

## **Curiosity Climbed A Tree To See Him**

We are all familiar with the Gospel reading that tells us the story of the tax collector, Zacchaeus. Tax collectors were hated during the Roman times. They obtained their wealth from cheating people out of their hard earned money by raising the taxes and keeping the extra for themselves. The more a tax collector could wring out of the people, the more he could keep. When Jesus came to Jericho, curiosity got the best of Zacchaeus and he wanted to get a glimpse of Rabbi Yeshua (Jesus' Hebrew name). He just had to "see what he was like." The tug that Zacchaeus felt inside certainly was the grace of God drawing him closer to his Son. As the story goes, while walking towards Zacchaeus, Jesus saw past the crimes that laid in his heart and prompted him to come down from the sycamore tree. What Jesus did next stunned and angered the Jewish people: he invited himself to the tax-collector's home. Their belief is that a person would be ritually impure by entering the house of a public sinner; particularly so close to Passover. Yet Zacchaeus could have declined the offer. God is not about forcing Himself upon His children. The door within our heart and soul must be opened from the inside. We must make the decision to allow ourselves to receive His mercy. Jesus offering to come to Zacchaeus' home, was an offering of forgiveness and mercy. Mercy had already been offered to him and grace moved him out to the street and up the tree. Why was Zaccheus endeavoring to see Jesus? Do we find ourselves wanting to "climb a tree" to see Jesus and seek His forgiveness and mercy? What was it that he heard about Jesus that sparked his curiosity? Are you wanting to learn more about Jesus and your Catholic faith? As you gaze upon this scene, can you identify with Zaccheus? Can you become him for a moment? Are you looking for Jesus to call you down from the sycamore tree? Have you ever felt that you were not worthy to approach Jesus? Have you ever felt like an outcast? Your guardian angel is constantly nudging you to encounter Jesus and remove yourself from the tree. Listen to him for he knows what is good for you.

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