

### **Introduction**

The name Zacchaeus means 'pure'. In today's story, Zacchaeus didn't start off this way. He was a wealthy man, who had become rich in ways that meant others didn't like him. However, when he met Jesus, he gave half his possessions to feed the poor and changed from a very unhappy person to one who was very thankful and glad about being alive. This is the effect that Jesus can have on people and through him we create a church where everyone is welcome. This is what we do through Messy Church, which is for people of all ages.

**The bible passage is from the gospel of Luke, chapter 19, verses 1 to 10.**

Jesus was going through Jericho, <sup>2</sup> where a man named Zacchaeus lived. He was in charge of collecting taxes and was very rich. <sup>3-4</sup> Jesus was heading his way, and Zacchaeus wanted to see what he was like. But Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry down! I want to stay with you today." <sup>6</sup> Zacchaeus hurried down and gladly welcomed Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> Everyone who saw this started grumbling, "This man Zacchaeus is a sinner! And Jesus is going home to eat with him."

<sup>8</sup> Later that day Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "I will give half of my property to the poor. And I will now pay back four times as much to everyone I have ever cheated."

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Today you and your family have been saved, because you are a true son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> The Son of Man came to look for and to save people who are lost."

There is a great re-telling of the story of Zacchaeus, [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUJV3Jm8ej0):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUJV3Jm8ej0>.

## Activities:

### 1. Money game

**You will need:** a whiteboard (or kitchen worktop with a strip of paper at the edge to mark out the numbered lines) which provides a good slippery surface (roughly 14x20”), with ten equally spaced lines to create nine ‘home’ spaces, the bottom line being four inches from the start; 2p coins (or equivalent); a score-pad; pencils

Zacchaeus was in charge of collecting money from the people in Jericho and he became very rich through doing this, probably because he kept some of the money for himself! There are several board games linked to making, spending and investing money, such as: Payday, Monopoly, Go for Broke, shove halfpenny. We’re going to play shove halfpenny.

The aim is to shove 2p coins up the board to land in between the lines. To do this, you position the 2p coin just overlapping the start line and then use any part of your hand to propel it forward. There is one point for every coin that lands in between the lines. The aim is for a player to be first to score two points for each of the nine sections. Each player has five coins to play with each round.



**Talk about:** many of us have a competitive drive which affects attitudes to money, riches and poverty. I wonder what motivated Zacchaeus to be the man he was before he met Jesus. Was it greed? Revenge? Ambition? Whatever it was, it makes his transformation on meeting Jesus even more amazing.

### 2. Turning over a new leaf

**You will need:** coloured paper, pens

Cut out some leaf shapes from the paper. On one side, write words or draw pictures to show those things that you are sorry about. Zacchaeus might have written greed, hurting others, or pride. Now, turn over the leaves and write new words or draw new pictures that describe how you want to be different with God’s help – for example, more generous, more caring, or more humble. Make these leaves your prayers to God.

**Talk about:** Zacchaeus changed dramatically when he met Jesus. What do you think they talked about when they met for a meal at Zacchaeus’ home?

### 3. Having fun in the woods

**You will need: the Woodland Trust sheet for identifying tree leaves (see the end of this document), or download the Tree ID app on your phone.**

Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree. Go down into the woods and see what trees you can identify. If you are on Facebook, post a note of the trees that you have found to our Messy Church page at:

[www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/](http://www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/). I've made a start with some

from our garden (Elder and Birch):



**Talk about:** how many different varieties of tree do you think there are? Let's see how many different varieties we can find by the time of our next Messy Church in September.

### 4. Where is Zacchaeus?

**You will need: An A4 (or bigger) sheet of paper; pencils to draw and colour a trunk and branches; newspaper, or other rough paper; scissors**

When Zacchaeus climbed into the sycamore tree, he thought no-one could see him, but Jesus did.

Draw a tree shape and colour the trunk and branches. Cut out about 20 sycamore leaf shapes from paper (you could use any rough paper, for example, newspaper). Glue each leaf onto the tree, gluing the bottom edge of the leaf only. Number the leaves. Cut out a tiny Zacchaeus from card or paper.

To play the game, one player hides Zacchaeus behind a leaf. See who can find him in the fewest guesses, taking turns to be the player hiding Zacchaeus.



**Talk about:** What made Zacchaeus want to hide in the tree? Are there some things that make you want to hide away sometimes?

### 5. Jesus paper chain

**You will need: coloured paper, scissors, sticky tape, pen**

We are all included in God's family because of Jesus. Jesus always made friends with those like Zacchaeus who were left out of being part of a group. Make a paper chain, long enough to wear as a necklace, or longer to hang in the garden for a summer party.

Think of all those people who you know and write their names on different coloured strips of paper, then think of others who might be feeling left out, or who might need extra help at this time and write their names, or a description on other strips. In a new different colour make up many strips of paper and write the name 'Jesus' on these. Make a paper chain using sticky tape, with a 'Jesus' link between all the other strips of paper, showing how Jesus links us all together.



**Talk about:** How it's hard to be close to others when we have to be socially isolated due to COVID-19. Who are the people that you miss, or who might be feeling lonely? Make a promise to give them a call, or pray that they will find people who can help them.

#### **6. Build your own sycamore tree**

**You will need: a step ladder, climbing frame or slide; green and brown coloured paper; sheet(s) to cover the structure**

Have you got a tree that you like to climb up? If you don't have a tree to climb, maybe you have a climbing frame or slide that you can make into a tree, by pinning paper leaves to a sheet and covering the structure with this.

Alternatively, use a step ladder, but make sure that someone is holding the ladder securely when you climb up it.

**Talk about:** how you get a very different perspective from being up in a tree. Why did Zacchaeus want to climb up high?

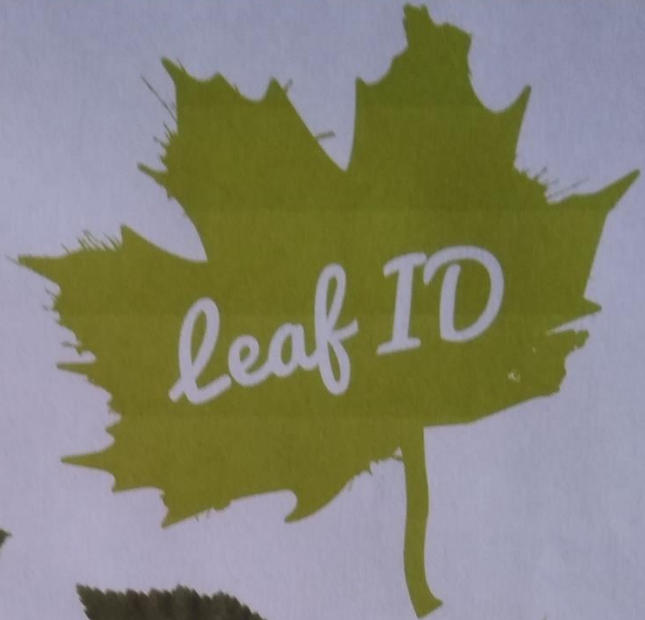
**Next date: Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

[www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/](https://www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/)



**Be a super spotter!**

How many trees can you identify?



Alder



Beech



Oak



Sycamore



Birch



Holly



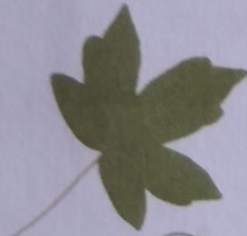
Elder



Ash



Horse Chestnut



Field Maple



Hawthorn



Hazel



Rowan



**Found any other leaves? Do you know which trees they're from?**

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and don't forget there are loads more brilliant activities to download on our website!

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