



Camp RidgeKids 2025 | Elementary Bible Story (Day 2)

Day 2 Bible Story Script: Jesus Sees Zacchaeus

Text: Luke 19:1 - 10

Big Idea: Jesus saw someone others looked down on and treated him with dignity.

Waypoint: Boldness – I can treat others like they matter.

Key Verse: Romans 12:10

1. Real-Life Connection – Feeling Unseen or Left Out

Storyteller:

Have you ever felt like you didn't matter?

- Maybe your friends didn't save you a seat.
- Maybe you were picked last—or not picked at all.
- Maybe someone ignored you, laughed at you, or looked right past you.

(Pause)

(Share a short personal story)

Tell them about a time you were left out or judged by someone. Keep it honest and kid-relatable.

Now imagine being treated like that **all the time**—like no one believed you were worth seeing.

That's what happened to a man named **Zacchaeus**.

2. The Coins – Introducing the Illustration

(Hold up a velvet money bag.)

Zacchaeus was known for one thing: **money**.

Let's pass out a few coins—**3 coins for each of you**. (Have leaders help.)

These are yours. You worked hard for them.

But here comes Zacchaeus... and he's not just collecting taxes—he's collecting **extra**.

3. Coin Interaction – “Taxes... and Then Some”

Zacchaeus was a **tax collector**. That means he worked for the **Romans**.

Reason #1: People didn't like him:
He worked for the **enemy**.



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The Romans had taken over Israel. They ruled harshly, and nobody liked them. But Zacchaeus, an Israelite, worked for *them*. He was seen as a **traitor**.

Let's collect your **taxes**. (Take **1 coin** from each kid.)
But Zacchaeus didn't stop there.

Reason #2: People didn't like him:
He **cheated** people. Took more than he should.

So now we'll collect **one more coin** from each of you, just for "administrative purposes."

(Take **another coin** from each person and put them back into the money bag.)

Zacchaeus was getting **richer** while everyone else got angrier.

And **reason #3:** He was **really short**.
The story makes a big deal out of it, so it's likely people **made fun of him for it**.
They laughed at him, called him names, and treated him like a joke.

Zacchaeus was small... in height and in **how people saw him**.

4. The Bible Story – Luke 19:1-10

Scene 1 – Zacchaeus Wants to See Jesus

One day, Zacchaeus heard that **Jesus** was coming through town—Jericho.

And Zacchaeus **wanted to see Him**.

But the crowd was packed, **shoulder to shoulder**, people everywhere.
For anyone, it would've been hard to see or get to the front.
But for someone who was **short?** Impossible.

No one moved aside. No one helped. No one said, "Here, come stand in front."

So Zacchaeus did something bold.

He ran ahead... and climbed a **sycamore tree**.

A rich man... in a tree. Just to see Jesus.

That's how much he wanted to be seen.



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Scene 2 – Jesus Stops for the Last Person You’d Expect

Now imagine this:

Jesus is walking with a huge crowd. He could talk to anyone.

He could choose someone who was kind.

Someone who followed all the rules.

Someone well-liked.

But He stops... looks up into the tree... and says:

“Zacchaeus, come down. I’m coming to your house today.”

Out of everyone, Jesus chose him?

The one who cheated people.

The one who worked for the enemy.

The one nobody liked.

Didn’t Jesus know who he was?

Maybe that’s why He chose Zacchaeus—because **everyone else** thought he wasn’t worth it.

And Jesus wanted to show the crowd:

This is how you treat people.

You see them. You honor them. Even the ones everyone else avoids.

Scene 3 – Zacchaeus is Seen... and Transformed

Zacchaeus came down fast—full of joy.

Jesus was coming to *his* house.

No one had ever treated him like this before.

Jesus said his name.

Jesus came close.

Jesus showed him that **he mattered**.

And something inside Zacchaeus **changed**.

He stood up and said:

“I’ll give half of everything I have to the poor. And if I stole from anyone, I’ll pay them back four times as much!”

(Take coins from the bag and start handing them back—generously. Even give out more than you took.)



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Zacchaeus used to take... now he was **giving**.

He used to cheat... now he was **restoring**.

He used to think money made him important.

Now he knew—**he mattered because Jesus saw him**.

And here's the thing:

When you treat someone like they matter, they might start to believe it too.

They might start to see themselves the way God sees them.

5. The Big Point – Boldness Means Seeing People Differently

Jesus could've ignored Zacchaeus.

But He didn't.

He treated Zacchaeus with **dignity**.

And because of that, Zacchaeus' life was **transformed**.

That's the kind of boldness we're talking about today:

Boldness means treating others like they matter, especially when no one else will.

6. Key Verse Tie-In – Romans 12:10

Let's look at today's verse:

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." –
Romans 12:10

"Honor one another above yourselves" means this:

See other people as important, *even more important than yourself*.

That's not easy. It takes **boldness**.

But it's what Jesus did.

And if we follow Him, it's what we do too.