

# Coach House Church BEACONS

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## A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

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I miss standing on the top of a mountain or a hill! I miss being able to look far and wide to houses, roads and people . From above, majestic buildings and big structures lose their towering height, somehow when you look at them, they don't seem so intimidating or frightening; they seem more approachable and not so overwhelming. These buildings or hills can be like the problems in our lives, sometimes a change in your viewpoint or perspective can bring about a change of mind.

I imagine that life for a really short person or for a really tall person can be difficult. When someone is really tall, it's hard to fit into a small car, or to find a big enough bed or bath. Everything has to be custom made. And on top of all this people stare and ask awkward questions

On the other hand, when someone is short they can't see in a crowd, the car seat needs to be modified as they can't reach the pedals. When they go shopping they have to buy clothes and shoes from the children's department. (OK, maybe this is a good benefit)

In the Bible, we can read a story about a man with a problem. You see, he was short and could not see over the crowd. He wanted to see Jesus, just a glimpse would be enough, but Jesus was surrounded by people, so he had to climb up a tree. let's read the account from Luke chapter 19:

"Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly."

Luke 19:1-6 NIV

A tax collector was a Jewish person that would collect money from the Jews to pay the Romans. Tax collectors were seen as traitors by the other Jewish people. If you carry on reading the chapter you will see that all the other people that were following Jesus, were grumbling at the fact that Jesus went to eat with the tax collector.

That fact that he would draw attention to himself did not stop Zacchaeus from doing what he had to do in order to see Jesus. Or, he probably thought that he would have a look at Jesus going past without being noticed hiding in the tree.

We don't know what he thought or what he intended to do. What we do know is that he received Jesus gladly and opened his home to him and his disciples.

If Zacchaeus had stayed on the ground he wouldn't have been able to see Jesus through the crowds but because he climbed in a tree he had that chance to meet him. The truth is that Zacchaeus was searching and did everything in his power to be able to see Jesus. The solution he found was quite simple. It's amazing what opportunities a bit of height can give to someone!

On the other end of the spectrum we have Solomon, Israel's third king, who also had an encounter with God whilst he was blessing the temple at its opening ceremony. I'm not sure how tall Solomon was but his social status was the tallest possible. Solomon dedicated the temple to the Lord with a prayer, which we can find in 1 Kings chapter 8 from verse 23 to the end of the chapter. What is interesting about this encounter, is the way Solomon physical posture changes during the prayer. Verse 22 from chapter 8 says this: "Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven and said: " and at this point he starts praying. We don't have the time nor space in this beacon to read the whole chapter. Please read it in your own time. When he finished praying we find out in verse 54 that he was on his knees let's read it : "When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the Lord, he rose from before the altar of the Lord, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven."

Somewhere during the prayer, Solomon had gone from standing to kneeling.

As Solomon was praying, the presence of the Lord had descended on the temple and made the king go to his knees.

In both examples Zacchaeus and Solomon had encountered God and both of them had experienced a change which was mirrored in their behaviour and

posture. The tax collector opened his house to Jesus and then payed back the money he had stolen in tax four times over, just as the law demanded of him. And the king, fell to his knees before the King of Kings.

In Both situations, God knew where these men were in their search for Him, and God also knew what they needed to see, and from where, from what perspective, in order for them to understand who God is.

Let's consider where we are in our lives and on our walks. As individuals, our perception of life is very different from each other but somehow what we feel and think is similar, relatable. That's why we need friends, family members or sometimes even a stranger to talk to. To bounce ideas off and see situations through a fresh pair of eyes.

If you must confront a friend with the truth; deal with a sensitive situation in work; work out how to talk to your teenager -that questions everything, or anything else that life confronts you with, I would encourage you today to look at the situation in a different way. If you can't see it, pray for it.

Sometimes it takes a change of angle to bring about understanding. Difficult circumstances need to be viewed from above, from your knees or even upside down.

Solomon and Zacchaeus were very different from each other -one a king and the other a social outcast, however God dealt with each of them according with their individual needs and circumstance. This example gives us reassurance that God will meet with us whatever our circumstances are in life.

Let's pray:

Lord thank you that you do not abide by human rules and regulations. Thank you that to you everyone is the same. Thank you that you see us where we are and you help us when we come to you. Thank you for you are with us in both high and lows, thank you for your faithfulness.



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