

# Characters from the Story of Zacchaeus Cards

---

**Directions:** Cut out the character cards and give out one card to each group of students. Have students read the short description of the character and discuss the role he or she played in the story of Zacchaeus.

## Zacchaeus

You are the chief tax collector in Jericho and a very wealthy man. Jericho is under Roman rule, and you collect taxes for the Romans. When you collect the taxes, you take more than is your due and pocket the difference. Everyone knows you are a thief and a sinner. You are small in stature and are hated by the people in Jericho.

### Discuss the following questions:

1. Why are you up in the tree?
2. Why do you want to see Jesus?
3. How do you feel knowing that everyone despises you?
4. How do you feel when Jesus speaks to you?
5. Why do you voice your sins and tell how you will repay your neighbors in the presence of Jesus?
6. How do you feel when Jesus forgives you? And what do you think the effect will be on the rest of your life?

## Simon

You are a carpenter living in Jericho. You struggle to make a decent living to support your wife and children, and you resent paying taxes to the Romans. You believe that Jesus has come to overthrow the Roman Empire. You know Zacchaeus well, and you know that he takes more money from you than the Romans require. You are in the crowd when Jesus stops and asks to stay at Zacchaeus's home.

### Discuss the following questions:

1. Why did you come to see Jesus?
2. What do you know of Zacchaeus? Describe his character.
3. How do you feel living under Roman rule?
4. Tell how it makes you feel to pay Roman taxes.
5. What are you thinking when Jesus stops to talk to Zacchaeus?
6. Do you believe Zacchaeus when he says that he will give half his riches to the poor and repay everyone he has cheated four times the amount? Why or why not?

## James

You have given up everything to follow Jesus and have been amazed by the way He seeks out the unclean, the outcasts, and the sinners in every town you pass through. You hang onto every word He says and have never felt so loved. The crowd in Jericho is large, and you feel the presence of the Roman soldiers in the city. You are walking with Jesus when He notices a funny little man in a tree and moves toward him. When Jesus speaks to the man in the tree, you hear the crowd murmur their disapproval and know something miraculous is about to happen.

### Discuss the following questions:

1. Why are you following Jesus?
2. How do you feel when you are in the presence of Jesus?
3. Does the presence of the Roman soldiers worry you?
4. Are you surprised when Jesus moves toward the funny little man in the tree? Why or why not?
5. How do you feel when you hear the crowd's disapproval?
6. What are your thoughts when you learn that the man is a sinner and listen to him repent in the presence of Jesus?

## Martha

You were a leper. You were unclean and an outcast in your community, living in poverty on the outskirts of town. Everything changed the day Jesus walked through your town. The moment you saw His face and heard Him speak, you knew He was special. When you touched His robe, you felt His love. Jesus healed you of leprosy, and you have become one of His many followers. When Jesus enters Jericho, the crowds grow large and you struggle to stay close to Jesus. You notice the Roman soldiers watching the crowd. The crowd begins to murmur, and you wonder what is wrong. Next you notice Jesus speaking to a little man in a tree, and immediately you understand that He has found someone who needs His love.

### Discuss the following questions:

1. Why are you following Jesus?
2. How do you feel when you are in the presence of Jesus?
3. Does the presence of the Roman soldiers worry you?
4. Are you surprised when Jesus moves toward the funny little man in the tree? Why or why not?
5. How do you feel when you hear the crowd's disapproval?
6. What are your thoughts when you learn that the man is a sinner and listen to him repent in the presence of Jesus?