

Week Four: *When Humans Collide*
Luke 19:1-10

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. If you know someone who believes something wrong or is doing something wrong, what is the best way, in your experience, to correct them?
2. Has there been a time when you argued someone out of a wrong belief/action? Or has there been a time where someone gave you a lecture and it changed how you thought/behaved?
3. Read this story of a shocking interaction between Jesus and a sinner: Luke 19:1-10. In your own words, distill this story down to its four main events.
4. The final action of this story is that Zacchaeus repents of his previous misdeeds and promises to pay restitution. What act of Jesus prompted this change of behavior?
5. This is pretty shocking and unexpected, isn't it? There was no lecture, no argument, no explanation of morality. And yet, suddenly—on a dime—Zacchaeus repented. Why do you think the seemingly unrelated action of Jesus inviting himself over for lunch got such a response from Zacchaeus?
6. If Jesus didn't persuade sinners by lecturing, what implications does that have for our own interactions with people who we think are wrong-doing or wrong-believing?
7. We'll be exploring this story in more depth all week. As you end your FIFTEEN, pray for God to give you a heart of understanding for his Word as well as for the people in your life who you will be coming into conflict with.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. Yesterday we read about a seemingly unpredictable result of Jesus' encounter with a corrupt man. Read that story again today: Luke 19:1-10. Let's notice the characters involved. Who are the different people (or groups of people) in this story?
9. Now let's think about the 1) emotions and 2) motivations of the different characters. What were the emotions and motivations of the crowd in this story toward Zacchaeus? Toward Jesus?
10. What were the emotions and motivations of Zacchaeus at the beginning of this story? At the end of this story?
11. What were the emotions and motivations of Jesus?

12. Would the judgments of the crowd ever have resulted in a change of heart for Zacchaeus? Why or why not?
13. How did the emotions and motivations of Jesus dictate his actions toward Zacchaeus?
14. End your FIFTEEN by asking God to reveal his wisdom to you. Pray for a heart and motive like Jesus had, not like the crowd of judgmental, morally religious people.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

15. Read Luke 19:1-10, focusing on Jesus' choice in verse 5. Is this what anyone in the crowd expected? Why or why not?
16. Is this how most Christians tend to act towards unbelievers today? Why or why not?
17. It might seem odd or feel awkward to intentionally put yourself in the home or environment of an unbeliever or morally questionable person. But before Jesus invited himself over to a sinner's home, he did something even more unexpected. Read Philippians 2:5-8. What choice does this passage describe Jesus making?
18. Jesus had the "high ground" by being with God in heaven. What motivation could possibly make it worth it to him to give that up and slum it down here on Earth as a human?
19. How did Jesus' choice to "level the battlefield" change both Zacchaeus' life and our own lives?
20. In your own interactions with God, does he take the high ground with you or the low ground? How can that change the way you connect with God?
21. Finish your FIFTEEN by praying for a deeper, more intimate connection with God based on his willingness to get low and come near to you!

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

22. Philippians 2:9-11 shows the victory of Jesus and the victory we can attain by ceding the high ground.
23. Conventional wisdom says that we should strive for the "high ground" in order to win during conflicts. For example, in the *Star Wars* saga, how did Obi-Wan Kenobi beat Anakin in combat? (If you need to see a reminder of the pivotal moment, you can watch this one-minute clip here: https://youtu.be/B7FMh3YtK_w)

24. But now read Philippians 2:5-11. When God wanted victory over sin and death, did he choose to keep or cede the high ground?
25. Why do you think God bucked the conventional wisdom instead of lording his moral superiority over sinful human beings? (Look at Luke 19:9-10 for help with this answer.)
26. But now, look again at verses 9-11. Christ's willingness to bring himself to our level had the ultimate result of him getting even higher authority!
27. In your own moments of conflict with others, what could it look like to lower yourself and level the battlefield?
28. How would those actions change your dynamic with that person in a positive way?
29. End your FIFTEEN by praying for wisdom and discernment to level the playing field during your interpersonal conflicts.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

30. We've talked this week about "leveling the battlefield" to change the dynamic between ourselves and others. Look again at Jesus' unusual action towards Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-6. In his request to eat at Zacchaeus' house, what was Jesus offering Zacchaeus that nobody in that crowd had ever offered him before?
31. For help with that question, let's look at another moment, when one of Jesus' disciples was distressed to see the Athenian people's idolatry. Read Acts 17:16-22. What kind of attitude did Paul show to the pagan Athenians?
32. Both Paul and Jesus showed respect to the other person, even as they disagreed with their beliefs and behaviors. Have you ever had someone you disagreed with or disliked show you respect? How did that change your relationship?
33. Think of someone that you're in long-standing conflict or disagreement with. What are some ways you can show them respect by expressing curiosity about their views, beliefs, behavior, or life story?
34. What is a way you could show that person respect by spending time with them?
35. What is a way that you could show that person respect by willingly getting low and apologizing to them first for any ways that you might have offended or contributed to your disagreement with them?

36. Close your FIFTEEN by thanking God for the ways that he showed us honor and respect by becoming one of us. Ask him to help you model that respect for others in tangible ways, especially those you disagree with!