

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

By Kathryn Higgins

A comedic dramatization of Luke 19 NIV for three actors. Three actors stand across the stage, several feet apart, the shortest in the middle -number TWO (Zacchaeus). A drama box (or chair) is down stage center, in front of them. This script could be performed in place of reading the scripture. With energy-

ONE Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.

THREE A man was there by the name of-

THREE & ONE Zacchaeus. *(Both pointing to TWO. TWO points at themselves.)*

ONE He was a chief tax collector and was-

ALL -very wealthy! *(All make money/greedy gestures)*

ONE He wanted to see who Jesus was,

TWO -but because he was short...

ONE & THREE look to TWO, as if to say, 'yah, you're pretty short.'

TWO -but because he was so short, he could not see over the crowd.
(Goes up on tippy toes.)

While THREE continues, TWO runs down stage, and climbs an imaginary tree (the drama box).

THREE So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

ONE assumes the role of Jesus, tidies up their clothes, smooths hair, and walks towards TWO on the box.

THREE When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him-

ONE *(Reaching arm up to Zacchaeus.)* "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

TWO is ecstatic, jumps off the box and gives Jesus a hug.

THREE So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. And all the people who saw this said –

ALL make a quick spin around in place, lining up again across the stage, this time shoulder-to-shoulder, transforming into the 'crowd' looking happy/clasping hands etc.

ALL How lovely!
(They pose in a dreamy position, looking towards the box. Beat.)

TWO *(Breaking the pose.)* Uh, I don't think that's how it went.

THREE takes out cell phone (or pocket Bible) quickly turns to the story, they all hover over THREE's shoulders, reading the story. We hear muttering of lines already performed, "...Zacchaeus was short....big crowd...climbed the fig tree..." etc.

THREE Ah yes! Back to the tree!

They all rewind to the position where Jesus reached up to Zacchaeus on the drama box. Repeated lines are performed exactly as they were the first time.

ONE *(Reaching arm up to Zacchaeus.)* "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

TWO is ecstatic, jumps off the box and gives Jesus/ONE a hug.

THREE So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. And all the people who saw this said –

ALL make a quick spin around in place, lining up again across the stage, this time shoulder-to-shoulder, transforming into the 'crowd' looking upset/accusatory/pointing etc.

ALL *(Gasp!)* "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner!" *(They freeze in place.)*

THREE *(Breaking out of the pose.)* But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord,

TWO *(Breaking out of the pose, walking downstage, they speak out to the audience, as if Jesus is there.)*
"Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, *(falls to knees)* I will pay back four times the amount."

THREE Jesus said to him,

Breaking out of the pose ONE (as Jesus), walks towards TWO placing a hand on their shoulder. TWO looks at Jesus.)

ONE “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.”

TWO stands and joins in.

ONE & TWO “For the Son of Man came-“

THREE joins in, they stand back in their original positions.

ALL -“to seek and to save the lost.”

END