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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for November 2, 2025

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year C

Scripture: [Luke 19:1-10](#) [**Summary:** *Jesus and Zacchaeus*]

Supplies Needed: No supplies are needed.

ASK (a.k.a *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- What exciting day happened a couple of days ago on Friday?
- That's right – Halloween!
- Did you get dressed up for Halloween? [*Listen briefly as they tell you their costumes*]
- Sounds exciting! Just for a moment, now, I want you to think about the costume you wore this year **and** all the other costumes that you've worn on past Halloweens.
- Can you think of at least one costume you've had that you would not want to wear **every** day?
- What are some of those costumes you wouldn't want to wear every day?
- **[Note:** *After letting the kids share, share your own story about a Halloween costume that you wore as a kid that you wouldn't want to wear all the time. Here's my story:*]
 - *Thank you for sharing some of your costumes that you wouldn't want to wear all the time.*
 - *When I was young, four or five years old, I had a store bought costume of Tweety Bird.*
 - *Tweety bird, for those of you who don't know, is a character from a cartoon who's very small, very yellow, and often says, "I tawt I taw a puddy tat" over and over and over.*
- I would definitely NOT want to wear that costume all the time, *now*. Can you imagine!?!?
- Why do you think I wouldn't want to wear that costume every day?
- Because I would feel weird? Because I would feel different? Because I would feel like I didn't fit in?

- Yeah – I think all of those reasons sound right...

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- I wanted us to think about something that would make us feel like we were different and wouldn't "fit in" because in today's story, we hear about Zacchaeus – who felt like he didn't fit in.
- What we learn about Zacchaeus was that he was very short and that he had a job as a tax collector – meaning it was his job to collect money from his own people and then give it to his people's enemy, the Romans.
- In other words, how he looked AND how he acted caused him to feel like he didn't fit in.
- It was sort of like he was walking around in a goofy Halloween costume every day, all day long.
- It should not be surprising then that Zacchaeus did NOT want to keep feeling that way.
- Which is why he climbed a tree to see Jesus. He figured if he was ever going to fit in, Jesus was the one who might help him do so.
- Do you remember what happened once Zacchaeus saw Jesus? That's right! Jesus invited himself over to Zacchaeus' house.
- By inviting Zacchaeus to join him for dinner, Jesus was showing him – and everyone who was watching – that it was ok for Zacchaeus to join in and belong – even if Zacchaeus felt like he was different and didn't fit in.
- We then see that Zacchaeus was so excited about belonging and fitting-in that he promised to give away half of what he owned.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Just like Jesus invited Zacchaeus to join him in what he was doing, Jesus also invites *us* to join him in what he is doing.
- And, when we say yes to Jesus' invitation, like Zacchaeus did, then we start to experience how we belong to God and fit in with God's faith community.
- The more we experience that belonging and fitting in, the more likely we are to invite others to experience the same thing, just like Jesus invited Zacchaeus.
- Which, then, helps those around us know that they belong to God and are loved by God.
- And that is the good news for today! Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who reminds us...

...who reminds us...

...that we belong to you...

...that we belong to you...

...and to each other.

...and to each other.

Thank you and Amen