

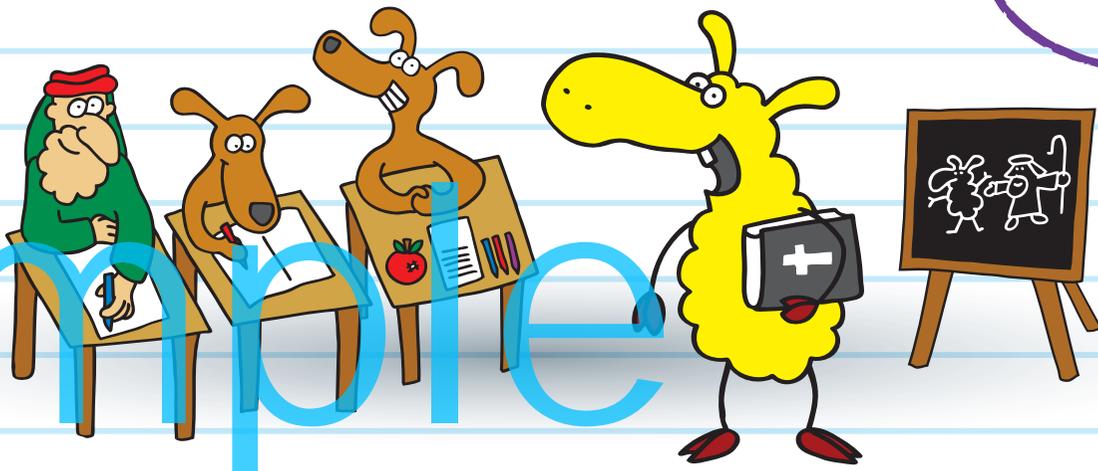


SHEEP DOG SCHOOL™

Zac the Taxman™

Created by
Andrew
McDonough

Sample



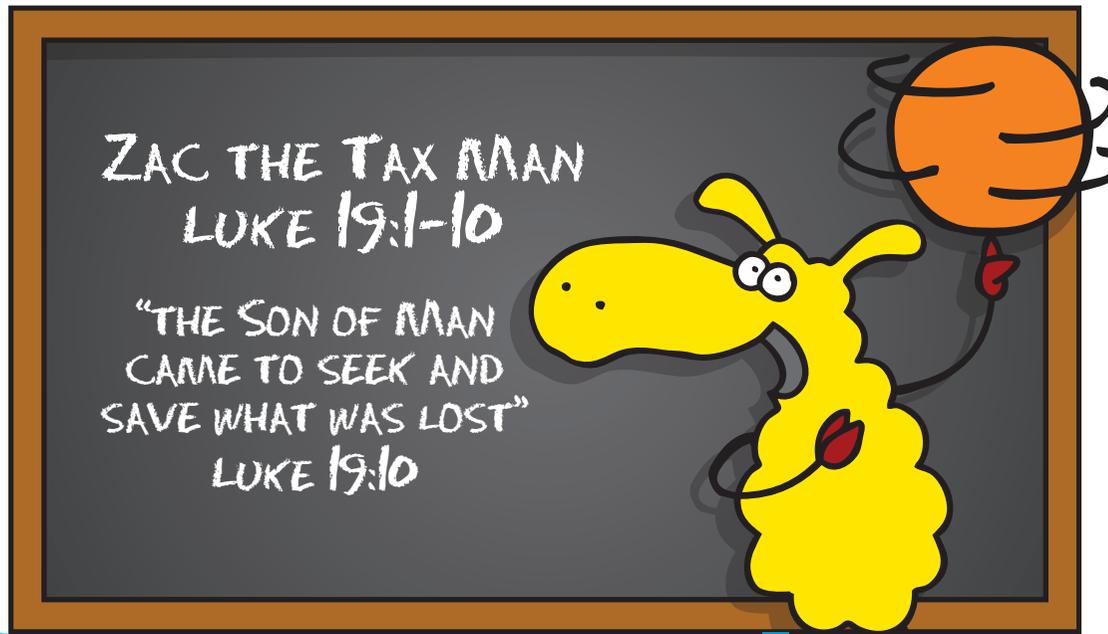
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Introduction



Hello Sheepdog School trainees.

Not only am I an expert on sheep, but I am an expert on all things lost. If you had to sum up the whole gospel of Luke in one verse, you couldn't go wrong with [Luke 19:10](#):

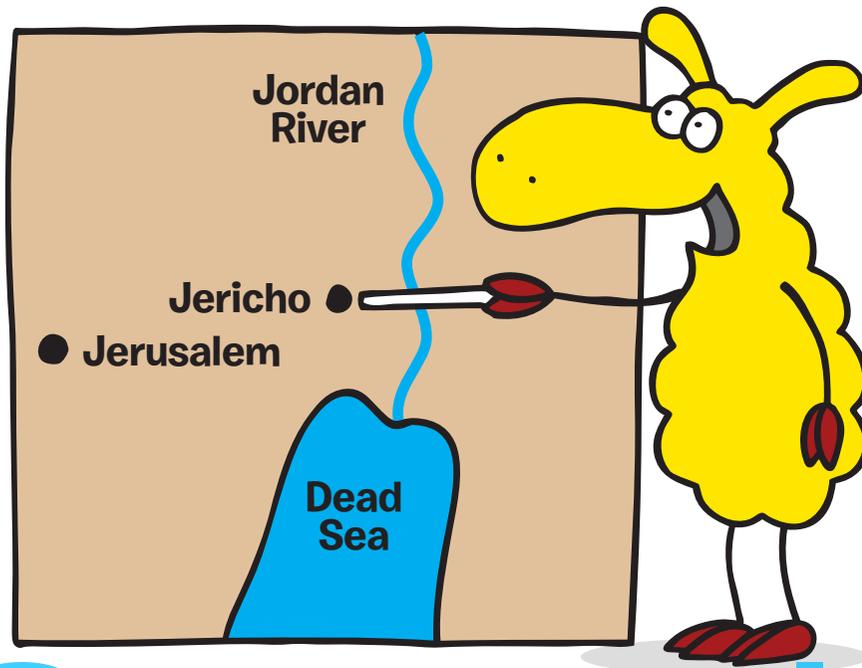
Luke 19:10 NIV

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

The book of Luke is full of people who have lost their way; some are rich, some are poor, some are sick, and some are greedy tax collectors! So grab your Bible, turn to [Luke 19:1-10](#), and let's read the story of Zacchaeus. Then, after class, let's shoot a few baskets.

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History & Geography

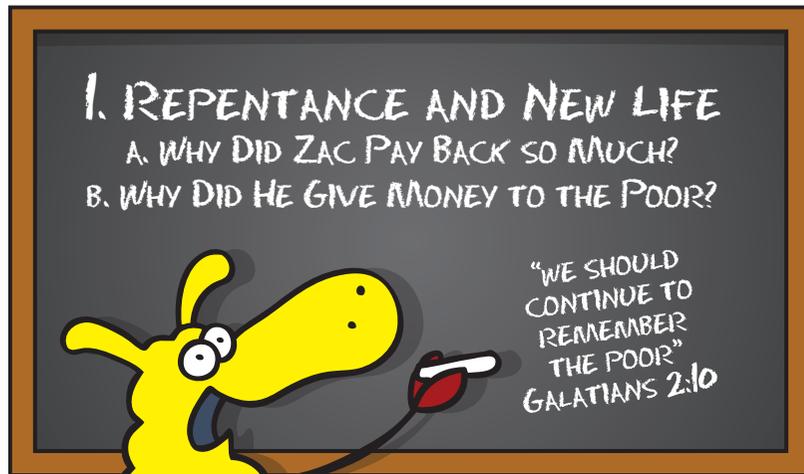


This is Jericho, where Zacchaeus lives.

(You may remember Jericho as the place whose walls fell down when Joshua showed up. You will find that story way back in [Joshua 6:1-20](#). By Zac's time, the walls were fixed and the city was thriving.) If you walk five miles south, you can go for a swim in the super-salty Dead Sea. It's almost ten times saltier than the ocean, so once you dive in, you float like a cork. The Dead Sea is 420 metres below sea level, making it the lowest place on the earth's surface. Jericho is sometimes called the "city of palm trees," but it also has one famous sycamore tree. I've heard this is where Zac likes to hang out.

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Master Class



1. Repentance and New Life

a. Why Did Zac Pay Back so Much?

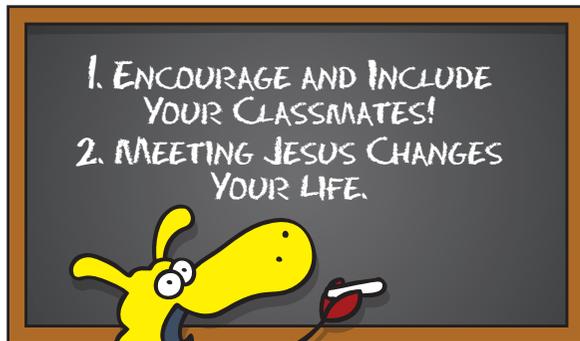
When Zac decided to follow Jesus, there was a change in the way he lived. This is true biblical repentance. There was costly restitution, as Zac repaid the people he had ripped off. In [Numbers 5:7](#), the fine for ripping people off was to repay in full plus one fifth. Zac instead gives back four times what was taken. If you look up [Exodus 22:1](#), you'll see this is the penalty for the worst crime I can think of –stealing a sheep. Zac is saying, “I haven't just overcharged a little, I have stolen from you.”

b. Why Did He Give Money to the Poor?

Zac also gave half of his wealth to the poor. While 20 percent was seen as generous, half of one's wealth was unheard of. This must not be overlooked. The way that Zac expressed his newfound faith was to give to the poor. Care for the poor was an important part of the life of Jesus and his first followers. Check out [Luke 14:12-14](#), [John 13:29](#), [Acts 2:45](#), and [Galatians 2:10](#). If we are to live as followers of Jesus, it is important we not only teach this to our children but also model it. It is also important to remember that Zac wasn't saved by these actions. Salvation comes through the work of Jesus on the cross, and Zac's actions were a direct sign of repentance, gratitude, and new life in Jesus.

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Teaching Tips



1. Encourage and Include Your Classmates!

The Bible doesn't tell us what happened to Zac when he was a boy. We can't be sure if Zac played basketball, but we can be certain he was teased as a child. Every child at some stage is teased, bullied, or excluded. And sadly, most children at some stage are involved in the teasing or excluding. These childhood experiences can have a profound impact on a person later in life. But this doesn't have to be the case! Zac's story is a fun way of helping children understand that teasing and excluding others can affect them later in life. The wonderful thing is that when children encourage and include others, they can have a profound positive impact on their classmates' future.

2. Meeting Jesus Changes Your Life.

Hooray for Zac! When Zac met Jesus, his life dramatically changed. Zac changed on the inside, and he was no longer mad or sad. Zac changed on the outside, and he went from being greedy to generous. The Bible calls these changes conversion and repentance. [James 2:14-18](#) describes how, when someone like Zac puts their faith in Jesus, it will show in their actions. It is worth discussing faith, action and other stories of conversion with older kids.

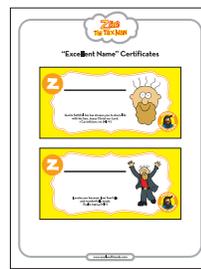
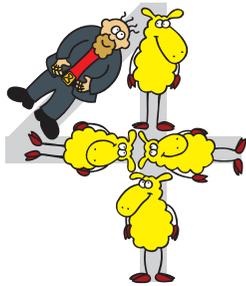
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Activities



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1. Let's All Play

While a competitive game of basketball is fun, there's nothing better than a game that involves everyone working together on the same team. Our favourite is called, "Make That Number!" The shepherd yells out a number and the entire group of children lie on the ground together in the shape of the number. The more sheep, the bigger numbers the shepherd yells out. (Note: if you have young children you may need to help them a little bit.) If you have a camera and a sycamore tree (or a ladder) climb up and take photos of the numbers created by the children.

2. Excellent Names

In the story Zac the Taxman, children called Zac names while he was growing up. Some names have the power to make you feel sad or mad, but an encouraging name can make you happy. When you play basketball and your teammates call you 'Incredible Ike' or 'Jumpin' Jennifer' you feel great! If people call you 'Big Zac' because you have a big generous heart, you'll aim to be even more generous. Prayerfully come up with an encouraging name for each of your children. You'll find some printable "Excellent Name" certificates with the downloadable

activity sheets. Write an "excellent name" in the space provided and a thoughtful comment underneath. This may highlight a quality you see in each child now, or could look to the future and what they may become when they grow up. Don't be surprised if 'Marvelous Ming,' 'Courageous Carlos,' or 'Judy the Wise' keep the certificate in their special-things box and grow into the excellent names you've given them!

3. Zac Mobile

When Jesus turned Zac's life around he brought balance and harmony to the people of Jericho. What better way to celebrate this than creating a Zac mobile.

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Bible Verses

Genesis 12:1-3 NIV

The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

'I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'

Exodus 22:1 CEV

If you steal an ox and slaughter or sell it, you must replace it with five oxen; if you steal a sheep and slaughter it or sell it, you must replace it with four sheep.

Numbers 5:7 CEV

You must confess your guilt and pay the victim in full for whatever damage has been done, plus a fine of twenty percent.

Joshua 6:20 CEV

The priests blew their trumpets again, and the soldiers shouted as loud as they could. The walls of Jericho fell flat. Then the soldiers rushed up the hill, went straight into the town, and captured it.

1 Kings 18:3-4 CEV

At that time Obadiah was in charge of Ahab's palace, but he faithfully worshipped the Lord. In fact, when Jezebel was trying to kill the Lord's prophets, Obadiah hid one hundred of them in two caves and gave them food and water.

Esther 4:15-16 CEV

Esther sent a message to Mordecai, saying, "Bring together all the Jews in Susa and tell them to go without eating for my sake! Don't eat or drink for three days and nights. My servant girls and I will do the same. Then I will go in to see the king, even if it means I must die."

Luke 3:12 NIV

Even tax collectors came to be baptised. 'Teacher,' they asked, 'what should we do?'

Luke 5:27

Later, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the place for paying taxes. Jesus said to him, "Come with me." Levi left everything and went with Jesus.

Luke 7:1-5 NIV

When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people who were listening, he entered Capernaum. There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was ill and about to die. The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, 'This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue.'

Luke 14:12-14 CEV

Then Jesus said to the man who had invited him: When you give a dinner or a banquet, don't invite your friends and family and relatives and rich neighbours. If you do, they will invite you in return, and you will be paid back. When you give a feast,

invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. They cannot pay you back. But God will bless you and reward you when his people rise from death.

Luke 19:1-10 CEV

Jesus was going through Jericho, where a man named Zacchaeus lived. He was in charge of collecting taxes and was very rich. Jesus was heading his way, and Zacchaeus wanted to see what he was like. But Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree. When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry down! I want to stay with you today." Zacchaeus hurried down and gladly welcomed Jesus. Everyone who saw this started grumbling, "This man Zacchaeus is a sinner! And Jesus is going home to eat with him." Later that

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The End



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Zac the Taxman Sheepdog School

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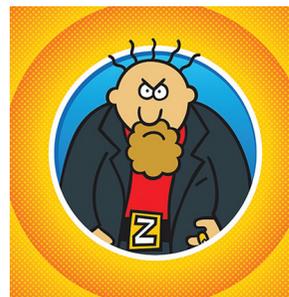
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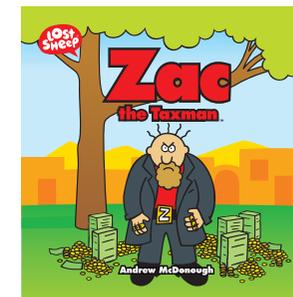
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Zac the Taxman Activity Book

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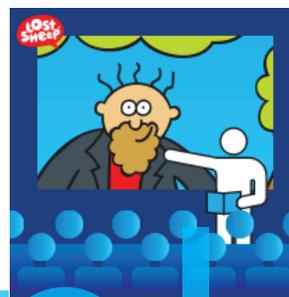
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