



BIBLE STUDY OBJECTIVE

The students will understand that each one has the opportunity to meet Jesus at the table.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 19:1-10

SUMMARY

The table in our culture is the place of meeting. At the table we can get to know someone, share our stories, and enjoy fellowship. During this series, it is our hope that your students will meet God at the table and allow Him to change their lives.

CONNECT

Using the student page, have students draw a layout of their house. Ask them to make a circle in every room that has a table. Once they have finished their sketch, have them respond to the following questions.

- What is your favorite table in your house? *Ask them to put a star by it on their student sheet.*
- Why is this your favorite table?
- Does your family meet around a table for meals? How often? What about special times of the year like holidays?
- When you meet around the table is it quiet or is there conversation?

TRANSITION: *The table represents a place we can gather with others. When we share a meal at the table, we can enjoy food, traditions, and conversation. How do you think it would make you feel if someone special were to invite themselves to your table for a meal?*

ENGAGE

Sometimes interesting things happen at the table. Take time to think of a memorable story that happened at the table and share the story with your group. Maybe it was a first date, a game night with friends, or a holiday with family. In your sharing describe the setting of the room, the conversation that took place, or the activities in which you participated.

If there is time, ask students if they have an interesting story to share. Use these stories to highlight relationships and memories that are built at tables.

TRANSITION: *Now that we have thought of different experiences that have happened around the table, let's look at one experience Jesus had at the table of Zacchaeus.*

READ LUKE 19:1-10

Ask students to open their Bible to the text in Luke 19:1-10. *Before you read the text* ask if one or two of the students will tell the story of Zacchaeus. After each telling of the story ask the group what they would add to the story. After several revisions, ask them to follow along as you read the story scripture.

TEACHING POINTS

1. Everyone has a place at the table.

Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. He worked for the Roman government and was despised by the Jews. As a chief collector, he would have others working for him doing the day to day operations. Because of his position, he would have most likely been wealthy.

When Jesus saw him in the tree, He called him by name. Names are important part of life. When someone knows your name, they can identify you and you have given them information about yourself.

Zacchaeus wasn't up in the tree to be noticed. He was there to notice Jesus. Unlike the crowd, Jesus ignored Zacchaeus' reputation and invited Himself to go to his home.

2. Meeting Jesus at the table is not like meeting anyone else.

It would be hard to imagine the emotions of Zacchaeus as Jesus came to his home to eat. This demonstration of hospitality was always to invite others, not have them invite themselves.

Zacchaeus was curious about Jesus and that is why he went to see him among the crowd. Think how different it would be to have someone like this in your home.

3. Being at the table with Jesus will help us to examine our life.

When you sit with someone like Jesus you start to see your own life differently. Maybe you would see life through the eyes of Jesus. Zacchaeus certainly seemed to have had that experience. His confession of sin is seen through his repentance to give half of his possessions to the poor and to return four times to anyone he cheated. He was willing to put his wealth and reputation on the line.

4. At the table, Jesus proclaims his mission.

In verse 10, Jesus was pretty clear why He came to be among us, “to seek and to save the lost.” We become a part of Jesus’ mission when we also seek those who do not have a relationship with Him.

RESPOND

Jesus met with Zacchaeus at his table. In fact, He invited himself which was a little unusual. While they were at the table, through his conversation with Jesus, Zacchaeus saw himself differently. During this time, he committed to change.

- What changes do you need to make in your life in order to meet Jesus at the table?
- Ask students to write a prayer in their student handout that they can pray each day this week. Tell them, “Take time to examine your life, confess your sins, and live in a healthy relationship with Jesus.”

BONUS

As you think about your table this week, at home and at school, create a plan for your table. Ask permission to decorate it. Sit at it during the week. Invite others to it. Pay attention to your favorite table this week. When you see the table let it be a reminder for you to meet Jesus there.