



Be Intentional

When Jesus came by, He looked up at Zaccheus and called him by name. “Zaccheus!” he said. “Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today.” Luke 19:5 (NLT)

I’m sure that you are familiar with the Bible Story about Zaccheus. We typically get caught up in the fact that Zaccheus was a “wee little man,” and miss out on this amazing story of intentionality and life change!

Jesus was on a mission with his disciples to Jerusalem (that would ultimately be for His death), but he took a route that would take him through Jericho. Interestingly, this was the only recorded visit that Jesus made to Jericho. He had been teaching his disciples as well as multitudes of others along the journey, had just healed a blind man on the outskirts of town, and he was probably weary physically and emotionally - maybe even hungry and just wishing for a minute of quiet to regroup.

Have you ever been there? You’ve had a hectic morning getting everyone ready for school and work. You get stuck in traffic. You spill something on your shirt on the drive. Your phone is ringing as you walk into your office, and the emails have piled up overnight. The last thing you really want is a coworker popping in your office to just chat. However, those opportunities are the ones that we have to be prepared for, and actually, if we want to do things the way Jesus did, those opportunities are the ones we need to be *watching* for. Jesus modeled what it means to be intentional with people as he dealt with Zaccheus. He could have easily stayed on schedule and kept walking past the tree where Zaccheus was perched. He could have kept on waving and smiling at the crowds that lined the road around him as he hurried on to Jerusalem. But Jesus was **looking** for someone whose heart was open to salvation. Jesus stopped the whole procession, looked up at Zaccheus, and called him out by name. Zaccheus...that despicable tax collector, that sinful cheat, of all people to stop for! Notice the intensity in Jesus’ words: “Quick, come down! I MUST go to your house...”

While it would make more sense to us that Zaccheus would want to hide from the perfect, sinless Son of God, something is going on in his heart. Zaccheus joyfully brings Jesus to his home, restores above and beyond what is required to those he has cheated, and then gives half of his wealth to the poor. He didn’t do those things to earn his salvation. Rather, Zaccheus did these things *because* of his salvation. Imagine what an impact Zaccheus had on his family,

neighbors, and community for the Kingdom of God...All because Jesus was intentional about seeking and saving that which was lost.

As you prepare to go to Jonestown, make it a priority to ask God to continually open your spirit eyes and spirit ears to *see and hear* people whose hearts He may be preparing even now. As you walk down the road, work on a project, share a meal, be mindful of people. Don't pass up those little nudgings of the Spirit to speak to someone or to do something that seems a little strange to you. Someone's salvation and eternity could hang in the balance.

Further Reading:

Ephesians 5:16-17 "Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do." (NLT)

Small Group Questions:

Would you say that your life more closely resembles that of Jesus (as he dealt with Zaccheus) or someone who must stay on schedule?

What are some practical ways to Be Intentional as you go about your regular schedule?

What are some ways that you have been impacted by someone else's intentionality?

How can you practically prepare your heart so that you are ready when the opportunity to be intentional arises?

Pray for God to place on your heart someone that you can be intentional with - now, and as you go on mission, so that you will be prepared when the time is right.