

The Joyful, Hilarious, Illogical Giver!

A dramatic challenge to give based on Luke 19:2-9

Zacchaeus: Yes, they called me lots of names. "Shorty" was the least of 'em. Oh, I've heard all the jokes: "Hey, Zacchaeus is so short . . ."

(waits for the audience to respond)

Zacchaeus: I said, "Zacchaeus is so short . . ."

Audience responds: How short is he?

Zacchaeus: That's as old as the hills I know. And I've heard them all. It's true, you know, I am short. But there's something worse than being short, and that's being a short tax collector. Money is addictive, isn't it? You reach a certain status of wealth; you buy things, lots of things; and it's just not enough. You want more and more. There's just no end to it. Some of you know what I mean. I can see it in your eyes. Some of you scrape and save for that special thing that caught your eye. You finally buy it, and then you feel this emptiness. It's not enough. I sit down each night and make graphs of my investments and savings. (*chuckles*) Yeah, some of you do that, too. But no matter how much wealth I piled up, I wanted more. Money was power! The more I had, the more power I felt! Power is intoxicating. I didn't think anything in my life or in the world, for that matter, could be as powerful as my money. But I was wrong. I'd heard about Jesus from a six-year-old kid in the street. He looked down at me . . . (*chuckles*) Don't laugh! He looked down at me and said that the Miracle Worker was coming. "The Miracle Worker!" I exclaimed. "Yes, Jesus!" I didn't know much about Jesus, but the title "Miracle Worker" caught my attention, especially when it came from a little boy. I'd never seen a miracle. I climbed that tree expecting a magician, but I saw something very different. He was just a man, an ordinary man. I know this sounds strange; but when I saw Him, I saw love in His eyes. My heart stirred within me. As He moved through the crowd, His look of joy and compassion flooded my lonely life. I wax poetic, I know, but I know of no other way to describe how I felt. I felt like I was the loneliest man alive, and this Man was a light in my darkness. He walked up to me, and I felt my chains fall off. What kind of chains? Well, strangely enough, I realized that what gave me the most pleasure in life was the thing that had me bound. This lust for money consumed me. When Jesus spoke, I saw His mouth move and I knew He was talking to me; but I was dumbfounded. He mentioned something about staying at my house. I just fell out of that tree! It's true. I was only seven or eight feet from the ground, but that was a long way for me. Before I had the chance to change my mind, I blurted out: "Lord, I give half of my possessions to the poor; and to those I have cheated, I will repay four times!" I thought to myself, Did I just say what I think I said? Before I knew it, I said it again! I rushed to my house, opened up my savings, and well, you know the rest of

the story. Those were the happiest moments I had ever known up to that time. I gave and gave and gave. The chains were broken! I was a free man! I no longer hoarded every precious coin for myself. I was passionately in love with the idea of giving. I had never known such freedom in my life. Dear friend, do you want to be free? Do you understand the joy of giving generously, even foolishly, to the Lord? He's still here. He still wants to bless you with hilarious joy. He can break the chains of greed and loneliness if you are willing. God loves a joyful, hilarious, illogical giver!

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