



'Worship at home' October 30th 2022



We come to worship to find in God a new way of seeing and a new way of being.

Light a candle to remind you of Christ's presence, with you always.

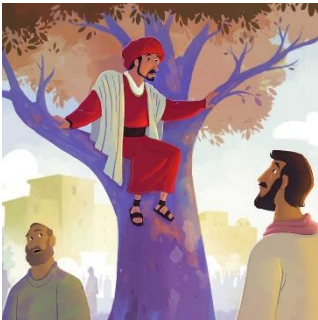
Opening

Whoever we are, and wherever we are,
Christ desires to bring us into the kingdom of love and life.

God seeks us, meeting us where we are.

Christ brings healing, restoration and a new way of seeing;
We are transformed in love, bringing peace and understanding.

We come to know God, who is making all things new.



Have you ever had the experience of getting a new pair of glasses, and suddenly find yourself seeing things you had not seen before? Like roadsigns? Or the dust on the sideboard? Zacchaeus was short in stature: he had trouble seeing. An encounter with Jesus changed him, enabling him to see things in a new way.

Luke 10:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus

was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." But 1

Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus

said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

New International Version

As a child, I enjoyed climbing trees: the challenge of finding just the right foothold, hoisting yourself up on the next branch, while trying to avoid the scratchy branches on your bare arms; climbing high enough to see the lost balls in the gutter, or an inviting glimpse of the blue of the neighbour's pool. When we are up a tree, we see things we otherwise would not see, details that might otherwise be hidden. We see a wider scene, broader horizons, beyond our own small world. It brings a new perspective.

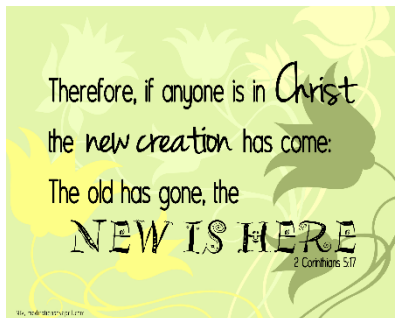
Zacchaeus found a new perspective in an encounter with Jesus while high in a tree. He came to see a wider scene, beyond his own small world, in his experience of the love and grace of God.



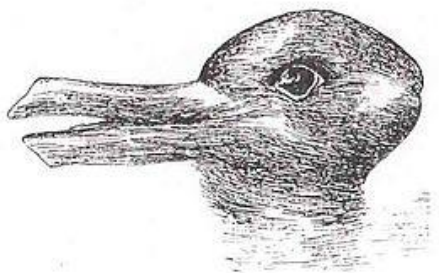
"Today salvation has come to this house," says Jesus, and he is speaking not just of a change in the condition of this man's soul brought about by a private inner moment of faith and belief. No, when the gospels speak of salvation, they are speaking of something far more broad and comprehensive. The Greek word for being 'saved' is also translated "made well," "healed," or "made whole." It refers not to some private transaction between God and the soul, but to the healing and transformation of the whole person! Those who experience this salvation are changed beings! They have been given a new identity, a new way of seeing, a new way of living. Their lives are radically transformed! Salvation has implications for every aspect of their lives: their work, their finances, their relationships, their priorities, their character, their spiritual practice. Everything becomes new!

The Christian life is a life of transformation. The call to follow Christ is a call to a lifelong process of conversion. It requires us to let go of our former identities – built on our gifts, our achievements, and our social standing – in order to embrace a new identity in Christ. It asks us to set aside our selfish goals and pursuits to take on a new set of priorities and values. It invites us to become changed people: people whose lives are characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and humility. It summons us to treat every person we meet with dignity and respect, seeing that they too are made in the image of God.

Br. David Vryhof <https://www.ssje.org>



How easy do you find it to set aside your own goals and pursuits to take on new priorities and values? How have you found yourself changed by following Christ? How do you live differently?



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambiguous_image

Look at this image.

What do you see?

**Look again –
do you see anything else?**

Sometimes how we see things depends on our perspective. Whether we see a rabbit or a duck in this image depends on what we are expecting. When

we follow Christ, we set our expectations aside, and we come to see things differently.

It was scandalous then, Jesus:
your inappropriate choice of associations,
your insistence on being with those
who were least likely to be friends of God.



It's scandalous now, Jesus!

We like to think we're more gracious than that,
but we still struggle with who you choose to include.

Yet, you also include us who, if we're honest,
are just as unlikely, just as undeserving;
And as we walk with you and work with you
we discover others that journey beside us,
and who find us to be just as much the unlikely companions
that we find them to be;

So, we remember unlikely leaders,
who with few resources and little influence,
make significant contributions to the world;

We remember unlikely healers,
who through little more than their compassion,
bring wholeness to broken and wounded others;

We remember unlikely benefactors,
who, with no wealth to speak of,
give generously to those with even less;

We remember unlikely saints,
who, though tainted and stained, broken and imperfect,
bring sacredness and life to hopeless ones

And as we pray, we celebrate all the Zacchaeuses,
who, like us have been touched by your grace and forgiveness,
and have become your unlikely companions
in saving the world. Amen.

John van de Laar <https://sacredise.com/unlikely-companions/>

Closing

May we go knowing that God
forgives us and offers us
new life, and that the Holy
Spirit transforms us to walk
in Christ's way of love,
caring for and being
generous towards others.
Go in peace, to love and
serve God and each other. Amen

