

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Mr. Mathis, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin

2922 NW 76th Terrace, Jennings, FL 32053

May 13, 2018

The Rich Ruler or Zacchaeus?

By Derek Long

It is amazing to notice the differences between people we meet or observe in life. We can often learn many valuable lessons by noting the contrasts between two individuals. The Bible contains individuals who stand in contrast to one another. We can normally identify with one of the characters better and perhaps learn what we need to do or avoid from the other character. Two characters who have a lot of contrasts between them are the rich ruler and Zacchaeus (Luke 18:18-23; 19:1-10).

The Rich Ruler - Luke 18:18-23

The rich ruler comes to Jesus with a question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He asks a very important question and is seeking an answer from the best possible source, Jesus. Jesus points out the man is familiar with the commandments contained in the Law of Moses which laid out what was required of him. The man has followed these commandments mentioned from his youth. He is a very moral man and very religious. Jesus knows the one area where the rich ruler was lacking and called upon him to change where it might have been most difficult. Jesus tells him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Luke

18:22). The rich man is sorrowful when he hears Jesus' response and it appears he does not sell his possessions as Jesus commanded.

We can say a lot of good things about the rich ruler. He had put in a lot of effort throughout his life to be pleasing to God. He was concerned about spiritual matters like gaining eternal life. He also appears to have done well in life from a financial perspective. We might look at a man like him and think he lacks nothing. Jesus though addressed the area where he was lacking and we see where his true treasure was (Matthew 6:19-21; 1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Zacchaeus - Luke 19:1-10

We normally think of Zacchaeus perhaps as a story we teach young children but there are lessons from his life for us all. Zacchaeus like the rich ruler is someone who sought after Jesus. Since Zacchaeus was of short stature, he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus as He passed by. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus but it was Jesus who approaches Zacchaeus instead of Zacchaeus coming to Jesus with a question like the rich ruler. Jesus tells Zacchaeus he will stay at his house. Those around know Zacchaeus was a tax collector and has a reputation of being a sinner. Zacchaeus tells Jesus "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8). Zacchaeus was willing to not be like other tax collectors, who took advantage of others, but instead was going to be generous with his goods and treat people fairly. Jesus' response to Zacchaeus' statement is, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:9-10).

We could say some good things about Zacchaeus as well. He sought to see Jesus, was willing to use his goods for others, and was willing to receive Jesus into his house. However, many around thought poorly of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:7). Zacchaeus is not thought of very highly like the rich ruler might have been but Zacchaeus ends up receiving salvation while the rich ruler goes away lost.

Lessons from the Rich Ruler and Zacchaeus

- Riches are morally neutral. The rich ruler and Zacchaeus both had riches (Luke 18:23; 19:2). Riches did not necessarily ensure one's salvation or condemnation. One's attitude toward riches certainly is an important factor in faithfully serving God though.
- The rich ruler appears to be very religious but is unwilling to make the one change Jesus requires of him. Zacchaeus is thought of as a sinner but is willing to take the kind of action Jesus required of the rich ruler. It is not how religious we have been in our past which determines whether we will be successful in serving God. If we are determined to do the right thing, we can be successful in serving God no matter what our past is like or what other people may think about us.

Conclusion

Today, we may not be in the exact same set of circumstances as either the rich ruler or Zacchaeus. We cannot go see Jesus physically somewhere. However, how will we respond to the instructions left for us by Jesus? Will we do whatever it is He requires of us or will we balk at His commands? Will we make radical changes, if needed, or will we continue to live our lives the same as always? Will we truly obey Him in all things or just in the areas we like?