

# Everyday FAITH Family Page

New Testament 4

## Law/Gospel

I sin when I ignore my own sinfulness and focus on the sinfulness of others, rejecting them because of it. **Christ's blood covers not only my sins but also the sins of every sinner, no strings attached.**

## Bible Words

[Jesus] came to seek and to save the lost. Luke 19:10

## Fun Facts

Tax collectors in Jesus' day were hated for many reasons.

For one thing, they were often dishonest and took more than their fair share of the money.

Also, they worked for the Roman government, a foreign power that the Jewish people resented. Tax collectors were seen as working for the enemy.

Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, would be seen as the lowest of the low. And yet, Jesus forgave him! And He forgives you too.

## From the Catechism The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal.

**What does this mean?** We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

## Jesus and Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1–10

Jesus is on the last leg of His journey to Jerusalem as He passes through Jericho. It is a few days before Palm Sunday (Luke 19:28–40). Having already extended mercy to a blind beggar, a resident of Jericho (18:35–43), Jesus now runs into another resident of Jericho in need of mercy—Zacchaeus. Since Zacchaeus was rich and a chief among the tax collectors (19:2), he was the object of particular spite, shunned as a “sinner” (v. 7).

## Wee Little Man

Thanks to the well-known ditty about this “wee little man,” Zacchaeus has often been portrayed as a sort of patron saint of the height challenged. But this is to miss the point. Short though he was, mammoth were his sins. If he is the patron saint of anyone, it is of those who become rich by sucking the lifeblood out of others.

So when Jesus invited Zacchaeus to come from his sycamore perch and serve Him supper, “all grumbled,” saying, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner” (v. 7). This is as much, or more, an indictment of Jesus as of the tax collector. “How dare He even speak to such filth, much less invite Himself over for a meal with that scoundrel!” the people scowled. If they wanted Jesus to do anything with Zacchaeus, it was to yank a switch from that sycamore tree and publicly whip him for his greed!

Perhaps because he overheard the grumbling and was moved by repentance and faith, this infamous sinner announced, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold” (v. 8). Salvation came to this man not because of his bigheartedness but because of his faith in Jesus, which was evidenced in this giving away of wealth. He is among the “lost” whom the Son of Man seeks, as are we, who are forgiven and called to forgive those who sin against us, no matter how Zacchaeus-like their sins may be.

## Prayer

*Thank You, Lord, for giving us all we need. Forgive us when we are ungrateful and greedy. Help us to take care of others who are in need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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