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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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*Written for October 30, 2022*

*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 is happening tomorrow?
- That's right – Halloween!
- Are you getting 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 will be wearing 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 pudgy 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.

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

- 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.
- You know – 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.
- That's 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**