

## GATE 25

### "LOST BAGGAGE" LUKE 19:1-10

#### **This Week's Core Competency**

**Salvation by Grace** – I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2: 8, 9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.*

In 1 Timothy 1:15 Paul affirmed the essence of the Christian message in an axiomatic statement, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The apostle's "trustworthy saying," although found elsewhere in the Pastoral Epistles, is found nowhere else in the New Testament. However, Jesus' statement at the end of Luke's pronouncement story comes close. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk 19:10) means essentially the same thing. So does "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45; cf., Mt 20:28). Here's the problem: we don't believe what it says. Here's what we believe. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save people like me," and "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for people like me." It seems to me we have as much trouble believing that Jesus came to save sinners—period—as the people who muttered, "He has gone to be the guest of a

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*Jesus loves me this I know for  
the Bible tells me so.*

– Susan Warner

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sinner," when they saw Jesus head over to Zacchaeus's home for dinner.

Zacchaeus was a Jew, but he was a tax collector, and tax collectors were despised by their fellow Jews. They stood on the same rung of the social ladder as prostitutes, thieves, adulterers, Samaritans, and the like because they were viewed as "in bed" with Rome, and were, therefore, deemed traitors. They didn't work directly for the government; they were subcontractors so to speak. They bid for the job of collecting tolls and taxes on Rome's behalf, and that right, of course, went to the highest bidder. Competition was fierce, and margins were tight. Rome had to be paid, regardless, and the tax collector had to net a living after expenses. In the end, the people got squeezed and naturally, squealed loudly over it. So when short Zacchaeus showed up looking for Jesus, no one was willing to step aside for him to see. As far as they were concerned, the Son of Man had not come to seek and to save tax collectors. Therein lies the whole point of the story. He did; he did come to seek and to save tax collectors and other lost people including social outcasts like the blind Bartimaeus, no doubt blind because of some secret sin, people who sin on purpose not just by accident, like thieves and adulterers, as well as, Gentiles, Samaritans, and yes, even tax collectors.

When we read the story of Zacchaeus, we run the risk of identifying *wholly* with Zacchaeus. We see ourselves in him—people who accept Jesus' invitation and welcome him into our homes. Maybe we should identify *partly* with the muttering

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crowd that couldn't get over the fact that Jesus would have dinner with that—that he would accept that disgusting tax collector. Nowadays it's hard for some of us to believe that Jesus is seeking ( ). You fill in the blank. Given the excessive political rancor lately, maybe for you it's "liberals" or perhaps "conservatives."

One author puts his finger on the overall problem. He writes, "One of the errors the pious can make is to separate themselves from the world in such a way that they lose contact with sinners. Usually two factors feed such isolation: (1) a healthy desire not to succumb to standards of living that destroy moral integrity, and (2) a subtle but deadly feeling of superiority, so that we feel we are inherently better than others. This second element in the equation can squeeze out our ability to empathize with the sinner's plight. It forgets that our blessing is the result of God's gracious work, not our inherent character. To want to live a moral life is part of God's call for believers. Along with that is the desire to keep one's distance from morally suspect practices. This principle is a good one. However, it risks being applied so thoroughly that one ceases to associate with unbelievers for fear of what comes with the relationship. It can be difficult to build the relationships on which much evangelism depends" (Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, 481). But usually it's just pious prejudice.

## For Discussion

Your son and his wife have worked for months to develop a relationship with several unbelieving families. They finally became such good friends that these families asked them to go along on a weekend outing. As they contemplated going, moral dilemmas set in. What did their friends intend on doing? Exactly where would they go? What kinds of things would they talk about? They had the chance they had waited for—a chance to spend personal time with people for whom they had been praying! Now they weren't sure what to do and asked for your advice.

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### Luke 19:1-10

1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." 6 So he came down at

once and welcomed him gladly.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"

8 But 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."

9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (NIV (c)1984)

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Circle "Jericho" the geographical connecting word in v. 1 (cf. 18:35).
- \* Underline "chief tax collector" and "wealthy" in v. 2.
- \* Box "but" indicating *contrast* and "because" indicating *reason* in v. 3.
- \* Box "So" indicating *result* and "since" indicating *reason* in v. 4.
- \* Circle "must" in v. 5.
- \* Circle "at once" and "gladly" in v. 6.
- \* Bracket "has gone" in v. 7.
- \* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 8.
- \* Underline "guest of a sinner" in v. 7.
- \* Circle "give" and "pay back" in v. 8.
- \* Bracket "son of Abraham" in v. 9.
- \* Highlight v. 10.

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## day 2

## EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Mention of Jericho in verse 1 connects the story of Zacchaeus to the story of the blind beggar in 18:35-43. What do the two men have in common?
2. What do the details Luke gives regarding Zacchaeus contribute to the story—what effect do they have on you, the reader?
3. We read that Zacchaeus "wanted to see who Jesus was," that he wanted "to see him." What do these words suggest to you about his purpose—do you think he just wanted to catch a glimpse of Jesus?
4. The Bible does not tell us about the circumstances leading up to his quest. It does not explain what prompted him to seek Jesus. What do you think might have been some of his reasons? (Cf. Lk 5:29; 7:34; 15:1)
5. How would you describe his spiritual condition?
6. What made staying with Zacchaeus a *must*? (Cf., v. 10)
7. What do the adverbs in verse 6 that describe how Zacchaeus responded tell us about him?
8. What do you infer from the reaction of the crowd?
9. Explain the *significance* of Zacchaeus' announcement.
10. Explain what made Zacchaeus a true "son of Abraham." (See "for," v. 10; cf. Ro 4:12)
11. **Discussion:** Talk about Zacchaeus's quest and how it turned out.

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## day 3

### EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

The Gospels contain stories that some scholars call *pronouncement stories*. These are brief narratives that report how Jesus responded in words (and sometimes also in action) to something said or observed on a particular occasion. According to one scholar, *quest stories* are a particular type of pronouncement story. "In a quest story someone approaches Jesus in quest of something very important to human well-being. This quest is a dominant concern of the story; its importance is shown by the fact that the episode does not end until we are told whether the quest is successful or not. While many pronouncement stories simply end with Jesus' pronouncement, with no indication of how the other person responded to this, the quest story indicates how the encounter comes out for the person who approaches Jesus. We are shown that the person was either successful or unsuccessful" (Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 1:111).

The label, *quest story*, is not particularly important. What's important is the fact that certain stories in the Gospels can be classified based on the features they have in common. In the quest story, the major character, apart from Jesus, is in quest of something. The story opens by introducing the questing person and closes by telling us whether that person was successful in his or her quest. Furthermore, the story usually includes some difficulty or conflict that hinders the questing person. Dialogue in the story usually highlights this difficulty or conflict. For example, Jesus may pose a difficult condition or raise an objection, or another party may express an objection. In some cases, contrasting characters represent conflicting ways of acting or judging. Through these devices the Gospel writer focuses his readers' attention on a particular issue that is crucial to the success or failure of the quest and presents Jesus' words at the end to persuade his readers to accept Jesus' teaching on the matter (112).

The story of Zacchaeus is one of seven quest stories found in Luke's Gospel. In each of the stories a needy person has some characteristic that led some in Jesus' day and might lead some in our day to believe that he or she was beyond salvation. The story in Luke 5:17-26 is about a sinful

paralytic, in 7:1-10 a Gentile, in 7:36-50 a sinful woman, in 17:11-19 a Samaritan leper, in 19:1-10 a chief tax collector, and in 23:39-43 a crucified criminal. The only "quester" to seemingly fail in his quest is the rich young ruler, a person of high social status in contrast to his ostracized counterpart, wealthy Zacchaeus, who succeeded (18:18-30). These stories dramatically portray Jesus as the one through whom God reaches out to save sinners—to accept those that society had rejected.

Zacchaeus was on a quest to see Jesus, but two things stood in his way. He was too short to see above the crowd in front of him, and the crowd wasn't about to give a despised tax collector like him a better vantage point. So he climbed a convenient tree to see what he could see, and he saw Jesus coming. When Jesus saw him, he ordered him down from his perch and invited himself over. Put differently, Jesus invited Zacchaeus to be his host for the evening. Zacchaeus's quest had started out badly, but it had taken a hard right turn, and the little man wasn't about to miss his unexpected opportunity. The Son of David had earlier restored the sight of blind Bartimaeus (Lk 18:35, 38; cf., Mk 10:46, 47), and now he was coming over for dinner!

Seeing what had transpired sparked a chorus of muttering amongst the crowd. "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner," they murmured. How disgusting! "Jesus is no better than his crooked host," is close to what they thought.

But Zacchaeus would not be deterred in his quest. Perhaps as they walked away (instead of "stood up and said" the NET Bible translates "stopped and said"), or more likely later at dinner—given Jesus reply in verse 9—Zacchaeus declared his intent to be a different man in the future. As a result of his encounter with Jesus, he would do two things: half his possessions would go to the poor and he would restore fourfold anyone he had cheated. Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus into his home, believed Jesus was who he claimed to be, and with that everything changed. Jesus said so. "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham." Zacchaeus had succeeded in his quest. "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

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*The Message of the Passage*  
*Recognizing that the Son of Man came to seek and to save lost people,*  
*accept Jesus' invitation to receive salvation through faith in him.*

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

**“Lost Baggage”**  
(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

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# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 1 **Jericho** A stopping place for travelers—approx. 800 feet below sea level—on their way to Jerusalem—approx. 2500 feet above sea level—about 20 miles west.
- v. 2 **Zacchaeus** A Jew who ironically didn't live up to his name, which meant "just one" or "righteous one," although "nothing is made of the meaning of the name, and it is quite unlikely that its root meaning would have been known to Luke's readers" (Robert h. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, 467).
- v. 2 **chief tax collector** One Greek word, which occurs only here in the NT. Zacchaeus was at the top of the food chain as the head of the tax and customs department, which employed numerous tax collectors to collect the customs tax on goods passing through Jericho on their way to and fro between the Roman province and the dominions of Herod Antipas. "Since the [chief tax collector] usually had to pay the expected revenue to the Romans in advance and then seek to recoup the amount, plus expenses and profits, by assessing and collecting the tolls [or taxes], the system of toll-collecting was obviously open to abuse and dishonesty" (Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, AB, cited by Craig A. Evans, *Luke*, NIBC, 282). "Especially because of their relation to Gentile authorities, these tax collectors were despised by their fellow Jews. This is seen in their frequent association with all types of undesirable people: 'tax collectors and sinners' (Matt. 9:10; 11:19; Luke 7:34); 'pagan or a tax collector' (Matt. 18:17); 'tax collectors and the prostitutes' (Matt. 21:31, 32); 'robbers, evildoers, adulterers—even like this tax collector' (Luke 18:11)" (282).
- v. 2 **wealthy** After meeting Jesus, he readily admitted that, like others in his profession, he was none too scrupulous in making sure that he made a good living off of all his collections (see v. 8; cf., 18:23).
- v. 5 **must** Lit., "it is necessary" implies a divine rather than circumstantial necessity (cf. Jn 4:4 Jesus "had to go through Samaria). Jesus could have requested hospitality from someone else in the crowd. "Jesus' stay with the tax collector is a necessity because it pictures what his ministry is all about—to lead to God those whom others have given up on, to call those who, like the tax collector Levi, need to repent (5:31-32)" (Bock, 478).
- v. 5 **stay** The Greek verb can mean, "to rest," "to find lodging," or "to spend the night."
- v. 7 **has gone** The tense of the verb suggests a scene change. Zacchaeus came down from the tree, and the two of them headed off for the tax collector's home.
- v. 7 **sinner** As far as the Jews were concerned, staying in a sinner's home was tantamount to sharing in the sinner's sin.
- v. 8 **stood up** Either outside as they headed off or later at the meal in his house, Zacchaeus stood up in the presence of others to make a significant announcement; he had repented of his sins. "We are not told if this took place after Zacchaeus came down from the tree, in Zacchaeus's home, or after dinner. For Luke such a question was unimportant" (Stein, 468).
- v. 8 **give, pay back** "How should the present tense (in Greek) of the verbs 'give' and 'pay back' be interpreted? Are they 'customary presents' that reveal what Zacchaeus had been doing for some time? Was Zacchaeus claiming 'I have been in the habit of giving half my goods to the poor and paying back fourfold'? If so, Jesus' words in 19:9 serve more as a vindication of Zacchaeus's faith than as a statement of his conversion. On the other hand, the verbs can be translated as 'futuristic presents,' which reveal what Zacchaeus was about to do, because of his encounter with Jesus, i.e., due to his conversion. Then we should translate these verbs '[As a result of my coming to faith] I shall give half of all I own . . . and restore fourfold.' The grammar permits either interpretation" (466; cf., Evans, 280). The context, however, suits the latter interpretation better—for a number of reasons (see Stein, 466). For one thing, v. 9 taken at face value implies that something had just happened that brought him to salvation.
- v. 8 **if** The grammar indicates that the subject views the condition as real. Zacchaeus knew that he had cheated others. The sentence might be translated "and whomever I have cheated out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."
- v. 8 **cheated** The same word is translated "extort money" in 3:14 where it refers to a common sin of soldiers who may have worked in cahoots with tax collectors.
- v. 8 **four times** He apparently considered what he had done theft (cf. Ex 22:1; 2Sa 12:6). "If later Judaism is any guide, it was considered generous to give away twenty percent of one's possessions. And the restitution Zacchaeus notes is better than the highest standard set by the law (Lev. 5:16; Num. 5:7). He actually penalizes himself with the standard required of rustlers (Ex 22:1; 2 Sam. 12:6). As Ellis notes, this is the 'thank offering of a changed heart'" (Bock, 479).
- v. 9 **son of Abraham** Not just a physical descendant of Abraham—he was that before he met Jesus—but also a spiritual descendant of Abraham, a man of faith like him.
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Connect the **FAMILY**. During this series, Bible stories appropriate for children will be used that complement the adult teaching.

### Experience it!

Experience scripture through the activity-based learning exercise. Dinner is a perfect time to engage the family.

The family Christmas tree is probably beginning to be surrounded by gifts of all sizes. What is the one gift this year that you want more than anything else? Read Matthew 1:18-25. Mary and Joseph learned they were going to be the parents of Jesus, the greatest gift of all time. When you believe, you get to be a part of the world discovering Jesus.

### Pray it!

As a parent you can teach your child to pray by using actual scriptures as a guide. Pray this scripture with them this week..

Father, I know it is by grace I have been saved, through faith and it is not from myself, it is a gift from You, not by my works, so that I cannot boast.  
Eph 2:8-9

### Post it!

Post the kid-friendly Core Competency and the memory verse throughout the house. Lead your children to interact with them as they memorize.

**Salvation by Grace** – I believe that I become a child of God through faith in Jesus, not because of anything I do.

**Memory verse** – "Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." Jn 14:23

### Discuss it!

Discover biblical truth by discussing the scripture. Reflective questions are great with older kids.

- \*How did Joseph find out that he and Mary would be the earthly parents of Jesus?
- \*What did the angel declare Jesus would do?
- \*What did the prophet say about Jesus a long time before he was even born?
- \*What does the name, Immanuel, mean?
- \*What did Joseph do when he woke up from his dream?

### Live it!

Live out the Core Competency and build deeper relationships by doing this activity.

Enjoying Christmas traditions as a family never grows old. Kids hearing the story of their parents' receiving the gift of salvation should never grow old either. Create a special moment (hot chocolate and cookies always help!) as a family as you share with the kids the wonderful details of receiving Jesus as your Savior.

*Kids K through fourth grade receive Kid Pix Tokens for each discipleship activity completed.*



Family completes **Experience It** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Child memorizes kid-friendly **Core Competency** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Family participates in **Live It** \_\_\_\_\_ and **Pray It** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Child memorizes **Memory Verse** \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

#### 2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** Ephesians

#### 6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Keith Smith** (B.A. in Speech Communication, Texas Tech University and M.A. in Religious Education, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) is the Family and Children's Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. Keith speaks at children/student camps across the country. He has developed a number of relational parenting seminars designed to motivate parents to empower their parenting by emotionally connecting with their kids. Keith lives with his wife, Denise, and their two children, Jordan and Alex.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).