

MUST HE? **NO. 2755**

A SERMON
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*“And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him,
Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.”
Luke 19:5*

I THINK this is the only instance in which our Lord invited Himself to anybody's house. He often went when He was bidden, but this time, if I may use the expression, He did the bidding Himself. Usually we must seek the Lord if we want to find Him. To the eye, at any rate, the apparent work of grace goes on in this way—a man begins to cry for mercy, as the blind man who heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, cried to Him, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” But God is so rich in grace that He does not restrict Himself to this usual method.

Generally, He is found of them that seek Him, but sometimes, He is found of them that seek Him not. Yes, if I tell the whole truth, if you go down to the bedrock of actual fact—it is always God who seeks sinners. He always calls them a people who are not a people, and the first movement between God and the sinner is never on the sinner's part, but on God's part.

Still, apparently, men begin to pray to God and begin to seek the Lord—and this is the usual order in which salvation comes to them. The prodigal said, “I will arise and go to my father,” “and he arose and came to his father.” The blind man cried, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.”

Our text, however, describes a case which shows the freeness of divine mercy, for although Zacchaeus did not invite Christ to his house, Christ invited Himself. Though there was no asking Him to be a guest, much less any pressing entreaty on the part of Zacchaeus, Christ pressed Himself upon him and said to him, “Make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.”

I reckon that there are some here who are on an errand something like that of Zacchaeus. They want, perhaps, to see the preacher—which is not nearly as good a thing as wanting to see the preacher's Master. Still, that curiosity has brought them into the place where Jesus of Nazareth is known to come and I do pray that He may find many to whom He will say, “Make haste, and come and receive Me; for I must abide, this very night, with you, and dwell in your house and heart at this time and forever.”

I. The first thing I am going to talk about is THE DIVINE NECESSITY WHICH PRESSED UPON THE SAVIOR. He says, “I must.” “Today I must abide at thy house.”

I do not think of this so much as a necessity upon Zacchaeus as upon Christ. You know that He felt this “must” at other times. In John 4:4, we read, “He must needs go through Samaria.” There was a sacred necessity that He should go that way. The most notable instance of all was when “Jesus began to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”

In this case, the “must” was of another kind—He must abide in the house of Zacchaeus. What necessity was this which pressed so urgently upon our blessed Master? There were many other houses in Jericho beside that of the tax gatherer. I daresay there were other persons who would, apparently, have been more suitable hosts for the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet it was not really so.

There was a mighty pressure upon Him, who is the omnipotent Lord of all. Necessity was laid upon Him who is “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.” He was His own Master, yet He must do something to which He was constrained by an urgent necessity—He must go and lodge that night nowhere else but at the house of Zacchaeus. What did this “must” mean?

I answer, first, it was *a necessity of love*. Our Lord Jesus wanted to bless somebody. He had seen Zacchaeus and He knew what his occupation was, and what his sin was, and He felt that He must bless

him. As He looked at him, He felt as a mother does concerning her child when it is ill and she must nurse it. Or as you might feel concerning a starving man, whom you saw to be ready to expire with hunger, and you felt that you must feed him. Or as some men have felt when they have seen a fellow creature drowning, and they have plunged in to save him. They did not stop to think. They dared to do the brave deed without a thought, for they felt that they “must” do it.

The compulsions of charity, the necessities of benevolence—these urgent things laid violent hands upon them, so they must do it. Thus Jesus felt—only in a much higher sense—that He must bless Zacchaeus. He must go to his house, that He might enter his heart, to abide there, and to make Zacchaeus holy and happy henceforth and forever.

And He is the same Christ, now, that He was then—He is not less loving, He is the same gracious Savior, and He feels the same necessity, the same hunger after souls, the same thirst of love to bless the sons of men, and I, therefore, hopefully expect that there will be, even in this place and I hope, in many other parts of the world, some of whom it will be true that the Lord Jesus Christ must come to their house and heart. So, this was a necessity arising out of our Savior’s divine benevolence and love.

Next, I think it *was a necessity of His sovereignty*. “I must abide at thy house.” Here were scribes, and Pharisees, and all sorts of people around Him who were saying, “He is a Prophet. He has opened a blind man’s eyes and He must, therefore, as a Prophet, be entertained by some notable Pharisee. Some very respectable person must find Him a lodging tonight.”

But our Lord Jesus Christ seems to say, “I cannot be bound. I will not be fettered. I must exert My own will. I must display My sovereignty, and though these people will all murmur, I cannot help that. Zacchaeus, I will come and stay with you, just to show them that I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”

You see, this man was in bad odor—we are not very fond of tax gatherers here, but in the East, they like them still less than we do. And among the Jews, a tax gatherer, if he was himself a Jew, who came to collect an obnoxious impost by a foreign power upon a people who thought that they were the people of God, and ought to be free, was a man who was intensely hated for having stooped to become one of the farmers of taxes. And if he was the head-farmer, the chief contractor of customs, as Zacchaeus was, he had a very bad name indeed.

People did not cultivate his acquaintance. They seldom dropped in to tea at his house and as a general rule, they fought very shy of him. When they mentioned sinners, they always reckoned that Zacchaeus, who had made a fine thing out of the business they specially loathed, and was reputed to be very rich, was one of the very worst—nobody thought much of him. I think, too, that he had been excommunicated by a law of the Sanhedrin, for the publicans were generally regarded as excommunicated persons—shut out, certainly, from the society of more respectable people.

Besides, to my mind, Zacchaeus was an eccentric sort of person. That running of his was a very strange action for such a man. Wealthy men, even though they happen to be short of stature, do not generally take to running through the streets and climbing trees. I should think Zacchaeus was the sort of man who kept himself to himself, and who, when he meant to do a thing, would do it—and if it was to climb a tree, as a boy might—he did not mind that, for he had got beyond caring for public opinion. He was an oddity—he may have been a very good sort of fellow in some respects, but it is quite clear that he was an odd sort of person.

So our Lord Jesus Christ seemed to say, “I will show these people that when I save men, it is not because they stand well in society, or because they enjoy an excellent repute, or because there are some beautiful points in their character. I will save this odd man, this Zacchaeus, this despised tax gatherer. I must have him—he is just the sort of man in whom I can best display the sovereignty of My grace.”

To this day, men cannot bear that doctrine. Free will suits them very well, but free grace does not. They would not let Christ choose His own wife—I say it with the utmost reverence. I mean they would not let Him have the choice of His own bride, His church, but say that must be left to the will of men. But Christ will have His way, whatever they may say. He has a sacred determination in His blessed heart, that He will do as He pleases, and so, for that reason, He says to Zacchaeus, “I *must* abide at thy house.”

Our Lord Jesus was also under another necessity, *He wanted someone in whom He could display the great power of His grace*. He needed a sinner, to begin with. That was to be the raw material out of

which He was going to make a saint, and a saint of a very special character. Is there a Christian in this place who comes up to the standard of Zacchaeus after he was converted? I do not wish to be censorious, but I doubt if there is one. Is there anybody here who gives away half his income to the poor? I think that was going a long way in grace in the matter of almsgiving. And then remember that he was but a babe in grace when he did that—so what he did when he grew older, I do not know. But the first day he was born to Christ, he was a saint of that kind. So what kind of a saint he grew to be, by-and-by, I can scarcely imagine.

Lord, out of what material did You make such a generous soul as this? Why, out of a grasping, grinding tax gatherer, who sought to grab all he could lay his hands on! The mighty grace of God, better than a magic wand, opened his closed heart and made it gush forth like a fountain flowing in a thousand generous streams. Jesus seems to say, “I must have Zacchaeus so that the men of the world may see what I can make out of the most unlikely material—how I can take coarse pebbles from the brook and transmute them into diamonds. How I can bedeck my crown with jewels of the first water, which were originally but as the common stones of the street.”

I wonder whether there is anybody here who feels that he has not anything at all in him that is any good whatever? If so, the Lord could say, “I will make something of that man that will cause all who know him to marvel. I will make his wife wonder what has changed him. I will make all his children say, ‘What has come over Father?’ I will make the whole parish say, ‘What a miracle! What a miracle!’” This was the kind of “must” that was laid upon our Savior and I hope such a “must” is laid upon Him now.

There was one more “must” upon Him, namely, He must abide in the house of Zacchaeus *because Zacchaeus was to be His host at Jericho*. Even the Savior must be lodged somewhere, and in most places, His Father had appointed some gracious spirit to entertain Him—and Zacchaeus was to be His host that day. And if He ever came that way again, I feel certain that He would go to His old quarters.

Blessed be my Master’s dear name, He still has some hosts left where the guest chamber is always ready for Him! In every town, and village, and hamlet, there is some house where there is a prophet’s chamber, and if you were to ask, “Is there anybody here who will entertain the Lord Jesus Christ?” you would soon find people who would be glad to have His company. Perhaps there is a large upper room, furnished and prepared, where they might break bread together. Or a little room where two or three might meet with Jesus—a place that never seems so bright as when there are a few praying people met together in it. The Lord must be entertained in this world and Zacchaeus was to be the man to entertain Him in Jericho.

Who is the one here now who will take Jesus in? A stranger from the country, perhaps? There is no preaching place in your village, the Gospel is not often proclaimed within miles of the place where you live, and few people go to hear it when it is preached. That is all the more reason why Jesus must come to your house, for He means to have your best room, or that old shed of yours, or that big barn, that the Gospel may be preached there.

There is a divine necessity laid upon Him to have your heart for Himself, so that He may come and dwell with you, and make your house His headquarters, whence His disciples may go forth to attack the enemy where you live and that all in your region may know that the true Salvation Army has come there, and that the Captain of our salvation has Himself come to make His abode in your house and your heart.

There is plenty of room for enlargement upon this point, but we must go on to the next one.

II. So, secondly, LET US INQUIRE WHETHER THERE IS SUCH A NECESSITY IN REFERENCE TO OURSELVES.

Has the Lord Jesus Christ any necessity to come and stay at your house, to come and abide in your heart? I can answer that question best by putting to you a few enquiries.

First, *are you willing to receive Christ at once?* Then, there is a necessity laid upon Him to come to you, for He never sent the will into a man without also sending His grace with the will. Indeed, the willingness to receive Him is the proof of the working of His grace. Do you long and sigh that Christ might be yours? Then you shall surely have Him. Are you earnestly anxious to be reconciled to God by Jesus Christ? Then you may have that great blessing at once. Are you thirsting after righteousness? Then you shall be filled, for what saith the Scripture? “Let him that is athirst come.” And lest anybody should

say, “Oh! but there is some preparation implied in that word thirst, and I am afraid that I do not thirst enough.” What does the Scripture further say? “And whosoever will—whosoever will—let him take the water of life freely.”

Next, *will you heartily receive Jesus?* Zacchaeus “received him joyfully” and if you will do the same, then He must abide at thy house. I think I hear somebody say, “Receive Him joyfully? Ah! that I would if He would but come to me. I would give all I have to have Christ as my Savior, to have the new life implanted within me, and to have Jesus dwelling in my heart. I would be willing to live, or willing to die, if I might but have Him as mine.”

So you will receive Him joyfully, will you? Ah, then! He is bound to come to you. When the door of your heart is opened, Jesus will not be long before He enters. He will stand and knock even at a closed door—therefore I am sure that He will enter an open one. It is written of Lydia, “whose heart the Lord opened,” and her heart was not long open before the Lord entered it. And if yours is open to Christ, that is a proof that you are one of those in whom He must abide at this time.

Let me ask you another question. *Will you receive Christ, whatever the murmurers may say?* Suppose He comes to you, they begin to murmur, as they did when He went to be the guest of Zacchaeus. I do not know where you live, but those around you will be sure to find fault both with you and with your Lord, too. “They all murmured, saying that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.” So, you see, they were murmuring at Zacchaeus as well as at Christ, and you will have the same sort of treatment when you receive Christ.

Those who used to say, “You are a fine fellow,” when they find that you have become a Christian, will call you a mean-spirited wretch. As long as you give them something to drink, they will say what a jolly dog you are, but as soon as ever you have done with their ways, you will be literally like a dog to them, and they will have nothing for you but kicks and curses.

In more respectable society you know how they give a Christian the cold shoulder. Nothing is actually said, but there is a very clear intimation that your absence is preferred to your company when you once become a Christian. Can you bear that? Can you dare that? Because if Christ comes to your house and heart, you must expect that He will bring His cross with Him. Are you willing to have Christ, cross and all, and to say, “Let the murmurers say what they will, and do what they will, my mind is made up, Christ for me, Christ for me. I cannot give Him up”?

Further, *will you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord?* Zacchaeus did so, for he said, “Behold, Lord.” Now, are you willing to give up all to Christ and to let Him be Lord over you? Are you willing to do what He bids you, as He bids you, when He bids you, and simply because He bids you? For, verily, I say unto you, you cannot have Christ for your Savior unless you also have Him as your Lord. He must rule over us as well as forgive us. As one of our poets says—

***“Yet know, nor of the terms complain,
Where Jesus comes, He comes to reign.
To reign, and with no partial sway—
Thoughts must be slain that disobey.”***

Sins must be given up, evil practices must be forsaken, you must follow after holiness, and endeavor in all things to imitate your Savior who has left you an example that you should follow His steps. Are you ready for that? Because if you are, then Christ is ready to abide at your house and to dwell in your heart.

Once more, *will you be prepared to defend Him?* If Jesus comes to a house, it becomes the duty of the host to defend Him. So Zacchaeus, not in boasting, but as a kind of answer to the sneers of the murmurers, when they said that Christ had gone to dwell with a sinner, seemed to say, “But I am no longer a sinner, as I used to be. If I have wronged anybody, I will restore it fourfold and henceforth, the half of my income shall be given in alms to the poor.” That was the best defense he could give and Christ must be defended by the changed lives of His disciples.

You must live so that when men attempt to attack the Savior, they may be compelled to say, “Well, after all, that man is the better for being a Christian.” Your children may rail at religion, but they will be compelled to say, “We could speak against Christ and Christians generally, but when we think of how

our mother lived and how she died, our tongues are silenced. Then, there is our old nurse, who feared the Lord—many a joke did we crack about her religion, but ah! there was something about her that was so heavenly that we were obliged to believe in the reality of it whether we would or not.”

Yes, dear friends, if the Lord Jesus Christ should come to your house, you must say, “It shall be my heart’s ambition, as long as I live, to defend His cause by the holiness of the character which I trust His Holy Spirit will work in me.” If this is the case with any of you, then He must abide at your house tonight. God grant that He may do so!

III. Now I must close by reminding you of WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF CHRIST COMES TO ABIDE IN YOUR HOUSE.

First, *you must be ready to meet objections at home.* You who say that you are willing to receive my Master, are you quite sure that you know what that reception involves? Christ says that He wishes to abide at your house, and that He must do so, and you say, “Yes, my Lord, I gladly welcome You to my heart and my home.”

But stay a moment, my friend. Have you asked your wife about that matter? You know that you must not bring home strangers—she will be down upon you if you do. Have you counted the cost of your decision? And my good woman, you say, “I want to bring Christ home with me.” Have you asked your husband about it? Sometimes a dear child says, “Jesus Christ shall abide with me,” but what will Father say? For, alas, often, the father is at enmity against God. If that is the case in your home, are you prepared to endure persecution for Christ’s sake? Our Lord Himself said, “A man’s foes shall be they of his own household,” and it is often so.

David said to Jonathan, “What if thy father answer thee roughly?” Suppose that is your experience—can you keep true to Christ under such circumstances? Can you say, “I love my wife. I love my child. I love my father, but I love Jesus more than all of them, and I must have Christ in my heart, and in my house, even if it brings war there”? Ah! then, He will come to your house if that be your resolve. But if not, He will not come to take the second place. He will not come there if you turn coward at the first jest that is made against you, or the first hard thing that is spoken against your Lord. But He will come to your house if, despite all rebuffs and rebukes, you are determined that He shall make His abode with you.

But next, *is your house fit for Him to enter and abide there?* I know some houses where my Lord could not lodge for a single night. The table, the talk, the whole surroundings would be so uncongenial to Him. Are you prepared, then, to put away everything that would displease Him and to have your house cleansed of all that is evil? You cannot expect the Lord Jesus to come into your house if you invite the devil to come, too.

Christ would not remain in the same heaven with the devil—as soon as Satan sinned, He hurled him out of the holy place. He could not endure to have a sinful spirit, the spirit of evil, there, and He will not come and live in your house if you make provision for the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and all those evil things that He abhors. Are you prepared, by His grace, to make a clean sweep of these things? He will not come to you on any other terms.

Further, *we must admit none who would grieve our Guest.* It is hard to lodge with some people because their children are so badly behaved. My Lord loves not to dwell in families where Eli is at the head of the household, and where the children and young people live as they like. If He comes to your house, He will want you to be like Abraham, of whom He said, “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD.”

If He comes to your house, you must ask Him to come in the same way that He came to the house of the jailor at Philippi. How was that? I have often heard half of that passage quoted without the context—“Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house.*” Many leave out those last three words, “*and thy house.*” But what a mercy it is when all in the house, as well as the head of the family, have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! Do you not wish that it may be so in your house? Do you not ardently desire it? I trust that you do.

Once more, *when the Lord Jesus Christ comes into your house, you must entertain Him.* He needs no riches at your hands, yet He wants the best that you have. What is the best that you have? Why, your heart, your soul! Give Him your heart, give Him your life, give Him your very self. If you had to entertain the Queen—if she had promised to come and spend an evening with you—I will warrant that

you would be fidgeting and worrying for weeks about what you should get for such an occasion. And if you have but little means, you would try to get the very best that you could.

I frequently used to go and preach in a country place, where I stayed at a farm—and the dear old man who lived there used to have about a hundred pounds of beef, at the very least, on his table. And when, year after year, I noticed such enormous joints, I said to him, one day, “You must have a very curious idea of my appetite—it is not possible that I should ever get through these masses of meat that you put on your table.” “Oh,” he replied, “we get through it all very easily after you are gone, for there are plenty of poor people, and plenty of farm laborers round about, and they soon clear it up.”

“But” I inquired, “why do you have so much when I come?” “Bless you, sir,” he answered, “I would give you a piece as big as a house if I could get it—I would, indeed—just to show you how welcome you are at my home.” I understood what he meant and appreciated his kindness, and in a far higher sense, let us all do as much as ever we possibly can to show the Lord Jesus how welcome He is to our heart and our home.

How welcome He ought always to be when He comes, as our blessed Savior, to put away our sin and change our nature, and honor us with His royal company, and keep and preserve us even to the end, that He may take us up, and our children, too, to dwell at His right hand forever! Oh, there ought to be grand entertainment for such a Guest as He is!

Where is the man who is going to ask Him home tonight? Here stands my Master and in His name I ask—who will take Him home tonight? With whom shall Jesus lodge tonight? “Oh!” says one, “if He would but come to me, I would be glad enough to welcome Him.” He is glad enough to come, for He delights to be entertained in human hearts.

O you soldiers over there, with the red coats on—I am always glad to see you here—shall Jesus Christ abide with you tonight? And you others, in black coats, or in colored dresses, shall Jesus Christ abide with you tonight? You good friends who are up from the country, if you have not taken Christ into your hearts, will you not take Him in now? I cannot hear what you say, but He can, and if this is the reply, “God be merciful to me a sinner, and come and lodge with me tonight,” it shall be done, and His shall be the praise.

Now the time has gone, but I must say just these few words more. I recollect that, when I was crying to God for mercy and I could get no answer to my supplication, so that I feared I must really give up prayer as hopeless, the thought which kept me praying was this, “Well, if I do not get salvation, I shall perish.” I seemed to fancy that the Lord had kept me waiting—that was only my foolish way of thinking and it was not true—but I said to myself, “If the Lord keeps me waiting, I also kept Him waiting a long while. Was I not for many years resisting Him and refusing Him? So that, if He makes me wait for salvation, I must not complain.”

Then I thought, “Well, now, if I were to keep on praying and I did not find Christ for twenty years, yet, if I found Him at last, the blessing would be well worth having and worth waiting for, so I will never leave off praying for it.” And then I thought, “Why should I expect that I must be heard the moment I choose to come to the mercy seat, when I would not hear God’s call when He so often spoke to me?” So I still persevered in prayer, yet with this thought—what can I do else?—like a whip ever upon my back. I felt that this must be my resolve—

***“I can but perish if I go.
I am resolved to try.
For if I stay away, I know
I must for ever die.”***

I like that plan which I have known to be followed by some who have gone to their room and shut the door, determined not to go out till they had found the Savior. They have read the Word, especially such passages as these, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” And they have gone down on their knees and have said, “Lord, this is Your promise. Help me now to believe in Jesus and give me salvation, for His sake, for I will not leave this place without Your blessing.”

Such vehemence, such importunity is sure to prevail. How dare any one of you continue to live unsaved? How dare you, sir, again close your eyes in sleep while you are unreconciled to God? What if, instead of waking up in that bedroom of yours, you should lift up your eyes and say, “Where am I? What is this dreadful place? Where are the things I once loved? Where are the things I lived for? Where am I? Where is Christ. Where is the Gospel? Where are Sabbath days? Where are the warning words I used to despise? Where is the power to pray? Is all this gone forever? And where am I? In dark, dark, dire despair—an enemy to You, O God, and an enemy to You forever! Horror and dismay have taken hold upon me.”

The very attempt to depict that awful scene makes me feel as though dread would stop my tongue. Oh, I pray you, go not there! There are some who deny the eternity of future punishment, but for my part, I would not risk such suffering for an hour even if it should end then. What woe it would be to be only an hour in hell! Oh, how you would then wish that you had sought the Savior and had found Him!

But alas, there is no such thing as an hour in hell. Once lost, you are lost forever! Therefore, seek the Lord now. Cry with Jeremiah, “O LORD our God, we will wait upon thee.” You cannot brazen it out. You cannot escape from everlasting wrath unless you trust in Jesus, so let this be your cry—

*“Thou, O Christ, art all I want
More than all in Thee I find!*

*Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.”*

So, Christ of God, we cast ourselves into Your arms! Save us, save us, save us for Your sweet mercy’s sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

LUKE 18:36-43; 19:1-10

Luke 18:35-38. *And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.*

He did not need to be told twice who was passing by, nor did he need any exhortation to seek Christ’s help. It was enough for him that Jesus of Nazareth was near him, so he would cry to Him for the help He alone could give. Oh, that we were half as sensible! Oh, that the blindness did not get into men’s hearts! If it were not so, every blind soul would at once begin to cry to God for mercy. There is not one poor sinner here, who knows that Jesus often passes this way, who would not begin at once to cry, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.”

39. *And they which went before rebuked him,*

“Be quiet.” they cried.

39. *That he should hold his peace:*

“Do not interrupt the flow of those marvelous words or break the thread of that matchless discourse.”

39. *But he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.*

They could not quench the fire that burned within his breast. They did but increase its intensity by all their efforts to put it out. The blind man was so earnest to get his eyes opened that his voice could not be silenced. This was a proof of his commonsense and true wisdom. It is remarkable how clearly the blind people mentioned in the Scriptures could see. Oh, that those who think they can see could really see as plainly as this blind man could and would act as wisely as he did! “He cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” This was his only hope—perhaps, his last opportunity—so he availed himself of it to the full.

40-41. *And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.*

There was no waste of words. He said what he meant, and he meant what he said, and he knew what he wanted. It is a great thing, in prayer, to know what we really need—a very important thing to be sensible enough not to multiply words, but to cry to the Lord with a definite object, as this blind man said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

42-43. *And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.*

That was a blessed praise meeting, brought about by the healing of that one man. Now that his eyes were opened, he showed that his mouth was not closed. He proved that he could pray well. Now he proves that he can also praise well. He prayed when they tried to stop him, but now nobody shall stop him from praise. And he so praised the great Physician that, with the flaming firebrand of his gratitude, he set all other hearts ablaze—“All the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.”

Luke 19:1. *And Jesus entered—*

That is, He entered at one end of the town—

1. *And passed through Jericho.*

And so came out at the other end of it.

2. *And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.*

It was an important station for the collection of customs—there was a good deal of produce at Jericho upon which there was a tax, so Zacchaeus had a good post. “He was rich.”

3-7. *And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully, And when they saw it, they all murmured,—*

Some of the very people, I suppose, who had just before given praise to God. So fickle are the judgments of men that we need not be elated when all of them speak well of us. It only needs that the wind should veer just half a point and they will all speak ill of us. The cry of men, even when it is most clear and strong, is not to be depended on. They shout “Hosanna,” today, but before the week is out, they cry, “Crucify Him. Crucify Him.” So here, “They murmured,”—

8. *Saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.*

I do not know where else He could have gone, for they were all sinners. But they meant that this tax gatherer was “a sinner,” by public reputation, he was an excommunicated person, who was regarded by everybody as “a sinner” in a very special sense.

8. *And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor;*

“Henceforth, one half of my income shall go in almsgiving.”

8. *And if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.*

“I will not give to the poor or to God that which is not lawfully mine. I will not steal a sheep and give the feet to the poor, but I will give back, four times over, anything that I may have taken wrongfully and still the half of my future income shall go to the poor.”

9-10. *And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—408, 538, 576

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