

Zacchaeus

Zacchaeus was a sly entrepreneur who collected more taxes than the hated Roman government required and then pocketed the surplus. His dishonest business dealings made him a wealthy—and despised—man. Since the people of Jericho considered Zacchaeus a thief and a traitor, they must have been shocked when Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus’ home. But Jesus’ unconditional love softened Zacchaeus’ sin-hardened heart and dramatically changed his life. That very day Jesus announced that salvation had come to Zacchaeus’ house.

Just like the people of Jericho, preschoolers learn by example. We often hear them using adult phrases and mimicking our phone conversations and see them treating others as they are treated. It’s our responsibility to give children a loving, accepting example just as Jesus did. The lessons in this module will provide opportunities for children to give and receive love and kindness.

Four Lessons on Zacchaeus

Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
10	Jesus wants us to love him.	141	Luke 19:1-4
11	Jesus wants us to be kind.	155	Luke 19:5-7
12	Jesus wants us to be sorry when we do wrong.	167	Luke 19:8
13	Jesus wants us to do what’s right.	179	Luke 19:9-10



Bible Point ▶

Jesus wants us to love him.

Bible Verse

“Never get tired of doing good” (2 Thessalonians 3:13b).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- experience being too short to see over a crowd,
 - hear a story about Zacchaeus trying to see Jesus,
 - learn that Jesus loves them just as they are, and
 - think of ways they can show their love for Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Zacchaeus learns to love Jesus.

Luke
19:1-4



This passage tells us that Zacchaeus was a wealthy man, and it also tells us why. Being a “chief tax collector,” he was likely responsible for collecting taxes from people in a particular region, and may have had numerous other tax collectors working for him. One might think that a wealthy man would have no need of Jesus, but it’s apparent from Zacchaeus’ actions that he felt a need to find out who this Jesus was.

What the passage doesn’t tell us is that tax collectors were generally seen as traitors because they worked for the Roman government and as thieves because they often collected more taxes than were really due and kept the profits.

Something Zacchaeus had heard about Jesus must have intrigued him, because climbing a tree just to get a glimpse of Jesus would have been undignified. Something about Jesus drew Zacchaeus to him, and Jesus is still drawing people to himself today. Use this lesson to help your preschoolers learn to love Jesus as Zacchaeus did.







Prayer

- Read Matthew 10:37-39. How much do your actions show your love for Jesus?
- Pray: Lord, thanks for loving me and my preschoolers. Help me show your love for them in...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Heart Name Tags” (p. 152), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Tall Towers —Build tall block towers to measure their height.	Blocks	
	Option 2: Coin Prints —Lay foil over coins, and make rubbings.	Tape, pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, aluminum foil	
	Option 3: Tree Treats —Fill celery “trees” with cream cheese and chocolate chips.	Chocolate chips, cream cheese, plastic knives, celery, plates	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Try to see a picture of Jesus through a crowd of children.	“Jesus and Zacchaeus” handout (p. 153), scissors	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hear the story of Zacchaeus from Luke 19:1-8, and then sing a song.	Bible, CD player	
	Do the Bible Story —Using masks, act out the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus.	Craft sticks, scissors, glue, CD player	
Closing 	I’m Rich! —Teach Whiskers how to show his love for Jesus.	Bag of pennies, CD player	
	Loving Jesus —Learn a new way to tell Jesus they love him, and then enjoy tree treats.	Tree treats from Option 3	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Heart Name Tags” (p. 152), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Today I Learned...” discussion. Use questions such as “What did you tell your family about the net full of fish?” and “Tell me about a time you trusted Jesus to help you this week.”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus wants us to love him.**
- Give each child a photocopy of a heart name tag that you cut out before class. Help children write their names on their name tags, and pin or tape the tags to their clothing.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.



You may want to laminate the name tags with clear adhesive plastic so they’ll last through the module.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “How do you feel when you’re too small to do something?” or “How do you show that you love someone?”

■ Option 1: Tall Towers

SUPPLIES: blocks

Set out blocks, and encourage children to build towers that are the same height as they are. As children build, point out that some towers are shorter and some are taller. Explain that today’s Bible story is about a short man who learned to love Jesus. Remind children that ► Jesus wants us to love him.



■ Option 2: Coin Prints

SUPPLIES: tape, pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, aluminum foil

Before this activity, tape pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters to a table. Be sure to put the tape only on the sides of the coins that are facing the table. Caution children not to remove the coins from the table or put them in their mouths!

Set out aluminum foil squares. Show children how to place the foil over the coins and rub the foil with their thumbs until coin prints appear. Have them try rubbing each different coin. Tell children that today’s Bible story is about a greedy man who stole other people’s money.



Option 3: Tree Treats

SUPPLIES: chocolate chips, cream cheese, plastic knives, celery, plates

Set out chocolate chips, cream cheese, plastic knives, and celery stalks with leaves. Help children fill the celery trees with cream cheese, and then give them chocolate chips to represent Zacchaeus' footprints.

Talk with children about times they've played in trees. Explain that today they'll hear about a man who climbed a tree to see Jesus. Make one stalk for every two students. Cut the stalks in half, and set them aside until the Closing.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: "Jesus and Zacchaeus" handout (p. 153), scissors

Before this activity, photocopy the "Jesus and Zacchaeus" handout and cut out the pictures of Jesus and Zacchaeus.

Tell children you'll clap three times to get their attention. Explain that when you clap three times, the children are to stop what they're doing and repeat the clap. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Have children gather in the story area.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to our class today?** (Built a tall tower with blocks; rubbed coins and made a print; made tree snacks.)

Say: **Some of you built towers, some of you made coin prints, and some of you made tree treats. You were all learning important things about our Bible story. If you built a tower of blocks, stand up and pat the top of your head. Show us how big and tall you are!** Pause. **If you made coin prints, stand**



teacher tips

You can also use raisins for the "Tree Treats" Activity, but you'll want to cut them in half so they don't present a choking hazard for young preschoolers.

up and rub your hands together. Pause. If you made tree treats, stand up and stretch out your arms like a tree. Pause.

Let's all pretend we're trees and stand up as tall as we can. Now pretend we're swaying in the wind. Trees are very tall, so stand up on your tiptoes.

Have children sit down. Say: **Our Bible story is about a short man named Zacchaeus** (show them the Zacchaeus cutout) **who climbed up in a tall tree so he could see Jesus.**

Form two groups. Have one group stand shoulder to shoulder in a tight circle. Have the rest of the children stand behind the first group. Say: **I'm going to put this picture of Jesus in the middle of this crowd.** Hold the picture of Jesus at children's waist level. Encourage the outside children to try to see the picture through the "crowd." After a moment, provide low chairs and let children peer over the circle. Then have a student hold the Zacchaeus cutout up, over the circle.

Look, look, what can you see? Please find the picture of Jesus for me. If you can find it, clap—one, two, three!

Have groups trade places and repeat the activity. Then say: **Now you know how Zacchaeus felt when he couldn't see Jesus.** ► Jesus wants us to love him. **Let's find out how Zacchaeus learned to love Jesus.**



■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible helper to bring me the Bible marked tracks 3, 4 with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible helper today. Each week one of you will get to be the Bible helper.**



If the *ink pad* is dry, moisten it with three to five drops of water.

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



**I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *tree stamp*, and thank him or her for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *tree stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible], **and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Have children gather around you. Open the Bible to **Luke 19:1-10**. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Luke in the Bible, God's special book.** Bring out the *Bible Big Book: Zacchaeus*. **Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of our Bible story. Let's listen to the story of Zacchaeus on our CD.**

Show children the *Bible Big Book* pictures as you play the "Zacchaeus" segment (track 16) of the *CD*. Turn the pages when you hear the chime. After the story, ask:

- **Why was Zacchaeus up in the tree?** (He was short; he wanted to see Jesus; he wanted to learn to love Jesus.)
- **Why did Jesus go to Zacchaeus' house?** (To eat; to tell him to give the money away; to be his friend.)

Say: **Jesus loved Zacchaeus very much, and Jesus wanted Zacchaeus to love him. How did Zacchaeus show that he loved Jesus?** (When he gave the money away; when he said he was sorry; by being nice.)

It must have been hard for Zacchaeus to give back the money he took, but he wanted to show that he loved Jesus by doing the right thing. The Bible tells us to ► "never get tired of doing good." Open your Bible to **2 Thessalonians 3:13b**, and show children the passage; then ask them to repeat the verse with you.

BIBLE VERSE ►

Ask: • **How can you show that you love Jesus?** (Do good things for people; tell Jesus I love him; talk to him.)

Zacchaeus learned to love Jesus. ► *Jesus wants us to love him, just like Zacchaeus did. Let's stand up and learn a song that reminds us that Zacchaeus loved Jesus.*

Lead children in singing "Did You Ever See Zacchaeus?" (track 17) with the CD to the tune of "Did You Ever See a Lassie?"



SING

Did you ever see Zacchaeus (*hand over eyes across brow*),
Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus?

Did you ever see Zacchaeus
Way up in a tree? (*Point up high.*)

He looked 'round for Jesus (*turn around in a circle*),
Then climbed up to see him. (*Do climbing motions.*)

Did you ever see Zacchaeus (*hand over eyes across brow*)
Way up in a tree? (*Point up high.*)

Jesus saw Zacchaeus (*hand over eyes across brow*),
Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus.

Jesus saw Zacchaeus
Way up in that tree. (*Point up high.*)

"Zacchaeus, come down now. (*Wave toward self.*)
I'm coming to your house!" (*Point at another person.*)

Jesus saw Zacchaeus (*hand over eyes across brow*)
Way up in that tree. (*Point up high.*)



Say: **Jesus was kind to Zacchaeus even though other people didn't like him. Jesus wants us to be kind to everyone, too, because we can show Jesus' love through our actions.** Point to each child as you say: **I can be kind to you, and you, and you.** Then let each child have a turn to do the same, pointing to every classmate and saying, "I can be kind to you."

Pray: **Dear Jesus, help us to be more like you. We want to do good things for others to show them your love, just like you showed love to Zacchaeus. We know you want us to love you, and we want to love you, too. Amen.**

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: craft sticks, scissors, glue or tape, CD player



Before class, cut the faces from the "Bible Masks" poster found in the Learning Lab. Glue or tape a wide craft stick to the bottom of each mask as a handle.

Show children the Bible masks, and tell kids that they're going to use the masks to act out the Bible story. Choose two children to be Jesus and


teacher tips

You can also use raisins for the “Tree Treats” activity, but ya’ll want to cut them in half so they don’t present a choking hazard for young preschooler.


BIBLE POINT

Zacchaeus, and let the other children be members of the crowd. (Tell kids that they can act out the story several times so that anyone who wants to can be Zacchaeus and Jesus.)

Play the “Zacchaeus” segment (track 16) of the CD again, and encourage children to act out the story as it’s told on the CD.

Ask: • **How do you think Zacchaeus felt when Jesus talked to him?** (He was excited; he was happy; he was glad.)

• **How do you feel knowing that Jesus loves you and wants you to love him?** (I’m glad Jesus loves me; I love Jesus!)

Say: **Jesus loved Zacchaeus, and Jesus loves us. Just as Jesus wanted Zacchaeus to love him, ► *Jesus wants us to love him*, too! Let’s tell others about our love for Jesus—starting with our friend Whiskers!**

Closing

■ I’m Rich!

SUPPLIES: bag of pennies, CD player



track 18

Before class, seal a handful of pennies in a plastic sandwich bag. Have Whiskers hold the bag between his paws as you present the following script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Teacher: Whiskers, what do you have in your bag? It jingles when you shake it.

Whiskers: (*Shaking the bag*) I have lots of money.

Teacher: Wow! How much money do you have?

Whiskers: Hmm, I’m not sure. But I know it’s a lot!

Teacher: Can we help you count it?

Whiskers: If you promise to be careful. I don’t want to lose any.

(*Have Whiskers pour the money out of the bag.*)

Teacher: Children, can you help me count Whiskers’ pennies?

(*Count pennies slowly and deliberately.*)

Whiskers: Wow! I have that much money? I must be rich!

Teacher: You are rich. Where did you get your money?

Whiskers: I’ve been finding it all over our house. There was some on top of my parents’ dresser, some in my mom’s purse, and my brother left some on the kitchen table.

Teacher: (*Horried*) Whiskers, that’s not your money. It belongs to other people in your family. We’ve been learning about a man who took other people’s money. Children, can you tell Whiskers about Zacchaeus?

(Help children tell Whiskers how Zacchaeus took people's money and then gave it back to show how much he loved Jesus.)

Whiskers: Wow! I guess I was wrong to take this money. I wonder what I should do now.

Teacher: Children, what do you think Whiskers should do with the money he took?

(Help children think of things such as returning the money, asking for forgiveness, or putting the money back where he found it.)

Whiskers: I guess if I gave the money back, it would show that I'm sorry.

Teacher: Right! Today we learned that ► Jesus wants us to love him. Zacchaeus wanted to show that he loved Jesus more than he loved the money he'd collected.

Whiskers: Well, I want to show that I love Jesus. I'd better give back these pennies right now. Thanks for helping me show Jesus that I love him!
'Bye, everyone!

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◀ **BIBLE VERSE**

Say: **Well, Whiskers learned that it's important to do what is right! Today's Bible verse tells us to ► "never get tired of doing good," and there's even a song about that. As we listen to the words of the song, let's clap our hands to the music.**

Lead children in clapping hands in time to "Doing Good" (track 18) on the CD. Play the song a second time, and this time help children to sing the words to the tune of "Do Lord."



**I'll never, oh never,
Get tired of doing good.
I'll never, oh never,
Get tired of doing good.**

**I'll always, yes always,
Do what I know I should—
So I will be like Jesus!**

(Repeat.)



■ Loving Jesus

SUPPLIES: tree treats from Option 3

Say: ► **Jesus wants us to love him.** We can show our love for Jesus in lots of different ways. Let's use sign language to show we love Jesus.

Teach children these simple signs to express their love for Jesus.

I: Point to your chest.

Love: Cross your hands across your chest.

Jesus: Touch your right palm with your left middle finger and then your left palm with your right middle finger.

Have children say and sign, "I love Jesus" several times. Then pray: **Dear God, thank you for your Son, Jesus, who loves us so much. Help us show how much we love Jesus. Amen.**

Give each child a half of a tree treat from Option 3, and say: ► **Jesus wants us to love him.** As you eat your tree treat, remember how Zacchaeus learned to love Jesus.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ Lively Learning: Coin Capers

Have children sit in a circle and cup their hands behind their backs, facing up. Give children play money to hold in their cupped hands. Have one child pretend to be Zacchaeus and go around the circle touching each person's money. When "Zacchaeus" is ready, he or she can take the money instead of just touching it. The student whose money was taken will jump up and chase Zacchaeus around the circle. If Zacchaeus reaches the other child's place without being tagged, the child whose money was taken becomes the new Zacchaeus. If the child tags Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus must give the money back and sit in the middle of the circle. Keep playing until everyone has a chance to be Zacchaeus. As children play, remind them that Zacchaeus took other people's money and then gave it back to show that he loved Jesus.

■ Make to Take: Love Baskets



Distribute 8x10-inch paper hearts in a variety of colors. Each child will need two hearts. Use a hole punch to make five holes around each heart, two on each straight side and one on the bottom point. For each child, set out a 2-foot length of yarn with one end taped. Show children how to weave the yarn "needles" through the holes to make heart baskets. As children work, tell them that ► Jesus wants us to love him.

■ Treat to Eat: Heart Treats

Have children use heart-shaped cookie cutters to cut pieces of bread or tortillas. Set out softened cream cheese and jam, and help children make heart-shaped sandwiches. Before children eat, have them remind each other that ► Jesus wants us to love him.

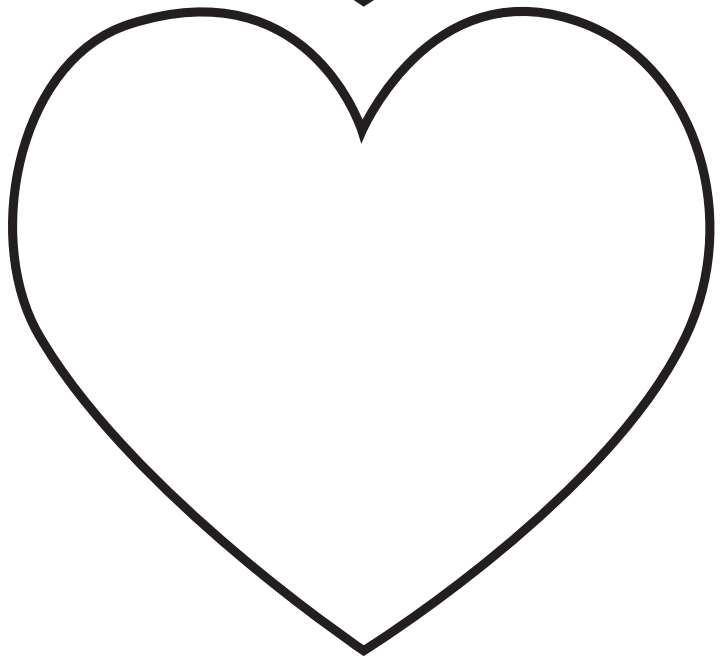
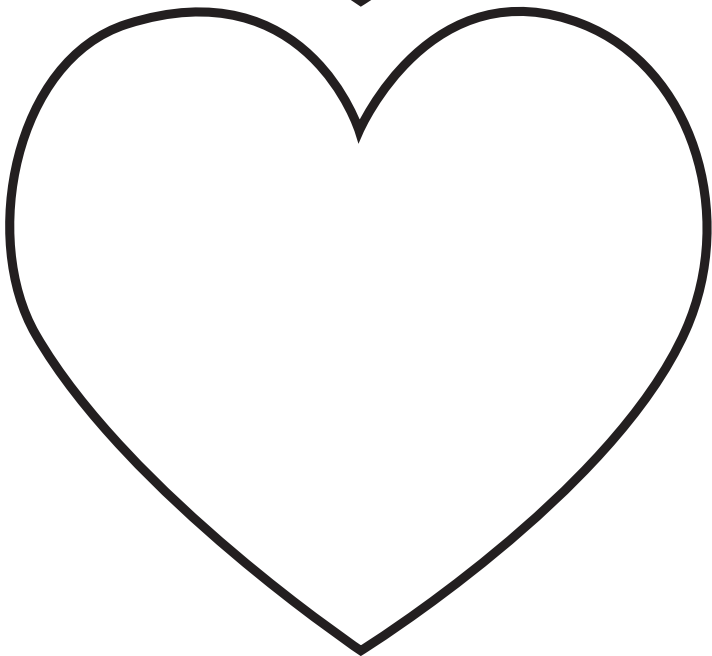
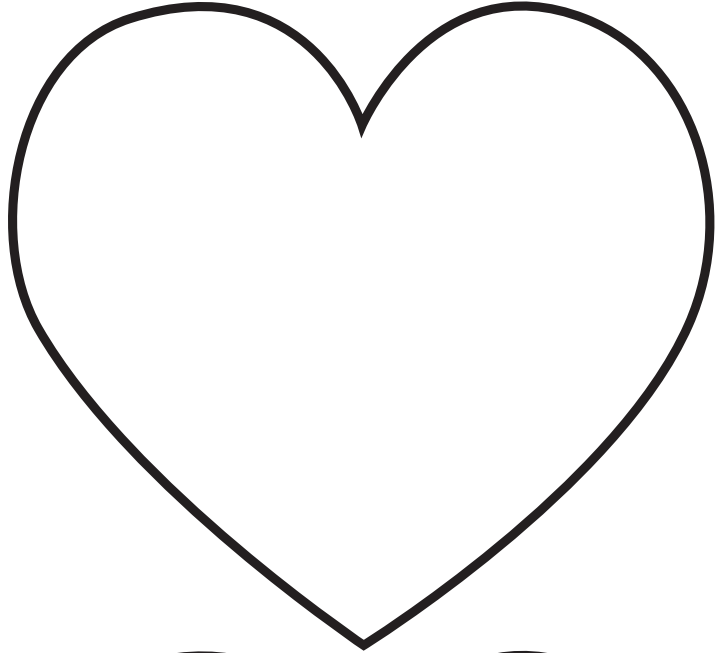
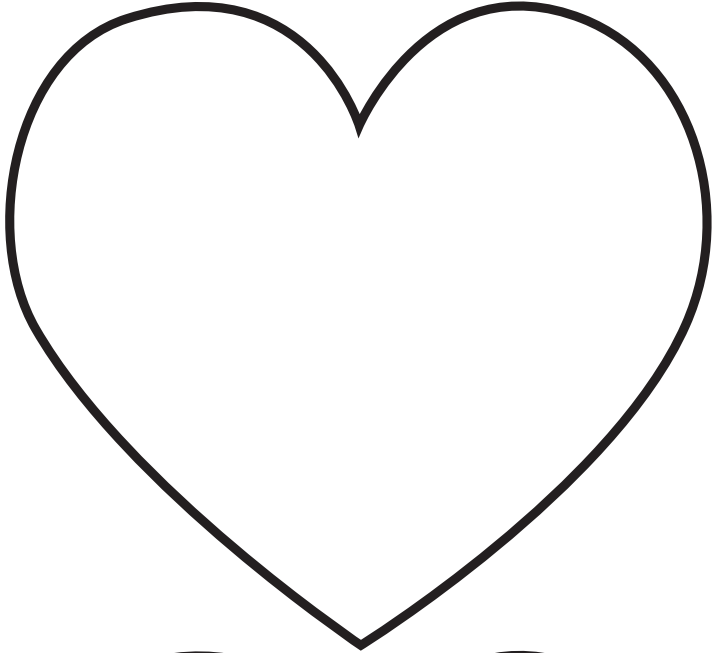


■ Story Picture: Zacchaeus Wants to See Jesus

Give each child a photocopy of the "Today I Learned..." handout. Have children color their handouts with crayons. Set out glue sticks and green tissue paper. Let children rub their tree pictures with a glue stick and then tear off small tissue paper "leaves" to stick on the tree. As children work, remind them that ► Jesus wants us to love him.

Heart Name Tags

Photocopy and cut out the name tags.



Jesus and Zacchaeus



Today I learned... Jesus wants us to love him.

Help me learn this:

"Never get tired of doing good"
(2 Thessalonians 3:13b).

Ask me:

- How did Zacchaeus show his love for Jesus?
- Why is it important to show Jesus that you love him?
- If our family loves Jesus, how should we treat others?

Lesson 10
Today your child learned that **JESUS WANTS US TO LOVE HIM**. Children heard a Bible story about Zacchaeus and how he learned to love Jesus. They talked about ways they can show their love for Jesus.

Family Fun

- Find a large tree in your yard or in a nearby park. Lie under the tree, and look up into its branches. Imagine looking up and seeing Zacchaeus in the tree! Hold hands, and tell Jesus how much you love him.

Zacchaeus Wants to See Jesus (Luke 19:1-4)

