

## Based on Luke 19:1-10 Pentecost 21; Proper 26

*Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."*

**Luke 19:1-10**

Zacchaeus is an interesting character and really not so different from lots of the people we probably encounter regularly. He doesn't pay much attention to God, he makes a living by taking advantage of others and probably tells himself "that's just how the world works," and has contempt for those below him on the ladder of life.

At the same time, he's not immune to curiosity about Jesus because there's just *something* about Jesus that's compelling.

I think what we need to be paying attention to are the people who stand between Zacchaeus's curiosity and his encounter with Jesus.



Because just like Zacchaeus, lots of people out there are Jesus-curious; he remains as compelling as ever, but many who seek Him find themselves blocked by those who

have already claimed Jesus as their own or who feel they need to protect God for some reason.

Jesus reminds us here that He is *specifically looking* for those who yearn for a closer connection to God and their neighbors; it is His particular mission to do so and He doesn't expect them to be perfect or holy, quite the opposite. God, through the Jesus, understands human frailty and human brokenness and longs to offer us His strength and healing that we might be made whole and live as the people we were created to be, as agents of God's love.