

Just Church drama

Jesus and Zaccheus

Based on Luke ch. 19, v.1-10

Parts: Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Jesus
Zaccheus
Crowd

Narr 1: In Jericho there was a wealthy tax collector called Zaccheus. He was good at his job and kept a good percentage of the taxes that he collected for himself.

Narr 2: He had all that he wanted – a lovely, large home, many servants, good food and wine.

Narr 1: What he didn't have, however, was many friends. His fellow Jews had no time for him because he collaborated with the Romans. He made his wealth out of keeping them poor.

Narr 2: Zaccheus was actually a bit lonely. He felt an emptiness in him. What was life all about when he had every material possession he could have and yet felt no joy from his wealth as he had no-one to share it with.

Narr 1: Jesus was walking through Jericho and people had gathered along the street to catch a glimpse of him – wondering whether he might heal anyone or preach to them.

Narr 2: Zaccheus was also curious. He had heard the gossip – that Jesus was a remarkable man who could look right into you and know exactly what you were thinking or what you needed. Zaccheus felt strangely compelled to see and hear this man for himself.

Narr 1: However, Zaccheus didn't like to be in crowds. He was not tall and often got jostled and pushed by people. Those who knew his profession treated him with contempt. He was always the outsider when he was in a crowd.

Narr 2: Today as he wove his way through the crowd, he had an idea...

Zaccheus: I'll sit in that large sycamore tree. I can sit in its shade, able to get a good view of Jesus and, better still, no-one will pick an argument or fight with me. I'll be safe up there.

Narr 1: The crowd got more excited and noisy as they saw Jesus approaching.

Narr 2: He was stopping to talk to people, old and young. He particularly stopped to talk to the children.

Zacc: Oh, here he is! It's Jesus! The one they say is the Son of God – a friend of the outcasts – who can heal people of all manner of illnesses. He looks so ordinary....and yet....

Jesus: Hey! Who's up there? Is that you, Zaccheus? Zaccheus the tax collector? I'm so glad that you are here. Will you come down please. I really want to meet you. In fact, I'd like to come to your house, if that's ok, so that we can eat together and really talk.

Zacc: Who? D'you mean.....me!!! You want to come to *my* house? Haven't you heard what I am ? what I do?

Jesus: Zaccheus, please hurry down. Of course I know about you and I really do want to meet you.

Narr 1: Zaccheus climbed, nearly fell, down the tree. His heart was pounding. Jesus had seemed to know instantly that he was in the tree and had looked at him so intensely.

Zacc: Jesus! I feel as if I have been waiting all my life to meet you. Please come to my home and have dinner

CROWD: (all together)
What's he doing with him!
I don't believe it. Going to Zaccheus' house!
That man's a crook! He's a sinner of the worst kind.
Zaccheus! He's the scum of the earth!

Jesus: Zaccheus, my friend, I'll be pleased to eat with you. Shall we go?

Zacc: Jesus, my Lord, I want to give some of my wealth away. I'll give half to the poor people of Jericho. And if I have cheated anyone then I will give him four times more than I took from him. They are right, I *have* led a greedy, dishonest life but now, suddenly, I...I want to change!

Jesus: You are indeed saved of yourself. The Good News is as much for you as it is for any other Jew. Your life will never again be the same. And I am so happy because this is my mission on earth – to save people who were lost and to bring them fullness of life.

Narr 2: And Zaccheus and Jesus hugged each other as if they were long lost brothers who had been reunited.

With thanks to Sally Ferris, Chorlton Central URC for permission to use this.