



## **I Volunteer 7:4**

Text: Luke 19: 1-10

Bible Teacher Duffy Robbins

1. Like Duffy, do you have any Bible heroes? Are there people from God's word that you relate to or encourage and inspire you?
2. Zacchaeus had a curiosity about Jesus and sought Him out to see Him and learn more.
  - a. Can you think of events or situations in your life which aroused your curiosity about God and spiritual things?
  - b. Did you, like Zacchaeus, have a spiritual turning point in your life?
3. Read Acts 6:1-6; Acts 10. For the early Christians, giving and accepting hospitality were essential to loving God and neighbor. This is especially clear in Luke's writings, where the practice of hospitality is an effective bridge for evangelization in the early Church and helps to unify congregations composed of members from diverse cultures.
  - a. How was hospitality essential to spreading the gospel and forming new communities of disciples?
  - b. Is it necessary today?
  - c. In what ways have you engaged in extending hospitality to your neighbors or those who you want to reach? In what ways could you grow in this area?
4. Read Luke 15:1-10. If we are honest, there is a little attitude of the Pharisee in all of us.
  - a. What were the Pharisees complaining about?
  - b. If this story were retold today with you cast as a Pharisee, who might you be muttering about?
  - c. Do you see some people as more "worthy" of the gospel?
  - d. What's the common element in both stories?
  - e. The purpose of the story, both stories, is to answer the question implied by the mutterers, "Why do you hang out with sinners?" What's Jesus' answer to that question?
  - f. What does this story teach us about the character of God?
5. Read Ephesians 3:14-21.

- a. What is essential for us to fight our feelings of inadequacy?
- b. How does Paul's prayer emphasize the importance of where we are grounded?
- c. How can we encourage one another in this?

**Challenge:** Who in your circles/surroundings could be lonely and lacking in relationships? Think about people you may naturally or unintentionally overlook. Pray about reaching out to them. Could you invite them to coffee, go dinner with your family, to Celebrate Freedom, etc.? (See B.L.E.S.S method in Study Deeper)

**Prayer:** Lord, give us the eyes of Jesus to see our neighbors and the strangers we meet.  
Teach us what it means to love the stranger as we love ourselves.  
Forgive us for our selfishness, for our silence,  
for not caring enough for the neighbors and lost in our communities.  
Teach us to love and care the way You do.  
Amen.

# STUDY DEEPER

## Five Ways to BLESS Your Neighbors

Dave Ferguson shares five ways to bless your neighbors.

He says, "From the very beginning, God's way of reaching and restoring the world has always been through what I would call a blessing strategy...how do we in a very practical way that's theologically grounded explain to people how they could bless people in places they are incarnating?"

We came up with this...

- B- Begin with prayer. We want you to ask, 'God how do you want me to bless the people in the places you've sent me to?'
- L- Listen. Don't talk, but listen to people, their struggles, their pains, in the places God sent you.
- E- Eat. You can't just check this off. It's not quick. You have to have a meal with people or a cup of coffee. It builds relationships.
- S- Serve. If you listen with people and you eat with people they will tell you how to love them and you'll know how to serve them.
- S- Story. When the time is right, now we talk and we share the story of how Jesus changed our life.

Genesis 12:2-3 says, "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

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