

# Short All Age Worship Service

(ShortAAW014)

## Encountering Jesus (2) Zacchaeus

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## Encountering Jesus

### (2) Zacchaeus

#### Service Aim:

To challenge people to seek Jesus as their “treasure” rather than money and possessions. The service is around 30-40mins long.

#### Biblical Reference(s):

Luke 19:1-10, Romans 2:4b

#### Outline of Service:

- Welcome: Introduce the theme
- Opening Prayer: Matthew 18:20 and prayer
- Opening songs: A couple of songs to draw people into worship (See Appendix 1)
- Warm up: Interview with a pirate seeking treasure
  - Today people still seek the treasure of money.
  - What would we do to get the treasure of money?
- Bible Reading: Luke 19:1-10
- Talk 1: What did Zacchaeus do to get rich? (with treasure box)
- Song: Song worshipping Jesus (See Appendix 1)
- Talk 2: Zacchaeus encountered the **love** and **kindness** of Jesus.
  - Experiencing Jesus’ love, Zacchaeus’ heart was changed.
  - Jesus became Zacchaeus’ treasure.
  - Zacchaeus was then able to give away his old treasure.
- Response: Memory Verse: Romans 2:4
  - Where is your treasure? (with glass of salt water)
- Song: Song about seeking Jesus (See Appendix 1)
- Prayers: Thank you, Sorry and Please
  - Thank you: Thanking Jesus for coming to “seek and save the lost”
  - Sorry: Confession for where we have gone after other treasure
  - Please: Asking for Jesus to change the lives of other people
- Lord’s Prayer:
- Summary: Jesus showed Zacchaeus that he was **known** by name, that he was **loved** and that he was **accepted**.
  - Zacchaeus discovered that Jesus, not money, was his true treasure.
  - How would we answer Jesus’ question “Where is your treasure?”
- Final song: Final song (See Appendix 1)
- Blessing: Numbers 6:24-26

## Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

**Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.**

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

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## Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the service. Explain that the theme of the service is “The encounter that Zacchaeus had with Jesus in the town of Jericho.”

## Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from a book like “New Patterns for Worship”<sup>1</sup> that the congregation can say together,
- or the following verse and prayer:

Jesus said, *“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them”*  
(Matthew 18:20)

As you promise to be with us Lord Jesus,  
**Make us aware of Your presence today.**

**Help us Lord to worship you,  
To listen to your Word,  
And to pray in faith,  
That we might grow in our love for you and for one another.  
Amen.**

## Opening Songs:

A couple of songs to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1

## Warm up:

For the “warm up” you will need someone dressed as a Pirate, a “treasure map,” a sword and an interviewer (with clipboard). You could also use some music from the “Pirates of the Caribbean” soundtrack<sup>2</sup> as the pirate enters. You will find the script in Appendix 2. You may like to introduce the interview by saying something like:

I wonder what treasure people look for in their lives.

- Some of us have seen people search for treasure with metal detectors.
- Others of us have seen people search for treasure by buying lottery tickets.

Today we have a pirate joining us, who has spent his life looking for treasure.

## INTERVIEW WITH PIRATE

After the interview say something like:

I wonder what treasure you are seeking.

<sup>1</sup> Church House Publishing – ISBN 9780715123263

<sup>2</sup> You can find music from the “Pirates of the Caribbean” soundtrack on YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)).  
Soundtrack 15 – “He’s a Pirate” works well.

You and I may not be looking for the treasure of gold and silver, like “one-eye” Pete, but many of us want the treasure of money and are willing to make all sorts of sacrifices to get more of it.

- I wonder... is money really the best treasure to be looking for, or is there a better treasure to be had?

### **Bible Reading:**

The Bible reading is Luke 19:1-10 and can be read by a child, young person or adult. While the reading is read, you could project pictures of it onto a screen<sup>3</sup>. Another way to present the story is by showing a video animation of Luke 19:1-10<sup>4</sup>.

Alternatively, you could use puppets (for example two camels) to tell the story. (See Appendix 3).

### **Talk1:**

You need a treasure chest<sup>5</sup> sitting on a table and some gold coins<sup>6</sup> / jewels for this talk. You also need some A4 or A3 cards with the following words on them: 1) traitor 2) hated 3) thief

The Bible tells us that Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and a very rich man. *(Pull out treasure box and open it and show some of the gold coins)*

So, I wonder what Zacchaeus was willing to do to get rich....

- The first thing he did was to take a job working for the Romans,
- the people who had occupied the land of Israel.....the enemy.

Zacchaeus' job was to collect money from his own people to give to the Romans,

- and his own people would have seen him as a **traitor**. *(Hold up card with the word “traitor” on it then lay it in front of the treasure chest)*

You can imagine that the people who lived in Zacchaeus' town of Jericho would not have liked Zacchaeus.

- You can tell that from their anger when Jesus chose to go to Zacchaeus' house.
- So, Zacchaeus was willing to be **hated** to get rich. *(Hold up card with the word “hated” on it then lay it in front of the treasure chest)*

The Bible also gives us a hint that Zacchaeus was willing to steal money to get rich.

- He would help himself to some of the money that the people gave him, instead of passing it straight on to the Romans.
- He was a **thief**. *(Hold up card with the word “thief” on it then lay it in front of the treasure chest)*

In his desire to be rich and have the treasure of money, Zacchaeus:

- became a traitor,
- he was hated, and
- he was a thief.

<sup>3</sup> You can find free pictures to project of Bible stories by going to [www.freebibleimages.org](http://www.freebibleimages.org)

<sup>4</sup> You can find a video animation of Luke 19:1-11 on YouTube by going to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

<sup>5</sup> You can make a treasure chest from cardboard. Go to YouTube [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and put “How to make a treasure chest from cardboard” into the search bar.

<sup>6</sup> You can purchase gold chocolate coins from Amazon ([www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)) or ebay ([www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk))

Even with all of the money he had, do you think that Zacchaeus was happy? (*receive responses*)

I think that the story makes it clear that Zacchaeus' treasure didn't made him very happy deep down in his heart.

- You see money doesn't satisfy the emptiness in human hearts.
- Maybe Zacchaeus had moments when he wondered whether there was a better treasure to be had than money.

Let's worship the Lord again in song.

### Song:

Songs worshipping God as per Appendix 1.

### Talk 2:

You will need a large cardboard box. On the outside of it stick the word "JESUS," then place it on the table next to the treasure chest. You also need some A4 or A3 cards with the following words on them: 1) known 2) loved 3) accepted.

[Note: If you used the camel script to tell the story, you can shorten this talk up]

One day everything changed for Zacchaeus when Jesus came into his town.

- I wonder what stirred Zacchaeus to want to see who Jesus was;
- perhaps it was his emptiness.

When Zacchaeus couldn't see Jesus because of the great crowd around Him, Zacchaeus ran ahead and climbed up a tree.

- And then something wonderful happened.
- Jesus stopped at the bottom of the tree, looked up to Zacchaeus and said: "*Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.*" (Luke 19:5)

In those few words, Jesus showed Zacchaeus that he was **known** by name (*hold up card that says "Known" then lay it in front of the "Jesus" box*),

- that he was **loved** (*hold up card that says "loved" then lay it in front of the "Jesus" box*)
- and that he was **accepted** (*hold up card that says "accepted" then lay it in front of the "Jesus" box*).

Now that is treasure isn't it?

- Being known, being loved and being accepted by Jesus, the Son of God.
- No wonder Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus into his home.

You know there was probably no-one else in Jericho who would have wanted to have gone to Zacchaeus' house as a guest,

- but Jesus loved Zacchaeus and saw how much he needed Him.
- On that day, Zacchaeus encountered the great **love and kindness** of Jesus.

As a result, something happened in Zacchaeus' heart.

- Being known, loved and accepted by Jesus brought such a deep satisfaction to Zacchaeus' heart that he was able to change.

He said to Jesus: *“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.”* (Luke 19:8)

No longer was money Zacchaeus’ treasure (pick up treasure box and remove from the table along with the cards saying, “traitor,” “hated,” and “thief.”)

- Having experienced the greater and better treasure that came from a relationship with Jesus, Zacchaeus was able to give away his old treasure of money.....
- giving over half of it away to people who had very little of it and giving it away generously to people he had cheated or stolen from.

Jesus described the change that happened in Zacchaeus’ heart as salvation;

- meaning that Zacchaeus had been saved from a life of separation from God by receiving Jesus into His life.

## Response:

You need 7 pieces of card with the following words on them:

1. God’s
2. Kindness
3. Is intended
4. To lead you
5. To
6. Repentance
7. Romans chapter 2, verse 4

You also need a glass full of salty water.

This next section is a memory verse followed by a challenge. You may like to use the words below:

There is a verse in the Bible that can help us remember what the treasure of Jesus’ love and kindness can do in a person’s life.

- It is from Romans chapter 2 verse 4 and says this: *“God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance”*
- The word repentance means to change your mind about something resulting in a change in the way that you behave.

Zacchaeus, having received Jesus’ kindness repented.

- He changed his mind about where his true treasure lay which led to a change in the way he behaved.

So, let’s learn this verse together.

- I need 7 people to come and hold the 7 cards to help us see the words.  
*(Receive 7 volunteers and give them a piece of card each to hold, revealing the words of the memory verse to the congregation)*
- Let’s say this verse through together a couple of times.

Once the congregation have said the memory verse a couple of times, turn a few of the cards around so that the words on them cannot be seen, then say the memory verse again.

Do this another time before turning around all of the cards and the congregation say the verse from memory. Then send the volunteers back to their seats.

Today we have heard the story about how Jesus changed Zacchaeus' life, and how Zacchaeus realised that Jesus is the true treasure.

But what about us?

- At the start of this service, I asked you what treasure you are seeking.
- Many many people around us will be seeking the treasure of money, just like Zacchaeus and just like our pirate did.
- But the treasure of money will never, ever satisfy.

Money is a bit like the salt water that I have in this glass here. (*Hold up glass of salty water*)

- The more you drink salty water, the thirstier and thirstier you get.
- You see salt water does not take away your thirst; it increases it and makes you want to drink more and more.....
- The problem is that if you kept on drinking salt water, you would die, because your kidneys cannot cope with all of the salt.

The same is true of money.

- The more you have of it, the thirstier you get for more and more of it.
- John Davison Rockefeller was the richest man in America and was once asked: *"How much money is enough?"*
- He answered: *"Just a little bit more."*
- No matter how much money we have, we will never be satisfied deep down in our hearts.

Money is not our true treasure,

- Jesus is.

Jesus is the One who knows us, loves us and accepts us.

- He is the One who died for us so that we can be saved,
- saved from a life of separation from Father God.
- Jesus is the only One who can truly satisfy our hearts.

Jesus said: *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matthew 6:21)

Imagine Jesus standing in front of you now and asking you: "Where is your treasure?"

- What would you say to Him?
- Let's think about that as we sing our next song.

## Song:

Song about seeking Jesus as per Appendix 1.

## Prayers:

The prayers below are focused on Luke 19:1-11, using the Thank you, Sorry and Please framework.

Today as we pray, we will be saying Thank you, Sorry and Please, so let's be still before our Heavenly Father. PAUSE

**Thank you**

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you came to seek and save the lost.

Thank you, Jesus, that you came looking for me.

Thank you that you died on the cross so that I can be forgiven.

Thank you that you know me by name, love me and accept me.

Thank you for your great love and kindness.

**Amen.**

**Sorry**

Lord Jesus I am sorry when I have looked for treasure in the wrong places.

Thank you for showing me that money will never satisfy my heart.

I am sorry for any times I have wanted more and more of it.

Please forgive me and help me remember that you are my true treasure.

**Amen.**

**Please**

Lord Jesus thank you that you can change people's lives and hearts.

Thank you for what you did in Zacchaeus' heart.

Please help me show my friends and family that You are the One who can change their lives, as you are changing my life.

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer:**

End by saying the Lord's Prayer together.

**Summary:**

You could summarize the teaching points of the service as follows:

One day, Zacchaeus had his life changed by Jesus.

- Jesus showed Zacchaeus that he was **known** by name, that he was **loved** and that he was **accepted**.
- Zacchaeus discovered that Jesus, not money, was his true treasure.
- How would we answer Jesus' question "Where is your treasure?"

**Final Song:**

Final song as per Appendix 1.

**Blessing:**

Pray a simple prayer to end the service, something like the blessing prayer from Numbers 6:24-26 ie:

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

The LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. **Amen.**

**[Notices:** If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that just before the final song. That way the flow of worship is unbroken]



## Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

### i) Opening songs. Ideas include:

- Come, now is the time (Brian Doerksen © 1988 Vineyard Songs)
- Cornerstone. (Edward Mote/Eric Liljero/Jonas Myrin/Reuben Morgan/William Batchelder Bradbury © 2011 Hillsong Publishing)
- Everyone needs compassion (Reuben Morgan & Ben Fielding © 2006 Hillsong Publishing)
- He is the Lord and He reigns on high (Kevin Prosch © 1991 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing)
- One thing remains (Brian Johnson/Christa Black Gifford/Jeremy Riddle © 2010 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing)

### ii) Song worshipping Jesus. Ideas include:

- Before the throne of God above (Charitie L. Bancroft)
- God is good we sing and shout it (Graham Kendrick (1985 Thankyou Music)
- God You're so good (Brett Younker/Brooke Ligertwood/Kristian Stanfill/Scott Ligertwood © Kristian Stanfill Publishing Designee (Admin. by Integrity Music) sixsteps Music)
- You are the Sovereign I am (Brian Doerksen © 1999 Vineyard Songs)

### iii) Song about seeking Jesus. Ideas include:

- Alive (Alexander Pappas/Aodhan King © 2012 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia)
- Christ our treasure (Jonathan Jackson/Jordan Kauflin/Grace Nixon/ Marc Willerton © 2019 Sovereign Grace Worship)
- God in my living (be my everything) (Tim Hughes © 2005 Thankyou Music)
- Who O Lord could save themselves (Matt Redman & Jonas Myrin © 2009 Thankyou Music)
- You are my strength when I am weak (Dennis Jernigan © 1989 Shepherd's Heart Music)

### iv) Final song. Ideas include:

- Amazing grace (my chains have gone) (John Newton, John P.Rees, Edwin O. Excell. Arr & add. Chorus: Chris Tomlin & Louie Giglio © 2006 worshiptogether.com songs)
- And can it be (Charles Wesley)
- Be thou my vision (Eleanor Henrietta Hull/Mary Elizabeth Byrne)
- I am a new creation (Dave Bilbrough © 1983 Thankyou Music)

## Appendix 2 – Interview with a Pirate

**Cast:** **Pirate** dressed up with a hat, eye-patch, sword etc. *(Will need to learn their words)*

**Interviewer** dressed smart carrying a clipboard, on which they can have the script.

.....  
*(Enter Interviewer and Pirate)*

Interviewer: Could you tell us how long you have been a pirate “one-eye” Pete?

Pirate: Since I was a boy, I have been travelling the world looking for treasure.

Interviewer: Have you found any treasure on your travels?

Pirate: Oh yes.....I’ve found gold, silver, jewels, pearls and it’s all mine.

Interviewer: Yes, yes of course....

Pirate: *(Aggressively)* I’m not sharing my hard-earned treasure with anyone.

Interviewer: No, I can see that. Don’t worry, no-one here would try and steal it.

Pirate: *(Aggressively)* They’d better not try, or else *(waves sword around)*

Interviewer: That is rather frightening....I’m sure you wouldn’t use that sword would you?

Pirate: I’ve used it many a time.

Interviewer: Right....I think we’ll move on to my next question: Is it hard finding treasure?

Pirate: What do you think? I’ve had months at sea, sometimes with very little to eat. I’ve coped with storms, rats, sun-stroke, bad-tempered crew, accidents, illness, losing my friends, a near shipwreck....

Interviewer: Oh dear, that sounds tough.

Pirate: That’s not the half of it. The worst part has been arriving at the place where the treasure should be and finding someone else has got there before you!

Interviewer: It certainly sounds like a tough life looking for gold and silver. I hope that it has been worth it.

Pirate: Of course it has been worth it.....I have found some treasure haven’t I?

Interviewer: Hmm. So, to my final question: Why are you called “one-eye” Pete?

Pirate: I’d have thought that was obvious. I got into a fight with one of my crew, who tried to steal some of my treasure, and I ended up losing an eye.

Interviewer: Well, thank you for being willing to be interviewed today “one-eye” Pete. Today you have heard from someone who has spent their life seeking the treasure of gold and silver.....it has cost them dearly. I wonder whether this treasure was worth the cost. Goodbye for now from the BBC.

*(Exit interviewer and pirate)*

## Appendix 3 – Zacchaeus encounters Jesus

### Puppets:



The script is a dialogue between a male camel puppet called “Cameron,” who is rather grumpy, and his wife, a female camel puppet called “Camilla.” Each puppet is operated by one person from behind a screen and so it is essential that the voices are heard; radio-microphones are ideal. Puppets and puppet screens can be purchased from many sources including <http://www.onewayuk.com/>

### Characters:

Male actor Zacchaeus, male actor Jesus, a few non-speaking actors for the crowd

### Props:

Table, tax book, bags of money, chair, tree branch

.....  
*(Enter Zacchaeus who sits down at table and opens tax book)*

Zac: Mmmm....now let me see.... who owes me taxes today? Ah yes...Mrs Zebedee owes me 2 drachmas. Oh I can't bear that woman, she'll probably whine and complain like she did last time I collected her taxes....*(in squeaky voice)*  
*“Oh Mr Zacchaeus, I can't possibly pay you all that money...I have six mouths to feed and my husband is sick”*  
 Don't these people realise I have to make a living? Well she can jolly well pay up...that's what I say.....and if she has to sell some of those brats of hers into slavery.....good riddance from Jericho.

*(Cameron and Camilla appear as Zac continues to look down his book)*

Camilla: Oh Cameron, look at that dreadful man....there he is again looking at his tax book. I wonder who his next poor victim is. I heard that poor Mr. Arachna gave old meanybags his last drachma last week and his family didn't eat all weekend.

Cameron: I don't think you should call him names Camilla...really...as camels we are above that sort of low human behaviour.

Camilla: But Cameron...have you not heard all the awful stories about “that man”? Look at him...he has no heart. I know he has a job to do....and mighty unpopular that makes him....collecting taxes for Caesar....but he cheats people.

Cameron: How do you know that?

Camilla: Well, when he thinks no-one is looking....

Cameron: But of course you are....

Camilla: Oh do try and listen Cameron.....well when he thinks no-one is looking...he slips a few notes under his robe and into a little money belt he wears around that Eeeenormous waist of his. No wonder he can afford to eat at the most expensive restaurants in town....he probably has double portions looking at the size of him. And do you know what Cameron.....

Cameron: No....

Camilla I heard that his house not only has all the latest gadgets but his camel (mighty unfriendly fellow he is).....

Cameron: Uh huh....

Camilla: Well his camel eats out of a gold-plated bowl.

Cameron: How ridiculous. Do you want me to go over and spit on him Camilla?

Camilla. Cameron camel you will do no such thing. He'd probably tax our owners even more. But I suppose in a way you have to feel sorry for the man.

Cameron: Changing your tune now are you Camilla?

Camilla: I will ignore that. I gather from what I have heard people say, that he is the most unpopular man in Jericho. He hasn't any friends. In fact no-one can bear him. He might have the nicest house in town but he must be the loneliest fellow because he certainly won't have any callers at his house. Oh Cameron....what's all that noise?

Cameron: What noise?

Camilla: Are you going deaf as well as being grumpy? Look over there.....can't you see the crowd .....or do you need your glasses?

Cameron: Oh yes....now they are coming close I can see.

*(Enter Jesus walking from the side front of church/room with a crowd of people around him. Stops half-way and says)*

Jesus: The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news

*(Jesus carries on miming talking to the crowd)*

Camilla: I can see now....oh look it is Jesus. How wonderful....he has come to Jericho. I have heard from Humphrey so many amazing stories about Jesus.

Cameron: I wouldn't believe everything you hear.....

Camilla: Oh really Cameron.....I have heard about wonderful miracles that Jesus has done.... healing people by simply touching them.....feeding crowds of people with just a few rolls and fish.

Cameron: Hhmpf.....I'll tell you a miracle.

Camilla: Yes

Cameron: It would be a miracle if that little man over there changed.

*(Zac gets up and joins the crowd but cannot see Jesus. Starts jumping up and down)*

Camilla: Oh look Cameron....I think he wants to see Jesus. He has got up from his seat.....oh how funny.....ha..ha....he's so short he can't see Jesus.

Cameron: Serves him right. I don't expect Jesus would want to meet such an unpleasant little man.

Camilla: Now what's he doing? Oh do look Cameron.

Cameron: What now?

*(Zac climbs a "tree" eg stands on a chair and holds a branch with leaves on it)*

Camilla: Cameron...he's climbing that old sycamore tree...oh I do hope the branch doesn't break...he is a very heavy little man. I never thought I'd see the day when a chief tax collector is sitting in a tree like a bird.

Cameron: Perhaps the heat has got to him.

Camilla: Oh Jesus is coming this way...wow he's coming really close to us Cameron...I wonder what he is going to do!

*(Jesus walks with the crowd until he reaches the "tree" where he stops, looks up and says)*

Jesus: Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.

Camilla: How did Jesus know that Zacchaeus was up that tree? And how does he know his name? Why would Jesus want to spend the day with him of all people? This is amazing. Oh Cameron do look!

Cameron: I was just trying to have a little shut-eye Camilla

*(Zac comes down from tree and looks at Jesus. Jesus mimes talking with him. Crowd mutter amongst themselves in a disconsolate way)*

Camilla: How can you Cameron? This is amazing....Zacchaeus has come down from the tree and he is talking with Jesus. I can't quite hear what he is saying....

Cameron: Oh really,...your ears not working so well these days dear....

Camilla: I think Zacchaeus is welcoming Jesus back to his place...for a meal. I can't really hear because a lot of people are talking. They don't seem very happy about this.

Cameron: You can't blame them Camilla....if Jesus is as special as you think he is...then a lot of people would want the honour of entertaining him.

Camilla: I just heard what some of them are saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner". This is not going down well at all. Perhaps Jesus has made a mistake....wait till he gets to Zacchaeus' house and finds out what a mean, hard-hearted man he is.

*(Jesus and Zacchaeus move off stage completely leaving the crowd)*

Cameron: Not so special this Jesus after all eh Camilla? You have to admit he has made a big error of judgment. Everyone in Jericho knows what an unpleasant person Zacchaeus is.

Camilla: Mmm....I don't understand it.....I thought that Jesus was.....

Cameron: Spit it out ol girl....

Camilla: I'm not so old....

Cameron: Well. What did you think?

Camilla: It doesn't matter....

Cameron: Oh come on dear...I am listening....what did you think Jesus was?

Camilla: From what I had heard I thought that Jesus was maybe the Messiah.....that he had come to save the humans. But now I am confused. Why would Jesus want to spend time with someone who is a friend of the Romans, and who is not exactly "Mr Popular?"

Cameron: Well here comes your answer.....look here is Jesus and Zacchaeus is with him.

*(Jesus and Zac re-appear)*

Camilla: Zacchaeus looks different Cameron...he looks happy! Wow....his face is shining.

Zac: 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: 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.

Camilla: There you are Cameron.....you have your miracle. That is a truly changed man.

*(All exit)*