**A Sermon Plan for Luke 19: 1-10** **Because God’s Been Generous To Me (Zacchaeus)**

*Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.*

*5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.*

*7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”*

*8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”*

*9 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”*

**Notes**

Start with a story or incident where someone has been amazingly generous. If you can find a story where someone explains the reason for their generosity even better. Otherwise, seek to explore the motivation for that generosity and establish the link that for many Christians, our own generosity is prompted by God’s overwhelming generosity to us.

Then move on to Zacchaeus. Point out that his incredible act of generosity was spontaneous. He wasn’t told or asked to give his money away, it was his natural reaction to his encounter with Jesus, and realising he was accepted by Jesus.

It should be the same for us. Clarify that maybe for some, our realisation that God accepts us comes in a single moment. Zacchaeus and St Paul are examples. For others, perhaps those who have grown up in the Church, it’s more of a process. The disciple Peter is possibly an example; we can see his understanding of who Jesus is increasing bit by bit during his discipleship. Either way, when we understand, regardless of who we are and what we might have done, that Jesus accepts and receives us, our response will naturally be one of spontaneous gratitude and generosity as we begin to understand how generous God has been to us.

But what about people who are struggling financially and would find difficulty in giving? Point out its not the size of the gift that matters, but the depth of our understanding of God’s generosity to us. There are cases of people even in extreme poverty who have nevertheless given generously. Try to find a contemporary story to illustrate this (might be from outside the UK). If not use the widow and her 2 small coins from Mark 12: 41-43.

Living and giving generously is a natural response to our deep understanding that God has been generous to us. That’s why , surely, we give to our local parish Church, and why we make sure we periodically review our giving to ensure it is keeping up with inflation or any improved financial circumstances we have.

Stress that people should never feel under any obligation or duty to give, certainly not to the Church, but that our giving is a natural response to our understanding of God’s generosity to us.

Finish with a gentle challenge suggesting people ask themselves if they consider themselves to be people of faith, and if they understand God has been generous to us. And if so, whether we too, like Zacchaeus, wish to give generously as a response to God who has been so outstandingly generous to us.

**End**