



for the Son of man came to seek  
and to save the lost

LUKE 19:10

# Bible

# Reading

**Luke 19 v. 1 – 10 NLT**

## **Zacchaeus the Tax Collector**

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.”

# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

Now that we find ourselves once again holding services in Church, we are able to give of our finances to the work of the Lord when we are in church.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.



# A Poem

## About

# Zacchaeus

**By Audrey Christophers**

Zacchaeus climbed the sycamore tree  
"Because I'm short" I know said he.  
Jesus was coming and I must see  
So I must climb this sycamore tree.

Jesus was travelling to Jericho  
Zacchaeus heart began to glow  
He was not going to miss Jesus' show  
So up the sycamore he had to go.

As Jesus came to that very spot  
he saw the place Zacchaeus had got  
even though the day was rather hot  
And Zacchaeus came down like a shot

Today I come to sup at your place  
To tell you of my Father's Grace  
though Zacchaeus's life was a disgrace  
Jesus way he longed to embrace.

He said half my good I give to the poor  
and if I've taken anything more  
I will give back four times to score  
Just to have Messiah come through my door.

Today Salvation has come to your home  
Not seen anywhere else in the  
kingdom of Rome  
The Joy that to this house had come  
When Jesus brought peace with his shalom.



The Son of Man came to seek  
and to save the lost.

Luke 19:10

# Song Suggestion

How Sweet The Name Of Jesus  
Sounds



# Church Together Thought

The last half of Luke 18 shapes our understanding of the passage about Zacchaeus.

- First, people bring little children to see Jesus. The disciples rebuke the parents, but Jesus intervenes saying: **'Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these'**. (Luke 18 v. 16).
- Then a rich ruler comes to Jesus asking how he might be saved. He goes away sadly after learning that he will have to give away his riches. (Luke 18 v. 18 - 27).
- Then a blind beggar sitting at the side of the road shouts his plea for mercy. The crowd tries to quiet him, but the man persists. Jesus orders the man to be brought to him and declares: **'All right, you can see! Your faith has healed you'**. (Luke 18 v. 35 - 43).

In each of those instances, Jesus reverses the ordinary. He welcomes children and beggars, whom people prefer to keep in the background - but places heavy demands on the rich ruler, whom most people would welcome gladly.

In the case of the rich ruler, Jesus leaves the door ajar. It is difficult for rich people to be saved, but God can save them. This leads into the story of Zacchaeus, a rich man who finds salvation. The rich ruler is too attached to his possessions to give them to the poor. Zacchaeus, on the other hand, voluntarily pledges to give half his possessions to the poor and to make restitution to anyone whom he has cheated.

In the case of the blind beggar, Jesus blessed the one who wants to see. This also ties into the story of Zacchaeus, who exposes himself to ridicule by climbing a sycamore tree because he wants to see Jesus. He, too, receives a blessing.

Our gospel reading from Luke reveals the love and welcome Jesus extends to all. His welcome includes those who are loathed and hated by others. Jesus offers his invitation to Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was a tax collector and possibly

the head of a group of tax collectors. To finance the Roman Empire taxes were levied on all those under their control. Zacchaeus was a Jew who chose to work for Rome. His position allowed him to corrupt the system for his own ends and line his own pocket. Zacchaeus was seen as a traitor to Israel.

The Jewish leaders were particularly critical of those who followed this profession and they openly criticised Jesus for having anything to do with them. Zacchaeus enjoyed influence, status and great wealth but there was something missing in his life. In terms of the world he was doing OK but he was not satisfied and yearned for more.

Jesus' reputation as a friend to all had reached Zacchaeus and on hearing that Jesus was in the neighbourhood he wanted to see and hear him. He was short in stature, the crowd was large and he could not see Jesus. He disregards his reputation and finds a sycamore - fig tree, rather like our oak tree, and climbs for a better view.

Jesus can see a man up a tree and He takes the initiative. He knows this man and calls him by name. Jesus invites himself to share in the life of this outcast. **'Zacchaeus come down immediately, I must stay at your house today'**.

In this invitation we see the universality of the gospel, the inclusiveness of the welcome Jesus offers, to all. Zacchaeus is accepted for who he is but the crowd is not happy and they start to grumble about whom Jesus is going to have dinner with.

But Zacchaeus stands up and repents. He promises to give 50% of his wealth to the poor and to make restitution with those he has cheated. His life is transformed.

To the amazement of the hearers Jesus declares that this tax collector, Zacchaeus is a son of Abraham! Zacchaeus was lost but is forgiven and made new. Zacchaeus' wealth and ego are no longer the centre of his world. Jesus is the centre. So let's look at it a little closer at the passage in order to understand better how the events that unfolded for Zacchaeus can also change our lives as well.

### **ZACCHAEUS CLIMBED A TREE TO SEE JESUS**

Being a chief tax collector for a wealthy community almost guarantees prosperity, and Luke specifies that Zacchaeus is rich (**Luke 19 v. 2**). Elsewhere in this Gospel, tax collectors are presented favourably (**Luke 3 v. 12; 7 v. 29; 15 v.1; 18 v. 10**), but the rich are not (**Luke 1 v. 53; 6 v. 24; 12 v. 16 – 21; 14 v. 12; 16 v. 19 – 31; 18 v. 18 – 25; 21 v. 1**).

Tax collectors contracted with Romans to collect taxes in a particular town or region, and payed a

substantial fee for their franchise. Zacchaeus most likely subcontracted the actual collection of taxes. Jews despise tax collectors as mercenaries and thieves.

Zacchaeus would have only a small circle of friends, that would include a few minor Roman officials, those in his employment, and people drawn to his wealth. Outside that circle, he would have mostly enemies. His would be an insular, lonely existence. His wealth only partially compensates for his isolation.

Like the blind man in **Luke 18**, Zacchaeus wants desperately to see Jesus. Also like the blind man, he is limited physically so that he is unable to see. Therefore, we are told that: **'He ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him'**. (**Luke 19 v. 4**). His behaviour in this instance is remarkable. His ability to function as chief tax collector requires that people respect his power and comply with his directives. His position demands dignity and authority. However, on this occasion, he exposes himself to sharp elbows or worse as he pushes through the crowd. He invites ridicule by climbing a tree, which calls attention to his short stature.

## **JESUS INSTRUCTS ZACCHAEUS ~ TODAY I MUST STAY AT YOUR HOUSE**

In **Luke 10**, Jesus sent the disciples on an evangelistic mission. Now he conducts a personal mission himself. Jesus conveys a divine purpose

when he says that he **must** stay at Zacchaeus' house. He must do so **today** conveying a sense of urgency. Jesus did not come to Jericho by chance. He came to save Zacchaeus.

Those who emphasize that a sinner must observe certain **steps and ways** to win salvation should note that Zacchaeus **does not beg Jesus for mercy... or express any sorrow. Jesus makes no reference to Zacchaeus' faith..., repentance or conversion..., or discipleship.** Jesus initiates the action without any prompting from Zacchaeus. However, we should also note that Zacchaeus obeys Jesus' command to **hurry and come down** from the tree. The result would be quite different if Zacchaeus failed to respond to Jesus' invitation.

How surprised and honoured Zacchaeus must feel! Jesus is popular and brings honour to any home that he visits. Why would he honour a man like Zacchaeus? Nobody, including Zacchaeus, knows, but Zacchaeus responds **with joy.**

Just as Zacchaeus exposed himself to ridicule by climbing a tree, so Jesus exposes himself to criticism by visiting Zacchaeus' house. Ordinary people see Jesus as their friend. They don't want him to honour a man whom they regard as their enemy.

## **ZACCHAEUS REPLIES BY SAYING ~ HALF OF MY GOODS I GIVE TO THE POOR**

Jesus asked the rich ruler to sell his possessions and to give them to the poor. He asks nothing but hospitality of Zacchaeus, but Zacchaeus volunteers to give half of his wealth to the poor and to make fourfold restitution to anyone whom he has defrauded.

This exceeds Torah requirements, which require restitution plus one - fifth (**Leviticus 6 v. 5; Numbers 5 v. 7**) except in the case of the theft of an animal, which requires two, four or fivefold restitution, depending on the circumstances (**Exodus 22 v. 1 - 4**). Zacchaeus does not make this offer to win Jesus' approval, but to show his gratitude. He is not trying to win salvation but is instead responding to the presence of the Saviour.

In short, the context seems better served by a Zacchaeus whose behaviour is transformed by Jesus rather than a Zacchaeus who has been behaving properly all along.

If Zacchaeus is, indeed, guilty of substantial fraud, his offer of fourfold restitution will impoverish him. He will voluntarily do what Jesus asked of the rich ruler (Luke 18:18 - 27), which is to give his wealth to the poor.

## **JESUS HAS COME TO SEEK OUT AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST**

As chief tax collector, Zacchaeus has been an outsider, a social leper. Jesus now brings him inside again, declaring him to be **a son of Abraham** – just as he has pronounced the woman crippled with a spirit of infirmity to be **a daughter of Abraham** (**Luke 13 v. 16**).

Jesus does not save Zacchaeus in isolation, but declares: **salvation has come to this house** which in this context implies **household or family**. Zacchaeus' salvation benefits his whole family.

It also benefits the entire community as he gives money to the poor and restitution to those whom he has defrauded. The life of the community is transformed by the presence of a tax collector whom people can trust.

We dare not judge any person hopeless. Whether we are murderers, terrorists, racists, or rapists, Christ seeks to save us all.

In **Luke 15**, Jesus dealt at length with lost things – lost sheep (**Luke 15 v. 3 – 7**), a lost coin (**Luke 15 v. 8 – 10**), and lost sons (**Luke 15 v. 11 – 32**). When they were found, there was great rejoicing.

Now he proclaims that his central mission is to **seek** and to save the lost. The word seek implies that Jesus takes the initiative, just as the shepherd took

the initiative to find the lost sheep (**Luke 15 v. 3 -7**).

We can be sure that, when Zacchaeus was climbing a tree to see Jesus, Jesus was also seeking to see Zacchaeus so that he might save the lost.

This is Good News! Who among us is not in need of salvation!

The story of Zacchaeus beautifully illustrates God's acceptance and restoration of a repentant sinner. After admitting his failures to God, to himself, and to others, Zacchaeus was willing to repay the people he had wronged. Making restitution to those we have harmed or cheated is crucial unless seeking to do so will only cause further injury to people we have wronged. In such a case, it is enough to admit our wrongdoing to God, to ourselves, and to another person.

# Prayers of Intercession

We have been reminded today, Loving Lord, of our responsibilities as your people to follow your instructions in order to be good disciples. Help us to come to you 'just as we are' in order that we too, like Zacchaeus, may know your forgiveness and salvation.

When we hear and watch the news, we can see and are reminded that times are difficult for many, help us today to pray for those who need you the most.

We think and pray for those who are homeless, the unemployed, the asylum seeker and those in greatest need. Lord Jesus be with those who find themselves lost and alone in society. Support all those who work and volunteer in society to bring hope to these people.

We pray for our families and friends. Lord we all face the normal ups and downs of life in many different ways. We thank you that you, Lord Jesus knows our every situation. Help us we pray to face the different situations we face with dignity courage and love.

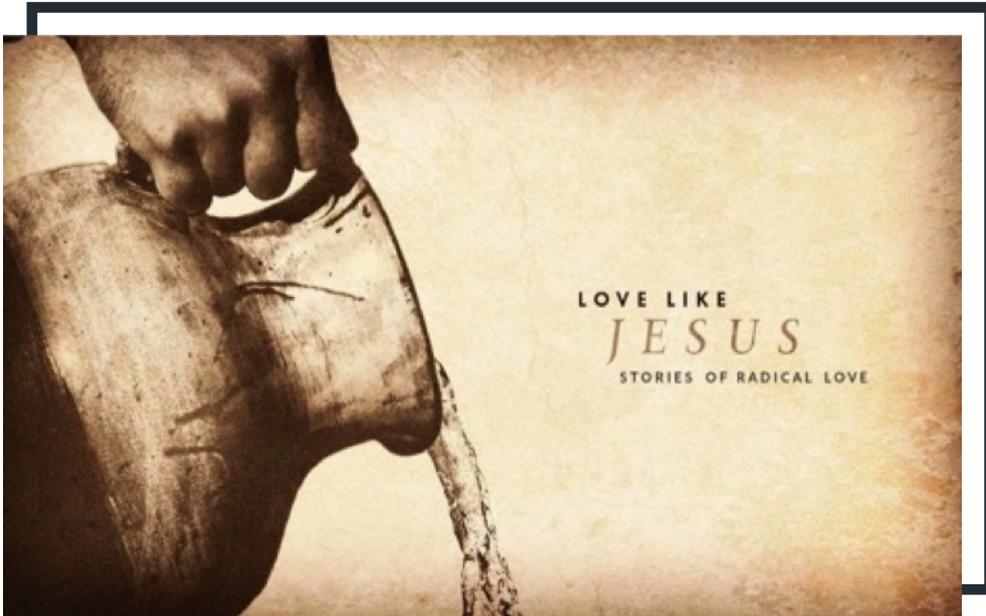


We pray today for the world - wide church and we pray especially for the local churches here in Huddersfield and for our own church family here at Salendine Nook. We pray for all who minister to the community in whatever way and in whatever role, may you guide and support them in all that they do. Help us to remember that the church is not the building, the Church is the people. Encourage us Lord to work together as your people to stay connected with each other and with you through these ongoing difficult and challenging times.

We think and pray today, Lord, for the elderly, the housebound and those in care homes who may be known to us personally. As we share a moment of silence together, we name them before you, Lord Jesus, in our hearts.

And finally, Lord we pray for ourselves. We place ourselves, this Church and all your people into your loving care. Please accept these our prayers, in Jesus name.

**Amen**



# Song Suggestion

Be Thou My Vision



# Blessing



And now may the Love of God,  
The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.  
And the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
Remain with us all,  
Now and forever more.

Amen

