**Zacchaeus, come down immediately**

Luke 19:1-10

Key Verse 19:5

“When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come

down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”

Do you know the expression, “you read my mind”? Many times in my life I have experienced that Jesus had read my mind. For example, last two weeks we had guests from Germany, missionary Samuel and Hanna Ryu from Meinz UBF. We have prayed to share love of God with them. We want to give them some special treatment. God helped us to find a way to send them to Grand Canyon. When they came to LA, there was no tour company which could bring them to Grand Canyon. It seemed the only way was for one of us to drive. But that would not be best idea because it is a long drive, and they would not be able to enjoy husband and wife fellowship. Then finally God helped us to find a way to send them by using Greyhound.

But still we want to give them some special treatment, a memorable one. Then God helped us to give them “foot massage”. When I visited Beijin in China in 2005, missionary Johannes Moon invited me to foot massage. It was a special treatment which I never forgot. I did not know 10 years late the same kind of massage was available in LA, and the price was not expensive. But to invite them to foot massage was completely unexpected. We did not plan it. What happened was they and Maria and I had a lunch in Korea town. Then Maria wanted to visit a nursery to buy something on our way to Hollywood. So we went to find the nursery. But we could not find it. In the course of finding a nursery, we found one “foot massage” place, and we could give them special treatment. So I felt Jesus knew how much we wanted to give them special treatment and he used our plan to find the nursery to give them special foot massage.

Jesus knows our heart desire. In today’s passage, we see Jesus knew the name of Zacchaeus, and what he really wanted. When Jesus said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” it was what Zacchaeus really wanted. Such deep and personal knowledge of Jesus moved the heart of Zacchaeus. It led him to repentance and salvation came to him. So let us see how it happened. My message has two parts. Part I. He wanted to see who Jesus was. (v.1-4) Part II. Zacchaeus, come down immediately (v.5-10)

**Part I. He wanted to see who Jesus was. (v.1-4)**

Look at verses 1-4.

**Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd.4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.**

Today’s event happened as Jesus was passing through Jericho. Jesus did not plan to do stay in the city, but he just wanted to pass through. He was resolutely heading for Jerusalem where he would be crucified. But something happened.

There was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. As you know, tax collector was regarded as a sinner like prostitutes. To the Jews, tax collectors sold their identity as God’s chosen people for money. Prostitutes sold their bodies for money. So they regarded both of them as same sinners. But Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. It means he must have had an excellent performance as a tax collector, and reached the top, a chief tax collector. And of course he was rich because all tax collectors chose their job to become rich. But that was not all he had.

He had something else. Verse 3a reads, “**He wanted to see who Jesus was”**. He had desire to know who Jesus was. The expression, “to see who Jesus was” is different from the expression, “to see Jesus”. Zecchaeus wanted to know WHO JESUS WAS. It was not merely seeing Jesus. He wanted to know who Jesus was.

His desire to see who Jesus was not just a mere thought. Verses 3b and 4 reads, “**But because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.”** He had such a strong desire to see who Jesus was that he climbed a sycamore-fig tree. Being a chief tax collector, probably he was not a young man anymore. He was probably middle aged man. He also had a position in his community. But he did not mind climbing the tree like children to see who Jesus was. He really wanted to see who Jesus was.

Why did he want to see who Jesus was? We don’t know. But it was clear that he must have heard about Jesus. And he must have thought that something was special about Jesus. He might have heard that Jesus opened the eyes of a blind beggar who cried out to him, “Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.”

Whatever the reason was Zecchaeus really wanted to see who Jesus was. But when he wanted to see who Jesus was, he had an obstacle. He was short.

Being a short is not a problem in our country because we have many tall people. But when I grew up in Korea, if you are short as a man, you have disadvantage especially when you want to marry. Being a short can be, depending upon the culture and situation, a serious shortcoming. We don’t know the situation of Zecchaeus. But surely it was an obstacle for him when he wanted to see who Jesus was. He could not see over the crowd. So he had to find a way, and it was to climb a sycamore fig tree.

**Part II. Zacchaeus, come down immediately (v.5-10)**

Look at verses 5-6.

**5When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.**

When Jesus reached the tree where Zacchaeus climbed up Jesus had an eye contact with him, and said, **“Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”**Zacchaues must have been greatly shocked when Jesus called him by name. They never met each other in the past. It was their first meeting. But Jesus knew his name.

Jesus knew not only Zacchaeus’ name but also the desire of his heart. Jesus said to him, “**“Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”**Jesus changed his plan to pass through Jericho for this one man, a chief tax collector. He decided to stay in Zacchaeus’ house. When Jesus said, **“Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today”** Zecchaeus heard the gentle and graceful and loving voice of his Messiah who knew the heart desire of him, and how much he wanted to see who Jesus was.

Jesus knows our names. Jesus knows what we really wanted. Jesus recognizes our heart desires and our effort to come to him. Jesus honors it.

There was another young man I knew. He really wanted to do something eternal in his life. As he saw all his works in his company did not produce anything eternal. The Lord knew his heart desire and how much he wanted to do something eternal. Eventually the Lord blessed him to open his spiritual eyes and to do something eternal – to share how much the Lord has done for him through 1:1 bible studies after his work.

Surely Jesus knows our names. He knows what we really want and how much we want.

Look at **Psalm 139:1-4**

**“1You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. 2You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.”**

Our life examples shows us how much the Lord knows us personally.

Before marriage, shepherdess Connie had 1:1 bible study with missionary Rebekah Kim who is in Redding now. Shepherdess Connie also had to have many talks with missionary Rebekah. I think it was almost on a daily basis like two hours a day before going to bed. After she married she stopped doing it. So missionary Rebekah Kim told me, “Wow, marriage is so good”. But msn Rebekah wondered how shepherdess Connie suddenly and completely stopped calling her. I was curious too.

Several years later I heard a story from missionary Billy by chance. He told me, “My mother had a hard time with my father. So every night my mother had me sit down and listen to her two to three hours or even five hours. So to listen to shepherdess Connie’s story two hours was a piece of cake.” And I was amazed about the personal knowledge of the Lord for shepherdess Connie. Jesus knew exactly shepherdess Connie needed. She needed someone who could listen to her 2 hours every day. That was why he brought her to missionary Billy.

How does Jesus know us so intimately? It is because He created us. It is also because he became a man like you and me. He went through all of our pains, sufferings, troubles and temptations in life. So when he talks to us, he talks as a man who knows all our agonies and troubles and he knows our heart desire.

In **Job 10:4** Job said to God, “**Do you have eyes of flesh? Do you see as a mortal sees?”** Job said so because he could not believe God would understand the severity of his pain because God was not a man. But the truth is Jesus had eyes of flesh and he could see as a mortal see because he became a mortal.

Can you believe that Jesus knows your name and he knows everything about you? And he uses his intimate knowledge of us to establish love relationship with us. Can you believe he calls you personally and gently and kindly in order to fulfill your dream, the desire of your heart?

When I married, I did not know anything about Maria. I trusted God and my bible teachers and married. I knew exactly what I was doing. Most of all, God knew exactly what I was doing. And I never regretted my decision to marry her even one second in my life even when I had arguments with her. All the time I know it was my best decision in UBF.

Although I knew nothing about Maria, after marriage, I could see several reasons why God joined us together.

Maria trusted me absolutely. My parents trusted me absolutely. Although they were not believers, their trust in me was religious. The absolute trust was given to me, and I knew they did so because they loved me. They never made any negative remarks on me except my mother said to me when I cried, “Why are you crying? Is your mother dead? Or is your father dead?” Then amazingly after I married I found that Maria had such an absolute trust in me. Because of her trust I could grow, while going through many ups and downs.

Maria was also independent. When I married I was weak and fragile. And I had many weaknesses in me including my super sensitive nerve. If she tried to depend on me, I would have been crushed. But she stood on her own feet and pioneered her own life. That was why I could grow on my own.

In addition, she is very stable, calm, and easy, and that was what I needed as a person who was super sensitive and had many weaknesses. Nothing was easy for me, but to her everything seemed to be easy expect bearing me.

Jesus said to Zecchaeus, “Zecchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” He knew exactly what Zecchaeus wanted. The Lord honored his heart desire.

**Psalm 37:4** reads, **“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”**

The Lord loves us through his intimate knowledge. According to John’s gospel chapter 10, the qualification of the good shepherd is to lay down his life for the sheep and know his sheep.

Jesus knows our names as the good shepherd. And he also reveals who he is to us so that our knowledge would be mutual.

**John 10:14** reads, **“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”**

In today’s passage, Zacchaeus must have been very happy when he heard Jesus. So he came down at once and welcomed him.

But there were people who were not happy. Look at verse 7.**“All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.””**

Zacchaeus was clearly a sinner. So they could not know why Jesus had gone to be the guest of a sinner. They probably thought Jesus could have fellowship with other people who were not sinners rather than sinners. They did not understand what Jesus said in **Luke 5:31-32 “31Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”**

Because all the people thought they were not sinners, they missed Jesus’ blessing – the opportunity to know him personally, and the blessing to see the desire of their hearts to be fulfilled by Jesus.

Now we know why Jesus came to us and called us by name. It is to heal us. It is to restore us. It is to bless us to establish love relationship with him. Jesus loves us even though we know we are sinners. He loves us preciously because we are sinners. So if any of us think he or she is better than others that person is a fool.

Look at verse 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.””**

This is Zaccheus’ repentance. He amended his broken relationship with people right there in front of everyone. He publically proclaimed his repentance.

He said to Jesus, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor.” In the past he did not care about the poor people. His only concern was for him to be rich even at the cost of making others poor. But now he was offering his half of money for the poor people. That was not it. In addition, he publicly announced that he would pay back 4 times of the amount of money if he had cheated anybody out of anything. According to the old testament, 4 or 5 times is the maximum amount of restitution.

His repentance was very specific. It involves a huge sacrifice of his money. Half of his possessions and handsome restitution if necessary. Repentance without change of our lives, repentance without cost, is not true repentance.

Once king David counted the number of fighting men and the Lord struck the Israelites with plague. When David prayed for his people the Lord sent Gad who told him to build an altar on the threshing floor of Aranuah, the Jubusite.

**2 Samuel 24:19-24** reads, “**19So David went up, as the Lord had commanded through Gad. 20When Araunah looked and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. 21Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?” “To buy your threshing floor,” David answered, “so I can build an altar to the Lord, that the plague on the people may be stopped.” 22Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. 23Your Majesty, Araunah gives all this to the king.” Araunah also said to him, “May the Lord your God accept you.” 24But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.”**

David refused to build an altar without his personal cost. He refused to repent without cost.

Jesus was moved by Zacchaeus’ repentance. So Jesus said in verses 9-10. “**9Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.””**

Zacchaeus was called as ‘a son of Abraham.’ It means he became a believer. He became a believer of promise given to Abraham. What was the promise given to Abraham?

It was the promise that God would send the Messiah through the line of Abraham. Abraham saw Jesus’ day and was glad. Jesus said in [**John 8:56**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+8:56&version=NIV) “**Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”**

Abraham believed the coming of Messiah, and he saw it and was glad. Zacchaeus became a son of Abraham. A man who met the Messiah whom Abraham saw by faith. Jesus was the Son of Man and son of David. Zacchaeus was the son of Abraham.

Indeed the salvation came to the house of Zacchaeus because he believed in Jesus and repented. His repentance was not a cheap repentance. It was a costly one, losing half of his possessions and ample amount of restitution. But he could do all this because he was so moved by the love of Jesus.

Jesus loves us unconditionally. Whatever we do or what we do not do, whether we perform well or poorly, has nothing to do with his love. He loves us unconditionally. But we should accept his love and we should repent based on his love. We should not abuse his love but we should repent being moved by his love.

Jesus’ love demonstrated in his death and resurrection should be the basis of all of our repentance.

Jesus was very happy too because the purpose of his coming has been fulfilled in the life of one person Zacchaeus. So Jesus said in **Verse 10**, “**For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”**

Jesus sought Zacchaeus who was lost and now he was saved.

In conclusion, Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Because he keeps seeking the lost we have a chance to be saved. He knows our heart desire and honors it. Because of his love and personal knowledge of us, he can lead us to repentance. Zecchaeus came to Jesus to see who Jesus was. He responded the love of Jesus with his repentance.

One word: Zacchaeus, come down immediately.