

Zacchaeus

Adapted from dltk-kids.com

Today's story is about a man many people didn't like. They called him a sinner, which is funny because aren't we all sinners? Don't we all make mistakes and do things we shouldn't?

Jesus was entering a town called Jericho, and there lived a man named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in this place and had lots of money.

So the people from Jericho didn't like Zacchaeus very much, especially because he had lots of money and a big house. Zacchaeus had heard a commotion and soon realized that Jesus was in Jericho, so he rushed to see Him along with everyone else. When he got to the crowd he couldn't see anything, because he was too short.

You probably know what it's like to be shorter than all the adults around. Well, Zacchaeus wasn't very tall for a grown-up and couldn't ask someone to pick him up to see better, that would've been silly! So Zacchaeus saw a sycamore tree in the corner of his eye and decided to climb it so he could see Jesus.

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

Wasn't it amazing that Jesus knew Zacchaeus' name without asking him first. Jesus didn't mind that other people didn't like Zacchaeus, he wanted to visit with him at his house anyway. Jesus said that he **MUST** stay at his house today. This means that Jesus knew that God wanted him to go there and Jesus obeyed.

Jesus asked to go to Zacchaeus' house in front of everyone and as soon as they heard this they all started talking among themselves. They were shaking their heads and saying "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"

I'm sure they both knew what people were saying but Zacchaeus jumped out of the tree and said to the lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my money to the poor, and if I have cheated or stole anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

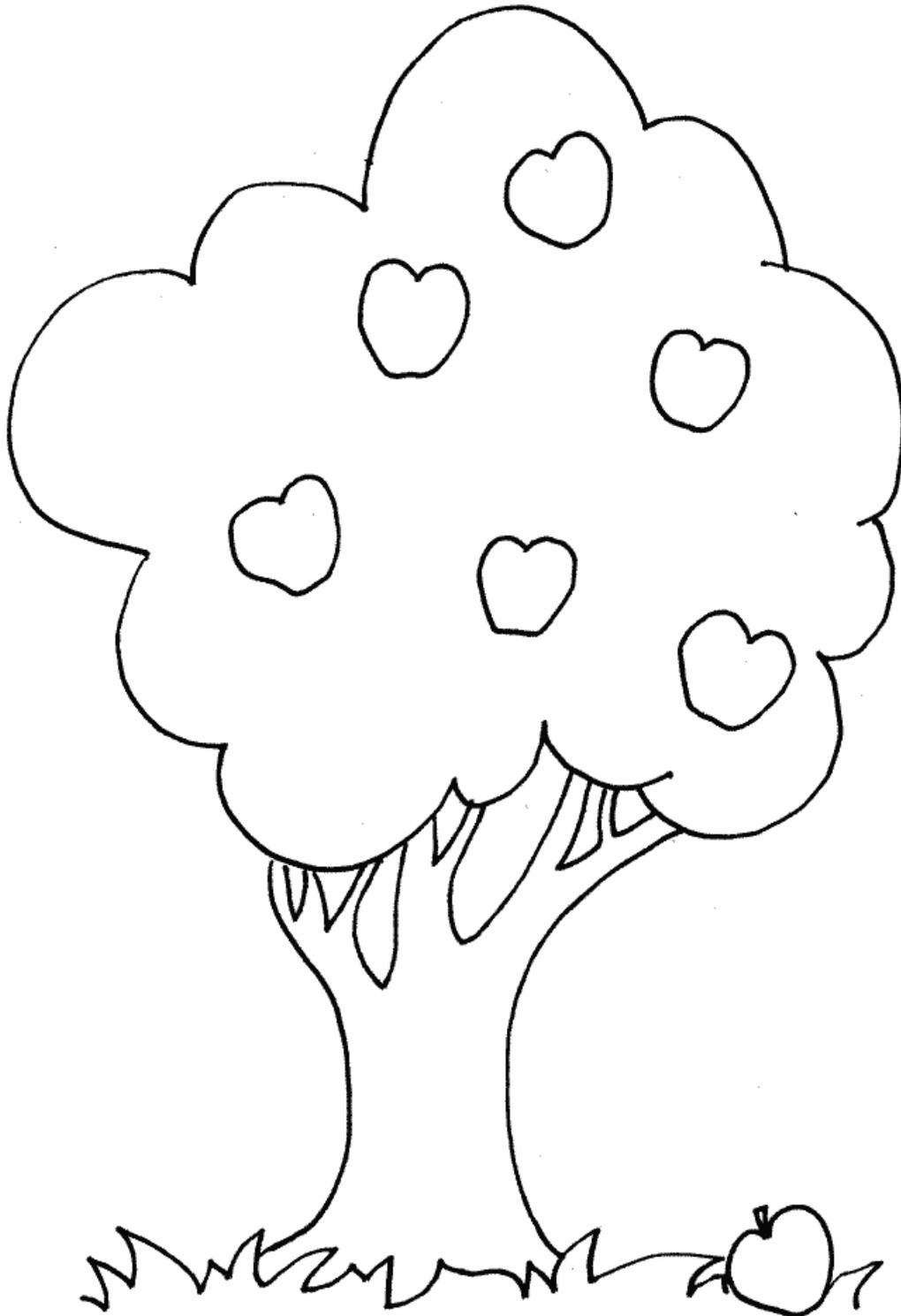
The important part about this is that Zacchaeus had a change of heart. I don't know if he was already thinking about repaying people back or he just knew what he should do when he saw and talked to Jesus.

When Jesus heard this he said, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." Jesus meant that he had forgiven his sins and that even though people didn't think Zacchaeus was good, God loved him too and knew that his heart was good.

Then the very last part Jesus said that he came to seek and to save the lost. This was the whole point as to why God sent His son Jesus to come to earth. To find those who didn't know God and were lost and to show them who God is so they could live forever in Heaven with Him.

COLORING PAGE

Color the tree and talk about how fun it would be to climb a tree so that you could see Jesus!



ACTIVITY

You will need:

- Paper plate
- Magazines
- Kid safe scissors
- Kid safe glue

Start by cutting out people from the magazines, then arrange on the paper plate. Have an adult write “Jesus Loves Us All” in the middle. Glue the images of all the different people around words on the plate. Talk about how Jesus loves us all as his children.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Do you have any blank cards at home? Or how about some white paper or construction paper? Make a card to send to someone you miss! Draw pictures, use stickers, and use your imagination to make a card to brighten someone’s day! Just as Jesus has shown that he loves us all, we must show others that we care for them. Let’s send someone a card to show that we love them!

KID-FRIENDLY RECIPE

Today’s story talked about Zacchaeus climbing a tree. What are some foods that look like trees? Broccoli, Cauliflower, Celery, too! Here is a recipe for a snack using one of those foods like that looks like a tree!

Celery with Peanut Butter or Cream cheese

Break a stalk of celery off of the bunch. Wash thoroughly. Leave the leafy top on, it’s the “branches” and “leaves” to our tree!

Next, smear some peanut butter or cream cheese along the inside.

Finally, take a bite! Make some for the whole family to share!

PRAYER

Thank you God, that just like Zacchaeus in the tree, you love us all and know each of us by name. Help us to show others Your love today. Amen