

## 1. Discussion Starter

An old AM/FM radio could serve the introduction to the group experience.

Turn on the radio to the AM band and turn up the volume. Slowly tune the radio so that you hear the static and different radio stations. Comment that this was the closest thing to the internet that we had before the internet!

Invite the group members to share what their favorite radio stations were growing up - the style of music or radio personalities they remember such as Paul Harvey, Casey Kasem or pop, country, talk radio, etc.

Say: To hear what we want to hear on the radio, we must be on the right frequency. We have a choice in what we choose to tune into. Some people tune in to their friends, the TV, or the news. Others are so confused by life and its meaning, all they hear is static. Long before radio there was a man who finally got tuned into the right frequency. His name was Zacchaeus.

## 2. Read Luke 19:2 (CSB)

*There was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.*

## 3. Explain

Tax collectors were hated by the communities. They were often considered shady and unjust. Tax collectors were treated as the lowest class of sinners. Socially, they were rejected. The people in towns thought of them as the worst of traitors. Most thought they had abandoned their faith. Tax collectors were the villains.

Given the status of tax collectors in Jewish society, it is remarkable that Jesus reached out to tax collectors like Zacchaeus.

It's safe to say that if tax collectors were on a frequency in Jesus' day they would have been canceled!

## 4. Ask

Who in our society might be comparable to tax collectors?

What negative impact can wealth have on people today?

## 5. Read Luke 19:3-10 (CSB)

*He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able because of the crowd, since he was a short man. So running ahead, he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus, since he was about to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today it is necessary for me to stay at your house."*

*So he quickly came down and welcomed him joyfully. All who saw it began to complain, "He's gone to stay with a sinful man."*

*But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, I'll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord. And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I'll pay back four times as much."*

*"Today salvation has come to this house," Jesus told him, "because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost."*

Ask:

How did Jesus get Zacchaeus on the right frequency?

Why is it often difficult for us to connect with people who are on a different spiritual frequency?

## 6. Discuss

Like Zacchaeus, we all have a backstory. In other words, a hidden or unhidden story in our lives that defines us and speaks into our own identity. Sometimes it's a tragedy, sometimes a blessing. Our stories are shaded by where we grew up, who our parents were, or the school that we attended. It's important to realize that everyone we encounter has a backstory. Once we

understand the backstory, we can help others realize a new story in Christ.

Ask:

Who are some of the people in our world that are outcasts like Zacchaeus?

Can you share a story of someone you've known or met who had a complete turn-around?

Read Mark Mitchell's story from the prayer guide:

*One attender who came to the church was a 20-year drug user. She was desperate. She needed ministry and hope. She attended a church plant and accepted the gospel. Now she's living a life drug-free, worshiping, and honoring God. Another story provides a view from a different part of the spectrum. Another attender with great political ambitions attended a Bible study with a fellow politician. After hearing the message, he was convicted, repented and committed to following Christ. Later he married and is now serving as a pastor in another church.*

Say: Although these are amazing stories, there are similar stories happening all over Louisiana because of the work we are doing to win Louisiana for Jesus. Mark Mitchell is just one example of the missions and ministries we support through the Georgia Barnette Louisiana Missions Offering. Jesus came for all people, and he calls us to go into our communities and our state to reach all people.

## 7. Video

Choose a video from the GBO website to share.

## 8. Read Luke 19:5 (CSB)

*When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today it is necessary for me to stay at your house."*

Say: In order for Zacchaeus to enter into a new story, he had to come down literally and figuratively. Of course, he had to come down from the tree, but he also had to humble himself and be willing to enter this new story. He needed to change his frequency.

Share the following quote from Dwight L. Moody:

*"A man does not get grace till he comes down to the ground, till he sees he needs grace. When a man stoops to the dust and acknowledges that he needs mercy, then it is that the Lord will give him grace."*

Say: We need to be willing to come down from our lofty attitudes and our crowded agenda to reach those like Zacchaeus in our state. Like Zacchaeus, we have been given an opportunity to give back and bless people with the greatest blessing they would ever receive.

## 9. Define Georgia Barnette Offering

Many Louisiana Baptist churches give to international missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas offering and to North American missions through Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The Georgia Barnett Louisiana Missions Offering goes to spread the gospel throughout Louisiana and supports missions and ministries like disaster relief, church planting, multi-media evangelism, and more.

## 10. Wrap-up

Read the GBO Theme Scripture.

*Jesus replied, "We must go to the nearby towns, so that I can tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come." Mark 1:38 (CEV)*

Ask: What is the good news that Jesus is talking about in this verse?

## 11. Share

Take a couple of minutes to share your story of how you came to follow Jesus.

## 12. Pray

Ask a group member to conclude the time in prayer.

