



3-11-18 Sermon Discussion Guide

“Game On! - Passion”



Context

Our Christian Education theme for year is “Game On!” We are encouraging people to be fully engaged participants in the ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Throughout this year, the second Sunday of each month will be our “Game On Sundays.” We’ll explore how we play this game as Christians and what we need in order to play it well. In short, we are all players on the team. Our presence matters. This month, we combine this theme with our Lenten sermon series, the Road to Jerusalem. Our word for this month is “passion.”

We are walking with Jesus on his journey to the cross, on the road to Jerusalem. In Luke 9:51, it says that Jesus resolutely set his face toward Jerusalem. Each week, we’ll get one step closer to Jerusalem, to the cross, and learn from Jesus along the way. While taking this journey, we’ll take an extra look at the geography and history of this journey – using maps and pictures of the Holy Land.

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

Think of a time when you were lost. It could have been physically, emotionally, or spiritually. How did you feel when you were lost? Did somebody find you eventually, or did you find your own way?

Discussing the Text – Luke 19:1-10

1. Luke 19:2 says that Zacchaeus was wealthy and a chief tax collector. Multiple times in the book of Luke, tax collectors are called sinners by people. In Luke 18, a rich young ruler leaves Jesus because he is told to give all he has to the poor. In response, Jesus says that it’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. With all of this background, how do you think Luke wants his readers to view Zacchaeus at the beginning of this story? Is he set up to be a good guy or a bad guy?
2. Luke 19:3 says that Zacchaeus couldn’t see because “on account of” the crowd in some translations. So not only was he short, but the crowd was actively preventing him from seeing Jesus. Why do you think this was?
3. In verse 7, the crowd mutters or murmurs, “Jesus is the guest of a sinner.” Why do you think this angers the crowd so much?
4. In verse 5, Jesus says he “must” stay at Zacchaeus’ house today. Why “must” he?
5. In response to Jesus’ invitation, Zacchaeus says he will give half of his possessions and pay people back four-fold in verse 8. However, the Greek could just as reliably be translated as saying “Look, Lord! I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I pay back four times the amount.” This subtle difference implies that Zacchaeus already does these practices, but he’s still socially rejected. How would this change the meaning of the story and of what Jesus did for Zacchaeus?

So what?

1. Who are the “tax collectors” in our culture? Who does our church write off? How could we seek them out?
2. Zacchaeus responded to Jesus by giving half of his possession and paying restitution. How have you responded to God’s grace in your life?



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3. If this is the last stop before Jesus gets to Jerusalem, and he "must" visit Zacchaeus, what do you think this says about Jesus' view of his ministry and his purpose?
4. What do you think it means to be "a son of Abraham" described in verse 9? Is this something we should strive to be?
5. What do you think the salvation described in verse 9 is describing?
6. If Jesus came to seek and save the lost, what does this imply about the mission of the church?

Prayer

Have the group share any prayer requests or prayers of thanksgiving they may have. Then invite the group to pray for people who are lost throughout this week.