

Short Talk

(SHT175)

Jesus, You are Welcome here

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “Jesus, You are Welcome here”

- Aim of Short talk:** To encourage people to “welcome” Jesus into their homes.
- Use of Short talk:** This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.
- Main themes:** Jesus, Zacchaeus, Welcome
- Biblical references:** Luke 19:1-10
- Lectionary:** Year C – The fourth Sunday before Advent
- Props:** If you use the dramatized option below, you will need the following props:
- A white garment to fit a man
 - A dressing gown to fit a boy
 - A bag filled with coins
 - A table and chair for Zacchaeus
 - Another chair that Zacchaeus will stand on (or you could use your pulpit if you have one)
 - A tree branch with leaves on it
- People needed:** You will need one small boy and an adult male
- Before the Service:** Brief your adult male and give them the white garment to wear. Tell them to sit in the congregation, and to stand up when you say: “*Jesus has come into Zacchaeus’ town.*” Tell them to speak the words “*Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today*” at the appropriate moment!

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[Briefly story-tell Luke 19:1-10 in your own words, followed by the short talk or use the impromptu drama of Luke 19:1-10 written below followed by the short talk]

Today we are going to re-tell the story of what happened when a tax collector called Zacchaeus met Jesus.

- Who would like to come and be Zacchaeus? (*Receive boy volunteer and give them the dressing gown to put on. Then introduce him to the congregation saying:*)
- Let me present to you, Zacchaeus.

He is a chief tax collector. *(Sit Zacchaeus down at the table and put the money bag in front of him. Tip the money out and tell Zacchaeus to start counting it).*

Zacchaeus collects money for the Romans from the Jewish people, which makes him very, very unpopular.

- Although Zacchaeus has lots of money, I don't think that he has lots of friends.

Today something very exciting is happening. Jesus has come into Zacchaeus' town, Jericho. *(Jesus stands up. Get Zacchaeus to stand up)*

Now Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus but when he sees the crowd of people around Jesus, he realises that he can't get anywhere near Jesus.

- He is a small man and he won't see anything over the heads of the crowd, and because he is so unpopular, nobody will let him through to see what is happening.

So Zacchaeus runs ahead of Jesus and climbs a sycamore tree so that he can see Jesus. *(Either get Zacchaeus to stand on another chair or stand in your pulpit. Then give him the tree branch to hold in front of his face to look through.)*

Jesus walks straight to the sycamore tree. *(Jesus walks to where the boy is standing then stops.)*

- When He gets there, He stops, looks up and says to Zacchaeus:

“Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” *(Jesus speaks these words)*

Zacchaeus comes down from the tree straightaway. *(Zacchaeus steps off the chair or comes down from the pulpit and stands facing Jesus)*

- He welcomes Jesus gladly into his home. *(Zacchaeus takes Jesus' hand and they walk off together)*

Now you can imagine that the people in the crowd weren't very happy about Jesus going to Zacchaeus' home.

- They all knew what a bad man Zacchaeus was.
- But after a little while of being with Jesus, Zacchaeus changed.
- He told Jesus that he would give half of his possessions to the poor and that if he had cheated anybody, he would pay them back four times the amount.
- Meeting Jesus completely changed Zacchaeus' life.

Now there are all sorts of wonderful things about this story, but I want to mention just a couple now.

- Although other people probably hated Zacchaeus because of the bad things that he did, Jesus didn't hate him.
- Jesus loved Zacchaeus and wanted to come to his house to spend time with Him.
- That's amazing isn't it?

But, in order for Jesus to be able to spend time with Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus had to welcome Jesus into his home.

- Zacchaeus could have stayed up the tree and said, “no thanks Jesus.”
- But the Bible tells us that Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus gladly into His home.

Now Jesus is the same today as He was in the time of Zacchaeus.

- He loves each one of us too, whatever bad things we have done, and He wants to spend time with us.

But, in order for Jesus to be able to spend time with us, we need to welcome Him like Zacchaeus did.

So, how about this for an idea?

- When you walk through the front door of your home, when you get back from church today, could you say something like: “Jesus, You are welcome here”

And then every time you go through your front door in the days to come, could you say: “Jesus, You are welcome here”

You may well find that your life changes as you invite Jesus into your home each day, just like Zacchaeus’ life was changed.

[Remind people at the end of the service to say: “Jesus, You are welcome here” when they walk through their front door today and in the days to come.]