

Turn to Luke 19 (Page 717)

By the way

You're going to want to turn to that

Some of you always do

Some don't

I know who you are

It's fine

But you're going to want to today

While you're doing that

I want to start

While ALL.OF.YOU.

Are turning to Luke 19

With one of the most significant verses

In the four Gospels

The four biographies of Jesus' life

In the Gospel of Luke

Luke's the historian of the bunch

And in the Gospel of Luke

About halfway thru his book

We find this verse

Luke 9:51 - As the time approached for Him to be taken up to Heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

It literally means

Jesus was determined to set his face towards Jerusalem

And everything that Luke writes after this

Ties back to this passage

It divides His Gospel in two

The things Jesus said and did before chapter 9 verse 51

And the things Jesus said and did after 9:51

We're going to be in the first part

Of Luke 19 today

But in the second half of Luke 19

In verse 28

Jesus enters Jerusalem

So, today's text

In Luke 19

Will be the last stop

Of Jesus' resolute journey to Jerusalem

Are you with me?

Just so we're all on the same page

Why did He want to go to Jerusalem?

To die for us

No one took His life from Him

He laid it down ... for us

So, He resolutely sets out for Jerusalem

So, Luke 9:51 (reread)

And then we have 10 chapters of teaching

10 chapters of traveling

10 chapters of healing and loving and leading

And Luke 19:1 starts the last interaction

Before He enters Jerusalem

And that gives this passage

Very... specific... context

Let me explain it this way:

Let's say you went to Destin

To go to the beach

And you have a great week

But as the time approached

For you to be taken back to work
You resolutely set out for Spring Hill

And you keep getting pulled off course

One kid needs to go to the bathroom

One kid's hungry

The other's thirsty

Your wife needs a sedative

What's normally a 6- or 7-hour trip

Has taken you 9

But you've almost made it

You pull off I65 onto Saturn Parkway

You get off at Port Royal Road

It's about 9:00 at night

Everybody's exhausted

Everybody's ready to get home

Everybody's... in a good mood

And from the backseat, someone says

"I gotta go to the bathroom"

You're ready – you calmly dismiss that

"We're almost home," you say

And they say, "NO! I gotta go now! Pull into Kroger's"

Do you stop?

Does it change your answer if it's your wife

And not your kid?

If you do, how frustrated are you while they're inside?

Keep that frame of mind

As we read this passage today

Read Luke 19:1

Jesus was "passing thru"

He wasn't planning to stop

He was resolutely going to Jerusalem

And He's going to get there

Later in this chapter

Jesus is at the Port Royal Kroger

Now it says He entered Jericho

Do you see that?

This is important for you to catch

Jericho was 2 cities

There was the ancient Jericho

That Joshua and his army destroyed

Way back when
And then about a mile / mile and a half away
They rebuilt what is now modern Jericho

So, this would have been
Modern Jericho that they were entering

Read Luke 19:1-4

Enter Zacchaeus

Now - we've made Zacchaeus cute
He's a wee little man
He climbs trees
He has lunch with Jesus
Probably brought a lunchable from his mommy
I mean, he's cute

But no one in Jericho would have thought
That Zacchaeus was cute

Matthew, Mark, and Luke talk about tax collectors a lot
22 times they mention tax collectors
In their three Gospels
But Zacchaeus wasn't just a tax collector

He was a chief tax collector

He was like a district manager

For tax collectors

Do you know how many times the Bible

Talks about “Chief tax collectors”?

22x for regular tax collectors

But only once for a chief

Tax collector and sinner are synonymous in the New Testament

And Zacchaeus was the only chief tax collector ever listed

No one in Jericho

Or the surrounding villages

Would have thought Zacchaeus was cute

Read Luke 19:5-6

Jesus went in to Zacchaeus' house

Jesus ate lunch with this guy

And if you wonder how scandalous that was

Look at verse 7

Read Luke 19:7

“All the people”

It’s the Greek word *pas*

It means... “all”

That’s why they translated it that way

“All” – like individually

And “All” like collectively

They *all* began to grumble

Side note – we don’t know

But where were the disciples at this point?

Did some of them go in with Jesus?

Maybe

Did all of them go in to Zacchaeus’ house with Jesus?

Possibly

But if not, some or all of them were also outside grumbling with the others

Because all of them were

We’re starting a new series today

“Love Beyond the Line”

Because Jesus calls us

He models for us

A love that’s beyond the line

We all have a line:

Maybe for you, it's a convenience line

Like we'll love up to *this point*

But then after that

Well, when it gets inconvenient

We're out

I always say,

"You can count on me till the going gets tough"

So maybe for you, it's a convenience line

You know, as so many of us are too busy

The convenience line becomes less about selfishness

And more about... reality... necessity

For some, it's a convenience line

Some of us have a moral line

That was the crowd around Zacchaeus

Why were *all the people* grumbling?

Because Jesus shouldn't be loving him

He was beyond the line

And before we look down our noses at them

We better check our own lines

Before we do that, I want you to notice something

This is key

Jesus loved Zacchaeus

Without any precondition

Zacchaeus repented

But that hadn't happened yet

Jesus may have talked to him

About greed & materialism

We don't know

But if He did

That hadn't happened yet

Jesus didn't say

I'll come to your house

But first, you need to know where I stand

Jesus just said

"Come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

Jesus loved him... even though he was beyond the line

And when you love beyond the line

It's gonna cost you

Jesus probably got a nasty email or two

You know, from the grumblers outside

Can't you just see it...

Jesus probably got the judgmental head shake

Maybe an eye roll

Maybe somebody who had been giving to his ministry stopped

Or they went to another rabbi

Anytime you love beyond the line

It's gonna cost you

And yet Jesus... did it... anyway

Jesus did it anyway

Hang on to that thought a second

I want to talk about the Port Royal Kroger again

For a second

Get out your Bible

And just look at the headlines

Surrounding this passage

We have “Zacchaeus the Tax Collector”

In the first part of Luke 19

And then this Bible says

“That Parable of the Ten Minas”

Do you see that?

That’s the same scene

Jesus is teaching the crowd

Because of their response to Zacchaeus

And then it says:

“Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King”

He made it!

He had resolutely set out for Jerusalem

And He made it

That means that Zacchaeus

Jesus passing through Jericho

On the way to Jerusalem

Talking to Zacchaeus was like stopping for the bathroom

At the Port Royal Kroger

But who initiated the conversation?

I mean, Zacchaeus sort of did

He climbed a tree along the route
If you did that to a politician today
The secret service would drag your sorry tail out of that tree

But who initiated their talk?

Who initiated lunch?

I mean, did Jesus have the opportunity to
Slip by without saying a word?

Sure, He did

Jesus initiated the talk

Jesus initiated loving beyond the line
Because of His deep love for Zacchaeus

Sometimes our presidents

Will negotiate with another world leader

And there's always pushback

From the opposing party

Because they say that leader doesn't deserve the recognition
That a visit from the US President brings

That maybe good politics

I mean, it really is sometimes

But it's bad Christianity

I mean, has there ever been a visit

More undeserved

Jesus – holy God in the flesh

Zacchaeus – chief tax collector

Has there ever been a visit more undeserved?

But Jesus felt like it was worth it

He was worth it, Jesus said

Because he's made in my Father's image

Jesus loved beyond the line

And without precondition

Jesus was always doing that

Look again in your Bible

We have these items after Zacchaeus

So, let's go the other way

This won't be the Port Royal Kroger

This will be Walgreens or Waffle House or something

"A Blind Beggar Receives His Sight"

Just before Zacchaeus

Jesus was interrupted *again* by a beggar

Probably 2 beggars – Matthew & Mark record two

But Luke here only mentions the leader

The vocal one

And Jesus stops to talk to him

To listen to him

To heals & love him

Matthew, when he records this story in his gospel

Says that not only did Jesus heal him

But, "Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed Him."

So, you have

"A Blind Beggar Receive His Sight"

Let's go back a little further

Stick with me now, trust me

In verse 31, Jesus begins a little section of teaching

But in verse 18, going backward

In verse 18, we have:

The Rich and the Kingdom of God

We'll come back to him

Before him, we have:

The Little Children and Jesus

Where the disciples try to shew off these kids

Who were coming to Jesus and taking His time

So, let's get this all together:

Jesus is on a long journey

A consequential journey

He's laying down His life to save all of mankind

I'm not sure what you've got planned for today

But that's on Jesus' agenda

Here in Luke 18 & 19

He's coming to the end

It's a crescendo of activity

It's a crescendo of distractions

A crescendo of opportunities to turn away from Jerusalem

And you know He was tempted

And Luke records 4 opportunities

To quit walking in Luke 18 & 19

Right here at the end

Kids...

Rich guy...

Normally, I think of Jesus sitting down

And I'm confused why He didn't get up and go after Him

But I don't think that's it

Mark 10 makes that clear

Jesus says, "I'm going that way"

And when the rich guy won't follow

And instead goes this other way

Jesus keeps walking

Jesus will stop for the kids

Who have nothing to offer

But not get distracted by the arrogant rich guy

Who most people would fall all over themselves to impress

Then comes the beggar - Jesus will stop for the beggar

And then He gets to Zacchaeus

A wicked, wicked man

And He not only stops to talk

He breaks for lunch

He says, "I'm going to your house"

That might be confused for acceptance

That certainly was confused for approval

Jesus

Consistently

Loved beyond the line

He loved children

When culture said only adults matter

He loved the rich man

But didn't allow the allure of wealth to distract Him from His mission

He loved a beggar

Had compassion on Him

Touched His... face

Because even though the crowd

Thought he wasn't worth such recognition

Jesus saw his humanity

Jesus saw the image of His father in those eyes

And then Jesus

Went to Zacchaeus' house for lunch

Likely the most wicked man in town

Before he repented

Before he apologized
Before his beliefs changed
Jesus loved him

Where's your line?
Where... is your... limit?

We love children
But some of us struggle
To give a kid our full attention
Because we're distracted by more important things

We all would agree
That everyone has value in the eyes of God
But some of us would struggle
To touch a homeless guy's face
Like Jesus did the beggar

And what about Zacchaeus
Who is Zacchaeus to you?

Some of us know right away
Some of us know who "Zacchaeus" is right away
You know

You say, "I struggle to love people with this sin"

Or "with this lifestyle"

Or maybe you have a specific person

That you just can't forgive

I mean, you know

But others of us don't know

If you don't know

The grumble test maybe a good place to start

Jesus stopped for kids

And the disciples grumbled

Jesus stopped for the beggar

The people around him grumbled

Jesus ate at Zacchaeus' house

And everyone grumbled

Who causes you to grumble?

It may be a person

Maybe a group of people

But think about it

Who causes you to grumble?

Love them

Love them

Not when they repent

Not when they take the first step

Not when they change their beliefs or their thoughts or their lifestyle

Love them

Even when they're beyond the line

In fact

I want to challenge us

In every relationship

In every opportunity

To love beyond the line

When you get to your limit

To the edge of what's comfortable

Love a little further

Love people who look differently than you

Love people who are much younger

Or much older than you

Love people who vote differently

And live differently

And believe differently than you

Because Jesus did that for us

Jesus, the most holy man to ever live

Jesus, the One who knew all of the right answers

Jesus, the One who was aware of every.single.person's.every-fault

Jesus loved you

And He loved me

And we were waaaay past the line