



# SPORTS IN FOCUS

Answered Prayer  
Luke 19 • Lesson Nine

# ZOOM!

## READY

- Which of these names of Christ are most meaningful to you right now and why?  
The Great Physician, The Good Shepherd, The Savior of the World, The Friend of Sinners

## SET

### Context of Luke 19

In this passage we meet Jesus, the friend of sinners! After he heals blind Bartimaeus, we read the beloved story of Christ showing kindness and mercy to Zacchaeus. This underscores the theme of Luke's gospel: "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (10:10).

### Keys to Text

*Chief tax collector:* Zacchaeus probably oversaw a large tax district and had other tax collectors working for him. Tax collectors were considered the worst sinners. The sycamore tree would have been a sturdy tree with low, spreading branches. A small person could get on a limb and hand over the road; this was an undignified position for someone of Zacchaeus's rank, but he was desperate to see Christ.

## GO

### Read Luke 19:1-10

He entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

## SPORTS IN FOCUS

1. What stood out to you in this passage?
2. Most tax collectors would have been anxious or distressed to meet Jesus, but Zacchaeus was not. Why do you think that was?
3. What did Zacchaeus's willingness to make restitution prove?

Michigan State quarterback Kirk Cousins threw a 44-yard touchdown pass to senior receiver Keith Nichol on the game's final play to upset fourth-ranked Wisconsin 37-31. Cousins's pass was deflected in the end zone by a crowd. The ball caromed to Nichols, who was initially ruled down at the 1-yard line. Officials, however, checked the television replay and overruled the call on the field, announcing a touchdown that sent Michigan State players springing onto the field in celebration and the Spartan Stadium crowd into a frenzy. There's no doubt that this play will be remembered as the "Miracle in Michigan" by many football fans. But what football fans call a miracle is not what the Bible has in mind. How is the story of Zacchaeus a true case of answered prayer and a miracle?