

Week 26 Family Letter

Jesus Came to Save Sinners: Jesus Eats with Zacchaeus

(Luke 19:1-10)

Once there was a little man named Zacchaeus. He had lots of money, but he did bad things. He took things that belonged to others. People didn't like him. (*Squat down and frown.*)

One day, Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to his city. (*Put a cupped hand to your ear.*) Lots and lots of people wanted to see Jesus. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus too. (*Walk in place.*)

But He could not see Jesus! He was too little! (*Stand on tiptoe.*) Zacchaeus saw a tree. Up, up, up he climbed. (*Pretend to climb.*)

Jesus came walking along the road. Jesus came right up to that tree where Zacchaeus sat. Jesus looked up, smiled at Zacchaeus, and said, "You come down! I want to stay at your house today!" (*Make a motion to come down.*)

Zacchaeus hurried down from the tree. (*Pretend to climb down the tree.*) He took Jesus to his house. Zacchaeus was so glad that Jesus forgave him. He said, "I'll give back the things that I took. I'll give money to help poor people." (*Give each other a big hug.*) Jesus is good and kind and forgiving to us too. (*Make the sign of the cross.*)

Bible Words

Jesus came . . . to save sinners.

1 Timothy 1:15

Dear Family,

Point out that the tree in the Bible picture reminds us of Zacchaeus. Let your child color the tree. Then draw a cross and ask, "Who does this remind you of?" Jesus died on a cross (made out of a tree) to take the punishment of our sins because He loves us and forgives us.

Just like Jesus, we can show our love for our children all the time. We must make it clear to our children that because we love them, we cannot let them do what is hurtful to themselves and to others. Tell your child, "I do not like what you did. You must stop doing it. But I still love you."

Our children must know there are consequences for doing wrong things. Consequences must fit the age and action of the child. It may mean removing an object or the privilege of playing with it by giving two or three minutes of "time out," or by firmly telling the child no and not allowing the behavior to continue. "Natural" consequences help a child distinguish right from wrong, learn acceptable behavior, and understand that other people have feelings too.

Consequences are important, but it is love and forgiveness that change the heart and change the behavior. It was Jesus' love and forgiveness for Zacchaeus that changed Zacchaeus's life. Hugging and speaking of both Jesus' and our love and forgiveness assure our children that they are loved, and this will help them to grow beyond the wrongdoing. Read the story on page 383 of *The Story Bible* together.

