

Worcester Baptist Church
10.30am Morning Worship with Communion
Sunday, 2nd November 2025

“Walking in the Dust of our Rabbi: Three Names for Salvation”

Sermon Message

Jesus came to save the lost. That's you and me. We need to truly see him for him to save us.

Sermon Style

Three Point

Sermon Text: Luke 19:1-11

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

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

All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

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.”

Jesus said to him, “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 the lost.”

Sermon Outline

- Way In - “Shall we start with a quiz... What are the three names...”
- Gospel Context - The journey to Jerusalem (began 10 chapters ago in Luke 9:51, “As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.” Just after he had come down from the mount of transfiguration”
- Our Context - We are on that journey in the footsteps of the Rabbi... rabbinic traditions, parables and stories, illustrations (including miracles as the ultimate sermon illustration!), sayings (you have heard it said that, but I say...)
- Jesus' Message - “I have come to seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:11) and the three names that Luke quotes Jesus as referring to in this scene each illustrate that message that Jesus mission is salvation (indeed Jesus own name means ‘God saves’)...

1 Zacchaeus “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” (Verse 5)

- Zacchaeus is a Hebrew name that means "pure" or "innocent". It is derived from the Hebrew name 'Zakkay' (זַכַּי), which literally means "pure" or "clean".
- The Hebrew meaning contrasts dramatically with this biblical character's reputation as a wealthy and scorned tax collector - the Jewish tax collectors were enemies and outcasts because of their collaboration with the Roman occupying forces in collecting taxes for Ceasar - and taking an extra cut for themselves
- Perhaps his parents chose that name because they were hoping that he would live a life of purity and righteousness.
- Perhaps Jesus (and Luke) chose to quote his name here to underline the irony of his name and his occupation and lifestyle - and emphasise even more just how radical and meaningful Jesus words were about wanting to stay at his house.

2. Son of Abraham “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham” (Verse 9)

- (cf Daughter in Luke 8:47-48 “Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”)

“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD:

Look to the rock from which you were cut
and to the quarry from which you were hewn;
look to Abraham, your father,
and to Sarah, who gave you birth.”

- From Isaiah 51:1-2 - in the context of Salvation:
verse 3:

“The LORD will surely comfort Zion
and will look with compassion on all her ruins;
he will make her deserts like Eden,
her wastelands like the garden of the LORD.”

And verse 11:

“Those the LORD has rescued will return.
They will enter Zion with singing;
everlasting joy will crown their heads.”)

3. Son of Man “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Verse

- Ezekiel 34:11:
For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them
- Ezekiel 34:26-27:
I will make them and the places surrounding my hill a blessing. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. The trees will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land.
- The connections that Jesus is making here between the saving work of the Son of Man and his own salvation work are entirely intentional.

Conclusion - There is another who had to climb a tree to get a better look at Jesus whom we read about 4 chapters later...

‘There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are

punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”(Luke 23:38-43)

The word "paradise" derives from an Old Iranian or Persian word pairidaeza, meaning "walled enclosure, pleasure park, or garden". This word was adopted into Hebrew as pardes (פָּרְדֵּס), which appears three times in the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), referring to a garden park or orchard including Ezekiel 51:2)

So it seems we’ve come full circle from Zacchaeus’ sycamore tree of salvation to the cross of calvary.

Jesus came to save the lost. Those lost to sin. The sin of being separated from God and others because of selfish ways born out of selfish thoughts and desires. All of us need to see Jesus better. All of us need to see him more clearly. We need our eyes opened to see him as he truly is, King and sovereign over all the earth and every part of our own life. We need the eyes of our minds and our hearts opened to see him clearly. Let us pray for God’s grace and the moving of the Holy Spirit to help us to see Jesus more

clearly. To see the saving work in us that Jesus needs to do more clearly.

And perhaps, today, that means that we need to allow Jesus too see us and speak to us too, take up our place on the tree next to Jesus. To hear Jesus say he wants to come into our home, our hearts our lives. To hear Jesus say he wants us to join is in his home, his paradise, the garden of the LORD.