

Tim's version of TRAIN for Day 25

Text

1Jesus 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 being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. 4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. 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. 7All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'" 8But 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." 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 what was lost."

Reality

Zacchaeus had something going on in his heart. He was searching.

And when he sought – he found. Just as is guaranteed by Jesus. “If you seek me you will find me.”

The beautiful part is that Jesus was so accepting. Even though the religious people didn't like it, Jesus accepted Zach on the spot. Even though he was one of the most hated and least “godly” people in town. Jesus knew his heart.

I believe that Jesus always knows the heart. I know that any of the people we think are so unholy and ungodly in the world are only one “heartbeat” from Jesus. And he will accept them for who they are. Immediately.

The reason I know this about his heart, however, is by his actions. This is the part that we miss. If your heart is right, your actions should follow. Zach gave away half his stuff immediately. Because he knew he'd cheated people out of it and he knew he wanted to make things right.

It's such an interesting dialogue. Jesus never asked Zach to do it. It was spontaneous.

There was so much eagerness and gratitude in his heart; he just overflowed with generosity and “right actions.”

And THEN Jesus says, “Today, Salvation has come to this house.”

I don't believe Zach was saved because he had right actions. But I do believe that if right actions don't accompany our beliefs – we have a problem.

Jesus brother James said “Faith without works is dead.” There is a balance. And it’s not a balance of the love of Christ. Jesus went to Zacchaeus immediately. As soon as Zach climbed the tree – out of curiosity – the door was opened. As soon as Jesus could see into his heart and know that Zach was serious about a relationship – it was granted.

But the proof in the pudding was doing something about it.

Application –

Is my life showing my heart? The first question is about my heart. Do I have heart issues? I’m working this week on “no but” week for celebration. Now I have to preach on anger this week. Heart issues, that are buried deep down inside, are going to be the first place for me to start.

But if my heart is right – does it show?

I think so. Where could I be missing it? I’m giving to the poor. I’m giving to God. I don’t have repayment for cheating issues. I work for God. My faith has works. So for me I think it’s going to show in attitude.

If I have faith and heart – is my attitude showing it?

Interaction with God

Good morning Lord. Thank you for the good day yesterday. Getting things done that needed to happen. Thank you for the great weekend and the excitement at Leadership community over the “Great Investment.” Thank you for the many people here who have the Zacchaeus spirit of generosity and “thank you for saving me.”

I pray for my family today. Needs that you know are there. Be with Rachel across that pond. Thank you for the good weekend she had and the relationships that are developing and her “Intro to Christianity” class you brought her too. I pray for the right decision for Lauren on college.

For my Zacchaeus heart. I may not have started as far away as he did, but I certainly “owe” you the same debt and should have the same kind of gratitude. Man, would I have loved to been around that guy after his conversion!

I have some hard things to do today – help my heart be right.

Lord, if things in Kenya weren’t bad enough already – they are killing each other right now. Rival tribes – just like Rwanda. Be with our people there and protect them. Stop the nonsense. They need Jesus.

Next Step

Generosity. I think I do okay, but I can go more.

Gratitude and sense of debt – I just don't think enough about the amazing grace I've been given.

Family – patience through their stress. Prayer for them – without ceasing.

Church – Bailey called me the David. I supposed for lack of a better illustration I am. Maybe somewhere between the David and the Solomon – since I am building. Help me to be the Good David (man after your heart David) and Good Solomon (the wise one).