

Rich Young Ruler and Zack

(Based on the stories of the Rich Young Ruler and Zacchaeus)

RJR: The other day I heard Jesus was coming to town.

Z: I heard Jesus was on his way to Jericho and I really wanted to see him.

RJR: There were all these people who wanted to talk with him, but that does not matter.

Z: There was a large crowd gathered just to look at him. The problem is, I'm "vertically challenged"

RJR: I walked right up to him, pushing aside anyone who was in my way. People know who I am. I am a very important and wealthy member of the community, so everyone knows my time is important.

Z: People know who I am. I am the head tax collector. People don't like paying their taxes, and they don't like me. So no one was going to make room for me to see Jesus. I tried to find a place there I could see him, but everyone was getting in my way.

RJR: When I got to Jesus, I knew he would be excited to see me.

Z: I decided to climb up a tree so I could see Jesus. I knew he wouldn't want to see me.

RJR: So I looked at Jesus and said, "Good Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

Z: Jesus was walking along the road, I was in the tree, and then he stopped.

RJR and Z (in unison): He looked at me for a second, and I was shocked by what he said.

RJR: He was kinda rude when he said, "Why do you call me good. Only God is truly good."

Z: He was so compassionate, he looked at me and said, "Zacchaeus! "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today."

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RJR: Finally He answered my question by telling me how great I am. He said, you know the commandments: 'You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. Honor your father and mother.'

Z: Finally someone was accepting me even though they knew how awful I am. I climbed down that tree as fast as I could. Everyone was staring at me.

RYR: Everyone was staring at me. I proudly responded, "I've carefully obeyed all these commandments since I was young."

Z: I grabbed Jesus by the hand and I led him to my house. I could not believe it. Jesus was having dinner with me! I couldn't believe he would want to be anywhere near someone so despised.

RYR: I thought Jesus would want someone with my resources and likability, but he said to me. "There is still one thing you haven't done." ONE THING I HAVEN'T DONE!

RYR (disgusted) and Z (shocked) - *in unison*: Are you kidding me?

Z: After cheating people, taking their money Jesus loved me. He saw my emptiness, and I was changed.

RYR: He the said to me, "Sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Z: I said to him, ""I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!"

RYR: Sell all my possessions? What is he thinking?

Z: Give away my stuff? What was I thinking?

RYR: I couldn't do it. I just walked away. He was asking too much.

Z: I did it. It was so freeing. He changed my life.

RYR: I heard him make some snarky comment that it was too hard for a rich person to get to heaven. We couldn't even fit through an eye of a needle. What a jerk.

Z: He told me that "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham." He transformed my life. What a Savior.

RYR (disgusted) and Z (shocked) - *in unison*: The people around him were so shocked.

RYR: How could he let someone like me go? Think of all I could have done to make him a more successful rabbi.

Z.: How could he associate with people like me? Think of all the ways I sent his ministry back.

RYR: I went back to living my life, it was pretty good anyways. (*walks off stage*)

Z: Jesus once said, "If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it." I may have given up my life as a tax collector, but I started living a whole new story, and following Jesus has been amazing.