

The Man in a Tree

Story told at Messy Church on 25th January 2014

Zacchaeus stretched up – up – to the lowest branch of the tree. He could only just reach, he was such a little man. He began to climb...

Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. But there were so many people. They were bigger than he was and he couldn't see past them. So he said to himself, 'I'll climb that tree. I'll be able to see him from there.'

Jesus came by. Zacchaeus looked down at him from his tree. To his surprise Jesus stopped. He looked right up to Zacchaeus.

'Come down from that tree!' Jesus said with a big smile. 'I want to come to your house today!'. He said it as if they were friends already.

Zacchaeus was very excited. He was rich, but no one wanted to be friends with him. Zacchaeus was a tax man and a cheat. When he came to collect people's tax money, he made them pay too much. 'How can Jesus go to that man's house?' everyone grumbled 'Zacchaeus is nothing but a nasty little cheat.'

But Zacchaeus stopped cheating. Jesus was his friend now and that had changed everything: he wouldn't cheat anymore..

'I shall give half my money to the people who don't have enough' he said to Jesus, later that day 'and I'll pay back everyone I've cheated – four times as much as I took!'. The crowds were amazed at the difference meeting Jesus had made.

'It's people like you I want to rescue and bring back to God' Jesus said. He was very pleased.

(This story is from the Bible – the book of Luke, chapter 19 starting at verse 1.)

