



DISCUSSION GUIDE / SESSION 3 - ONE HEART AND ONE MIND

SERIES BIG IDEA

As ONE church with ONE vision, we will accomplish the ONE mission together.

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA

God will empower us by transforming our hearts and minds so that we can unite as **ONE** and accomplish the **ONE** mission together.

ICEBREAKER

Do you know the meaning of your name? If so, did it surprise you? Inspire you?

INTRODUCTION

We are in the middle of our **ONE** series; a introduction to the two-year initiative that is all about what God wants to do IN us and THROUGH us as a community. Our goal is for every person to sit quietly in God's presence and determine how they will get involved in **ONE**. Today we are looking at how we can move from a mentality of "me and mine" to "we and ours" by looking at the well-known story of Zacchaeus.

VIDEO

Commitment Sunday is two weeks away so let's begin preparing our hearts and minds for that day. Before proceeding, visit communitychristian.org/one and watch the week three small group video.

READ LUKE 19:1-10 (NIV)

1 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."

BACKGROUND

Zacchaeus' name meant pure, just, and righteous. Names were very important in Biblical times, even to the point of determining one's destiny. For Zacchaeus though, the meaning of his name doesn't really match his occupation. As a tax collector, he was in collaboration with the Romans, charged with getting as much money out of the Jewish people as he could. Naturally, he was not popular, and very much hated. In this way, tax collectors were in the same category as notorious sinners.

QUESTION 1

Zacchaeus' parents hoped and prayed their son would grow up to live purely and justly as part of the community of Israel, but his role as a tax collector directly contradicted his parent's hope and dreams. Put yourself in the shoes of Zacchaeus' parents. How do you think they felt about their son's occupation?

QUESTION 2

Zacchaeus goes to great lengths to see Jesus (v. 4). How do you think he felt as he climbed the tree?

QUESTION 3

Jesus shows Zacchaeus God's grace when others would have sneered at him, and the impact it had on his life was profound. He gives away 50% of his possessions in addition to paying out 400% to those he had wronged. In what ways have you seen grace have a transforming effect in your own life or the life of others?

QUESTION 4

If Christ's love truly compels us, that will be reflected in our devotion to him. As we grow in our relationship to Jesus we will become more generous. What do you think of this statement? How has this been reflected in your life?

DISCUSSION GUIDE / SESSION 3 - ONE HEART AND ONE MIND

Not everyone can give away large sums of money like Zacchaeus, and we may be tempted to think generosity is only for those who can give away impressive amounts of money. Consider the story that Jesus told of the poor widow who gave two small coins, worth only a few pennies while others brought large bags of gold (Luke 21:1-4). Jesus said, “She gave the most, because she gave all she had.” Generosity is not about a specific dollar amount, but the transformation of our lives by God’s grace. What would it look like to be more intentional about daily choices surrounding finances? We may choose to not go out to eat as often, or we might abstain from purchasing new clothes for a period of time. These daily decisions can make a powerful impact in our ability to generous.

QUESTION 5

What daily choices can you make to grow in generosity?

QUESTION 6

Read the story below by Barry Pruitt and ask one another: What magnificent things could be accomplished if as **ONE** we grasped this truth? How could we advance God’s **ONE** mission here in Chicagoland and around the world?

Focusing Sunlight by Barry Pruitt

“My Dad was a chemist working on, among other things, the Proctor and Gamble team that brought Cascade to the market. It was a fun childhood for me because my dad was always tinkering or experimenting with something. I remember one experiment in particular that was assigned to me on a hot summer morning. It was one of those bright, already hot at 9:30 am days. My dad sent me out of the house with directions, a magnifying glass, some old newspapers and a stopwatch.

I was to put the paper on the ground in the middle of the yard, hold the magnifying glass over the paper, and continually move the magnifying glass ensuring that the light traveling through it was never still in one spot. I was to do this for five minutes and make note of the result.

Next, I was to do the same while holding the magnifying glass steady – ensuring that the light was always focused on the same spot on the paper for 5 minutes. Again, I was to make note of the result. Upon conclusion, I was to present my findings to my dad.

I discovered that when I constantly moved the focus of the lens, I could never start a fire. And, when I held the magnifying glass still, the glass harnessed the power of sunlight, focused

the rays in one place, and, had greater power. With the moving magnifying glass I could not start a fire, and when steady in one place I could start a fire in less than one minute.

When I presented the findings to my dad, he made the point that everyone had sunlight available – yet, I was one of the few that (on that day) focused the sunlight in one place to do something magnificent. He continued to share how people and teams all have energy, but the successful ones could focus. He revealed to me that IF I would focus the power of my own energy and effort, even my own thoughts, in the same way on a single target, then I too, could have magnificent results.”

QUESTION 7

We are two weeks away from commitment Sunday where everyone will be invited to make a two-year commitment to generosity. What makes you nervous as you think about that? How can we be praying for you?

QUESTION 8

How might growing in generosity have an impact on your family and friends?

EXERCISE

This week, invite Jesus to challenge you to grow in generosity as you think of an amount you’d like to give over the next two years. Ask yourself this question: If I keep this commitment over the next two years, what kind of spiritual change will that create in me?

CONCLUSION

Zacchaeus was transformed by his encounter with Jesus and he found a whole new purpose for living. Zacchaeus, who wasn’t living up to his name, is called a “Son of Abraham” by Jesus, (vs. 9), meaning he was now part of the people of God, who are called to bless others. He went from being a hated, excluded tax collector to a welcomed member in the family of Abraham. That’s a #familywin! He moved from me to we. He was no longer only looking out for his own personal gain, but giving generously to others in ways that exceeded cultural expectations and standards. In its place put: “In a similar way God wants us to unite with a spirit of **ONE** heart, **ONE** mind, and **ONE** purpose so we might accomplish the **ONE** mission together. Will you spend some time these next two weeks prayerfully considering how you might commit to the **ONE** Initiative? How might you give generously so our whole church experiences a #familywin?