



## HE KNOWS YOUR NAME

March 2017

*Jesus reached the spot where Zacchaeus was. He looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay at your house today." So Zacchaeus came down at once and welcomed Him gladly.*

Luke 19:5-6

I recently took a taxi ride for the first time in eight months, first time since I moved. To my surprise, the driver greeted me by name. He knew where I had lived before I moved and he remembered where I had always wanted to go. At one time I frequently took taxis early in the morning to my volunteer work. The person who drove me this last Thursday was one of many drivers I had and yet he knew me! Amazing! Can you understand how I must have felt?

This experience helps me understand how Zacchaeus must have felt as he sat in the sycamore tree to get a good view of Jesus passing by. I understand how it must have felt to have Jesus call

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him by name when he had not realized that Jesus even knew him. And then to have this Jesus tell him he was coming to spend time with him at his home!—Jesus, this person who Zacchaeus, along with so many others, was eager to see and hear. He must have felt incredibly special. Wouldn't you feel that way too? Imagine if it were you...

We all know the story: Zacchaeus was a wealthy tax collector, despised because he, like most tax collectors in his day, was dishonest and cheated people out of their money. I imagine that he must have been an unhappy and lonely man.

If we, like Zacchaeus, were visiting with Jesus in our home, what would Jesus say to us? I'm just guessing, but knowing what I know of him, I would think Jesus would tell us that he believes in us because we love him and have searched for him and found him. I believe, too, that he might have told us he wants us to work with him to make the world a better place.

How would you feel if you heard Jesus tell you—as he has told many—that he has big things for you to do?

Would it scare you? Would you feel overwhelmed? Would you say to him: "Who? Me? But I'm so small.

Or would you be stirred as I and so many have been? When I first read Jesus' words: "with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) I was so inspired. Think of the difference believing that promise could make in our lives! Can you imagine all that might be possible? What became possible in Zacchaeus's life?

At the end of his visit with Jesus "...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.'" (Matthew 19:8) Spending time with Jesus and talking with him—perhaps about the kind of things we discussed here--changed Zacchaeus in a big way. I wonder how it would change us? Would we be happier?

Many of us have lost direction and have come to think there's nothing to live for beyond ourselves alone. But Jesus tells us that through him we can have a life worth living—a vibrant life where we will discover what we can do to help build God's Kingdom, a world according to God's plans.

Today Jesus is telling us: "I need you." In his love, God stoops down from his throne, and invites us to follow him—to partner with him. No matter how small we may think we are, no matter what struggles or disabilities we may live with, God values us as people he can use—in whatever ways we are personally able to manage. With him all kinds of things are possible.

In the midst of what you're dealing with, is Jesus calling your name?

