



## UPPER ELEMENTARY

### WEEK 3- STARTER



#### Activity Name: Respond with Love

What You Need:  Scenario cards

#### What You Do:

- Read one of the scenario cards aloud.
- Ask the group, “What would you normally want to do in that situation?” (e.g., get mad, say something mean back)
- Then ask: “How can you respond with the love of Jesus instead?”
- Brainstorm kind and loving responses together.
- Continue with each of the scenarios.

#### What You Say:

It’s not always easy to choose love, is it? Jesus chose love. We can ask Jesus to help us show love to others, too. The love of Jesus can change things for the better. In our true story from the Bible today, we’re going to hear about a man named Zacchaeus who didn’t have many friends because he was a dishonest tax collector. But Jesus loved Zacchaeus, even when he had done wrong things. Let’s go find out what happened.

**Lead your group to the Large Group area.**

## UPPER ELEMENTARY

### WEEK 3- SMALL GROUP

### Discussion Questions:

- Zacchaeus climbed a tree just to see Jesus. What do you think made him so eager to see Jesus—and what might that say about what was missing in his life?
- Jesus called Zacchaeus by name and wanted to spend time with him, even though others called Zacchaeus a “sinner.” What does this teach you about how Jesus sees people who have messed up or feel left out?
- Zacchaeus didn’t just feel loved—he changed. Why do you think experiencing Jesus’ love made Zacchaeus want to make things right instead of being told to?
- The crowd judged Zacchaeus and whispered about him but Jesus chose kindness. When have you seen someone judged by others, and how could you respond more like Jesus in that kind of moment?
- The story says that the love of Jesus changes people. How has knowing that Jesus loves you—no matter what—changed the way you see yourself or treat others?



#### Bible Story

Zacchaeus • Luke 19:1-10

#### Bottom Line

The love of Jesus changes people.

#### Monthly Memory Verse

*“I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you.” • John 13:34 NIV*

## Activity Name: Top Ten

**What You Need:**  Large paper or white board  markers  Zacchaeus water bottle

### **What You Do:**

- Tell the group that you're going to create a "Top Ten" list together.
- The title of the list is: "Top Ten Ways to Share the Love of Jesus." Write that across the top of the board.
- Challenge the group to brainstorm a list of ten practical, everyday ways they can show Jesus' love to the people around them.
- Write their ideas on the board. Encourage them to be specific.
- Instead of "be nice," maybe "invite someone new to sit with my group at lunch."
- Instead of "help people," maybe "ask my parents if I can help with a chore before they ask me."
- Keep brainstorming until you have a solid list of ten great ideas.

### **What You Say:**

This is an incredible list that we can put into action. Zacchaeus didn't just feel bad about his choices; he made a plan to change. He took action. The people in the crowd who saw Jesus go to a 'sinner's' house didn't understand. But Jesus said He, the Son of Man, came to look for the lost and save them. Every item on this list is a way to show that **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**

It's amazing to think about how much Zacchaeus changed in one day. Jesus didn't condemn him or order him to pay everyone back. Jesus simply made it clear how much He loved him. Jesus looked up into the sycamore-fig tree and said, 'Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay at your house today' (Luke 19:5 NIV). That love transformed him from the inside out. Zacchaeus went from being someone nobody trusted to someone who was making things right and being generous, promising to pay back four times the amount he took.

Let's try this ***Zaccheus Water Bottle Challenge!***

### **What You Do:**

- Show the group the water bottle. Tell them this is the "Zacchaeus Bottle Flip Challenge."
- Let kids take turns trying to flip the water bottle and have it land standing up.
- Explain that just like flipping the water bottle can completely change its position, Jesus' love completely flipped Zacchaeus's life around.

**\*\*Close in Prayer\*\***

**KEEP GROUP TOGETHER UNTIL PICK UP**