

Explore It FOR LEADERS



GOD'S GRACE

Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus

Each child will need:

- Sticky notes
- A mirror
- Pens/pencils and paper

Start It

Let's get to know each other a bit better. Ask one child to introduce themselves and to say one interesting thing about them. Ask the next child to re-introduce the child who has just spoken and then introduce themselves. The third child re-introduces the first two to the group and then introduces themselves ... and so on.

If you have a younger group, you might prefer them to only re-introduce the child who has just spoken.

● **Say:** In our story today, we will hear how Jesus knows everything about us: our names, who we are and what we are thinking.

Ask: How does that make you feel?

Give the children time to respond.

● **Say:** Our lives and our stories are important to Jesus.

Give the children time share the things which are happening in their lives at the moment.

Sing It

Our song today reminds us about God's grace. Grace is an unusual word we use to mean God's never-ending goodness, kindness and love for us – even though we may feel we don't deserve it.

'Your grace is enough' by Capitol Kids! Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmgET3Q1VgU>

Tell It

Watch a video telling the story about Zacchaeus.

God's Story: Zacchaeus by Crossroads Kids' Club

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe7dTNID6h8>

Ask the children to retell the story in their own words. Different children will have picked up different parts of the story.

You could read together Luke 19:1-10 to share the story again.

Consider the following points together.

- ➔ Tax collectors were pretty unpopular in the days of Jesus. Why do you think they were so disliked?
- ➔ Zacchaeus wanted to hear what Jesus was saying and was so eager he climbed a tree. Why do you think he was keen to listen to Jesus? Why do you think he went up a tree?
- ➔ One reason Zacchaeus may have climbed a tree was to avoid being seen by others. So how do you think he felt when Jesus spoke to him?
- ➔ The crowds who had come to see Jesus might have thought Zacchaeus was not a good guy. How do you think they felt about Jesus inviting himself to Zacchaeus' home?
- ➔ Zacchaeus was changed by his encounter with Jesus. What happened?
- ➔ Zacchaeus gave away half of his wealth and put right what was wrong. What do you think he thought of that?
- ➔ What does this Bible story mean to us?

Last week we shared the story of Jesus and his disciples sharing the Last Supper. Ask the children if they can remember what happened in the story of the Last Supper.

- 💡 **Say:** Even though the story of Zacchaeus takes place before the Last Supper, Jesus already knew why he was on Earth. When Jesus spoke of forgiveness and remembering him in all we do, he was reminding the disciples of all the things he had done while on Earth and telling them to share that with others.
- 💡 **Say:** Zacchaeus' life was transformed after he met Jesus. Zacchaeus understood the mistakes he had made and promised to put them right.
- 💡 **Say:** We receive God's grace when we admit the things we have done wrong and promise to put them right. When we do this, we show God we love him and we also show our family, friends and community Jesus' love.

Ask: Are there times where we need to change our thoughts, our words and our actions and ask God for forgiveness when we make mistakes?

Action It

- 💡 **Say:** It may have been a long time since we have had friends and family over for tea.

Ask: What are the things you miss doing? What would you like to be doing?

Ask the children to draw a picture of the different activities they would like to do when they can invite a friend over for tea.

Ask: What would that picture look like if Jesus invited himself to your house for tea?

Ask children to think about what they have drawn. Would they change anything?

- 💡 **Say:** Jesus loves us for who we are and promises us an eternal life. He asks us to admit when we do things wrong and work to put them right.

Pray It

- 💡 **Say:** Even though Zacchaeus had messed up and not been in a relationship with God, Jesus still wanted to be with him. Jesus invited himself to be part of Zacchaeus' life. Jesus invites all of us.

Ask: How did Zacchaeus accept the invitation and grace Jesus gave him?

Give children time to share.

Ask: How can we accept the grace Jesus gives us?

- 💡 **Say:** We are going to spend some time in prayer now thinking about the things we think, the things we say and the things we do. Sometimes it can be hard to keep all these things positive.

Using the sticky notes, ask the children to write down three positive thoughts, three positive

things they can do and three positive things they can say this week. If children would like to share, invite them to do so.

Invite the children to stick the notes to the mirror as a reminder this week.

🗨 **Say:** We know there are things we sometimes say, think and do which displease others, ourselves and God.

Give the children time to write down some of those things which have happened in their lives.

🗨 **Say:** Dear Jesus, we want to say sorry for these things that we sometimes say, think or do which displease others, ourselves and you.

Pray together, then scrunch up the writings and throw them away as a symbol of removing some of the things in our lives which keep us from living close to Jesus.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.