



## The Greatest Need

# WHEN HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED A DIY PROJECT GONE WRONG?

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## The POINT ➤

Only Jesus can take care of our need  
for forgiveness.

### ➤ LUKE 5:17-26

<sup>17</sup> On one of those days while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea, and also from Jerusalem. And the Lord's power to heal was in him.

<sup>18</sup> Just then some men came, carrying on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed. They tried to bring him in and set him down before him. <sup>19</sup> Since they could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the roof tiles into the middle of the crowd before Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> Seeing their faith he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>21</sup> Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

<sup>22</sup> But perceiving their thoughts, Jesus replied to them, "Why are you thinking this in your hearts? <sup>23</sup> Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? <sup>24</sup> But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he told the paralyzed man, "I tell you: Get up, take your stretcher, and go home."

<sup>25</sup> Immediately he got up before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God.

<sup>26</sup> Then everyone was astounded, and they were giving glory to God. And they were filled with awe and said, "We have seen incredible things today."



# THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

## FACT:

Falling from a ladder is a common DIY injury. When climbing a ladder, keep in mind the four-to-one rule: For every four feet high, the ladder base should be one foot from the wall.<sup>1</sup>



## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // SALVATION

No amount of good works can save a person, and Jesus paying the penalty for our sin is the only way to be reconciled to God.

Recently, my wife and I decided to tear out our old flooring and install new hardwood floors. When we got an estimate, we were shocked by the total cost. The materials certainly weren't cheap, but the labor was even more expensive than the supplies. So, we decided to install it ourselves.

"Do it yourself" (or DIY) projects have become popular in recent years. When we do things ourselves, it can save quite a bit of money. Plus, it can provide a sense of pride and accomplishment while allowing us to learn new skills. Sometimes, DIY is a great idea and the best way to tackle a job. However, there are times when a DIY approach simply won't work. Too many dads think they can cut their daughters' hair or even perform minor surgeries on themselves. It goes without saying that these are pretty terrible ideas—an expert is called for.

In today's passage, a man was dealing with an issue, and his friends knew it was no DIY project. In fact, the man's issue was so challenging that not just any expert would do—only one Expert had the wisdom and power to resolve the issue. But getting to this Expert wouldn't be easy. Reaching Him would require commitment and creativity.

## LUKE 5:17-19

**1** Why do you think the men were willing to go to so much trouble to bring their friend to Jesus?

**2** How is God calling you to grow as a whatever-it-takes kind of friend?

*Jesus was making a claim about His identity—He was claiming to be God. #BSFLTheGOAT*

## LUKE 5:20-21

**3** What role did the faith of the friends play in the healing of the paralyzed man?

**4** In what ways do you identify with the paralyzed man? How can you be more like him?

**5** Why is it so important that we believe Jesus is fully human and fully God?

## LUKE 5:22-26

**6** What was the significance of Jesus taking our humanity on Himself?

**7** Do you think it's easier to say someone's sins are forgiven or to say get up and walk? Explain.

**8** How have you responded to Jesus's revelation of Himself?





# LIVE IT OUT



## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // SALVATION

*No amount of good works can save a person, and Jesus paying the penalty for our sin is the only way to be reconciled to God.*

Because of sin, all people are hopelessly separated from God, and there's no way we can earn salvation. We are broken and desperately needy apart from Jesus, and our greatest need is forgiveness. Thankfully, Jesus paid the price for our sin on the cross, making it possible for those who repent and believe to be reconciled to God.

## > CHRIST

Jesus told the paralyzed man his sins were forgiven. Only Jesus has the power to forgive sins, and 1 John 1:9 teaches that when we confess our sins, agree with God that what He says is true, and take responsibility for the wrong we've done, He is faithful to forgive and cleanse us. Confession isn't simply a general "I'm sorry" for our pride and disobedience. Rather, we're to confess the ways we've specifically rebelled against God.

**9** Today, take time to confess your sins to God. Take responsibility for your choices and commit to making changes.

**10** Ask God for forgiveness and ask Him to restore you to a place of intimate fellowship with Him.

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

**SALVATION**

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY  
& WORLD

## > COMMUNITY

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We are called not only to confess our sins to God, but also to one another (James 5:16). This doesn't mean that we should confess every little sin we ever commit to a Christian friend. However, when we struggle with a pattern of sin and continue to struggle despite trying to make changes, it can be wise to confess to a trusted friend who can provide encouragement and accountability.

**11** What sin do you have a pattern of struggling with—one you've tried to stop but still fall back into?



**12** This week, consider inviting a trusted Christian friend or leader to help you overcome your struggles.

## > CULTURE

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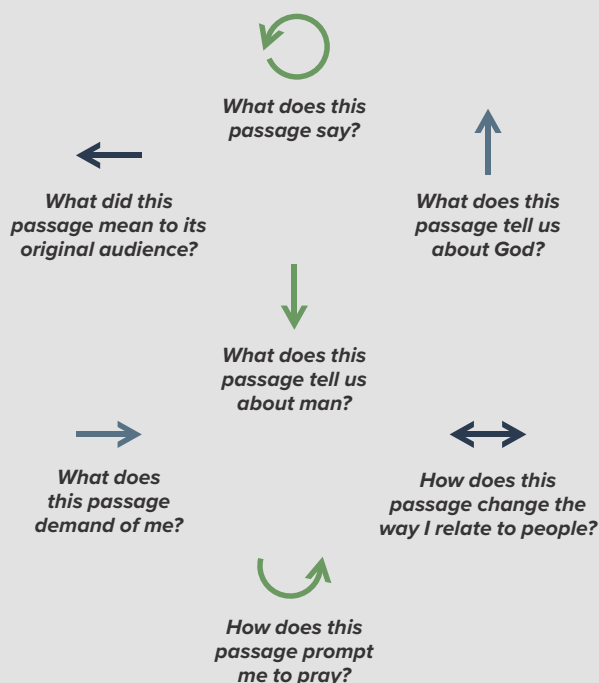
Who do you know at school or in your community who doesn't know Jesus? Who needs to experience the forgiveness and restoration that only Jesus can provide?

**13** Like the paralyzed man's friends, what will you do this week to bring those who need Jesus to Him?

# DAILY DEVOTIONS



## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



## Day One LUKE 19:1-2

It's important to understand who tax collectors were in Jesus's time. Israel was oppressed under Roman occupation, and the Israelites were forced to pay heavy taxes to Rome. Tax collectors were Jews who worked for Rome to enrich themselves. For instance, if Rome charged a tax of one dollar to travel on a road, the tax collector could charge an extra dollar to keep for himself, or perhaps even two or three extra dollars. The Jewish people despised tax collectors and viewed them as traitors and thieves. Jericho was a center for trade and commerce, and many people traveled through the city. Zacchaeus was not only a tax collector in Jericho but also a chief who oversaw other tax collectors. He was a wealthy man, and though he possessed financial wealth, he was hated by his Jewish brothers and sisters. The money wasn't enough to bring the satisfaction and fulfillment he desperately wanted.

- **Why were tax collectors hated among the Jewish people?**
- **When have you been tempted to pursue satisfaction in material possessions or earthly wealth?**

## Day Two

# LUKE 19:3-4

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At this point, Jesus was moving toward Jerusalem where He would celebrate the Passover, which would culminate in His crucifixion and resurrection. News of Jesus's ministry and power had spread far and wide, and people had probably heard about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. When they heard Jesus would soon be passing through Jericho, huge crowds had likely lined the streets to catch a glimpse of this incredible teacher. Because Zacchaeus was small in stature, he couldn't see past the crowd. But he was desperate to see Jesus. Chances are he knew something was missing in his life, and he thought that Jesus just might be the One to provide answers. In his desperation, Zacchaeus climbed the low-hanging limbs of a nearby tree, an undignified act for someone in his position. But he was willing to do whatever it took to encounter Jesus.

➤ **Why was Zacchaeus desperate to see Jesus?**

➤ **How does your life show this kind of desperation?**

## Day Three

# LUKE 19:5-6

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Hundreds of people, perhaps even thousands, lined Jericho's streets as Jesus passed through. But one man caught Jesus's attention. When Jesus looked up and saw Zacchaeus clinging to the branches of the tree, He ordered Zacchaeus to hurry down, for Jesus would be coming to his house. We might wonder why Zacchaeus stood out. Was it because Jesus knew he was wealthy and had authority? Was it because Zacchaeus was the only one brave enough to climb a tree to see Jesus? Jesus's mission was to seek and save the lost and here Jesus would change Zacchaeus's life to again show why He had come. Zacchaeus had an emptiness that would not be filled by wealth, and he truly was curious about Jesus based off what he had heard about Him. He was a desperate sinner, and many in this condition would shrink back when in the presence of true holiness. But Zacchaeus saw in Jesus not the expression of God's judgment and wrath, but His mercy and grace. We are invited into the presence of this same Jesus today.

➤ **Why did Zacchaeus catch Jesus's attention?**

➤ **Why is it so important that we understand the true nature of Jesus?**

## Day Four

# LUKE 19:7

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Tax collectors were despised in first-century Israel. Zacchaeus wasn't just any tax collector—he was a chief among the traitors and thieves, and he was hated by both the religious leaders and the common people. The crowds at Jericho knew exactly who Zacchaeus was, and when they heard Jesus's invitation, they began to grumble, "What in the world does this Rabbi have to do with a terrible sinner like Zacchaeus?" However, they'd missed an important truth: Jesus hadn't come for the well but the sick. He didn't come for the righteous but the sinners. The crowds saw themselves as the good guys, and Rome (and Zacchaeus) as the bad guys. Little did they know that this kind of pride set them in opposition against God and that Zacchaeus's humility put him in the position that Jesus would come into his life.

- **Why did the crowds complain about Jesus's invitation to Zacchaeus?**
- **How do we put ourselves in the position for Jesus to work in our lives?**

## Day Five

# LUKE 9:8-10

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Scripture teaches that if we confess and repent, taking responsibility for our sins and committing to change, Jesus offers forgiveness. Zacchaeus did just that. He promised to provide for the needs of the vulnerable, and beyond this, Zacchaeus promised to pay back those he'd taken advantage of four times what he'd taken. This is true confession and repentance. His actions demonstrated a right response to true conviction, and it was a legitimate commitment to forsaking wrong and pursuing right. Jesus saw Zacchaeus's heart and told him that, on that day, salvation had come to Zacchaeus. The reason Jesus came to earth was to seek and save the lost. When we respond in the same ways as Zacchaeus, salvation is available to us too.

- **What did Jesus see in Zacchaeus that led Him to say that salvation had come?**
- **Why are you confident in your salvation?**