

A RECIPE FOR DIVINE ENCOUNTER – PART TWO

This is your Friend and Minister, Dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you healing word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

Today, we want to conclude the message we started last time: the Recipe for Divine Encounter. It was taken from Luke 19:1-10.

Let us pray.

PRAYER:

Father, we've come now. As we search Your Word today, may we find You, even in the pages of Your book, in Jesus Name. Amen!

A Recipe for Divine Encounter. It's taken from the experience of Zacchaeus with Jesus Christ. We said that we would observe or consider three things: first of all, the curiosity of Zacchaeus; then the calculation of Zacchaeus; and then the encounter that Zacchaeus had. And we have already considered or looked at the curiosity of Zacchaeus. He was curious about Jesus because he kept searching – seeking to know who Jesus was. And we found that in verse 3 of Luke 19.

Then the second point is that Zacchaeus calculated how to overcome his limitations. And last time we mentioned that Zacchaeus had three limitations: he was a chief tax collector, not just a tax collector – but an executive for the Roman Government. He was a rich man – he was a wealthy man. He also was of short stature.

Not many people would see the first two as limitations; but they were for Zacchaeus. A tax collector for the colonizing Romans was an enemy of the people. – Because taxation without representation led to the American Revolution, when America revolted against King George the 3rd of England.

The Romans colonized the Jews, and they had no representation in government. It's not only that they were taxed, but these tax collectors had an arrangement

with the Romans where they collected more than the Romans were asking for; and the rest was for them. They pocketed the rest. And that was one of the reasons their people hated them so much. And as I said, it is not only that Zacchaeus had that job, but he was chief tax collector; and he had become rich by exploiting his people.

What a number of people especially in our nation Nigeria cannot see how and why wealth would be a limitation to any one; a number of people who are under the sound of my voice would say, "Pastor, poverty is my limitation, not wealth: give me wealth".

In Matthew 19, there is a story there, from verse 20

The young man said to Him – to Jesus – the young man who came to Jesus and was asking for what he would do to inherit the Kingdom of God. And Jesus said, 'what of the commandment?' he ran through some of them, not all of them.

Matthew 19:20-24

²⁰ *The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"*

²¹ *Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*

²² *But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

²³ *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.*

[He repeats Himself.]

²⁴ *And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*

Wealth is often a stumbling block, not for everybody. It's not wealth itself that is the problem; often, it is the source of wealth and what one does with it. Wealth is

a stumbling block for those who are made wealthy by greed. But when you find those who are made wealthy by God, wealth is not a stumbling block for them. Such a despised man as Zacchaeus could not mingle freely in a crowd of Jewish People. So his wealth was a limitation for him. To crown his limitations, he was of short stature. But more important than his limitations is how Zacchaeus compensated for those limitations. He calculated how to overcome them in order to have an encounter with Jesus Christ.

Luke 19:4

⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He [Jesus] was going to pass that way.

Zacchaeus did four things to overcome his limitations:

- i. He ran ahead. He ran ahead of everybody.
- ii. He located a sycamore tree; not just any sycamore tree - he located a sycamore tree in the direction Jesus was heading.
- iii. He disregarded his status as an adult.

Can you imagine an adult climbing a tree, a kind of thing that children did and still do? He disregarded his status as an adult. But more than that,

- iv. He disregarded his status as a wealthy man. He climbed up a sycamore tree like a little child.

What are your limitations in life, friend; limitations that are depriving you of an experience with God? But I want to tell you that there are no limitations greater than sin or ignorance of the efficacy of forgiveness. If Satan does not deprive you of the touch of God through keeping you in sin he will through making you live in the memory of the sins or the sin that God has already forgiven.

Two scriptures come to mind. In Isaiah 59:1, the scripture says,

Isaiah 59:1-2

¹*Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save;
Nor His ear heavy,
That it cannot hear.*

²*But your iniquities have separated you from your
God; And your sins have hidden His face from you,
So that He will not hear.*

So sin will keep you from having an encounter with God; or if the devil can succeed to keep you remembering the sin or sins that God has forgiven. And that's why I give you this second scripture:

1 John 1:8-9

⁸*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

When you repent of your sin and confess your sin to God, God has given His Word that He will forgive. And when He forgives – He forgives.

Now let us quickly go to the encounter that Zacchaeus had with Jesus. And you find that in verses 5 and 6, the encounter that he had with Jesus.

Luke 19:5-6

⁵*And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him,[a] and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." ⁶So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.*

Zacchaeus sought Jesus, received Jesus; and Jesus received him. This is the scenario of his encounter with Jesus. And it agrees with what Jesus says.

John 6:37

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

But what is the substance of this divine encounter? What is the substance?

Luke 19:7-10

⁷*But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."*

⁸*Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."*

⁹*And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

The encounter – the substance of it.

1. It went against the norm of the day. The norm of the day was this, that this Man, a Man of God, a Man from God should not mingle with those considered to be sinners.

When you have a divine encounter the norm ceases to be normal, because there is a new reality. That is why 2 Corinthians 5:17 says: *Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Jesus cannot touch any man, any woman, any boy and that person remains the same.

2. There was the proof of a changed life, in keeping with the law of restitution; because Zacchaeus was ready to make restitution.
3. Jesus confirmed his experience of salvation in line with the faith of Abraham. Verse He says, *for he is the son of Abraham*. Jesus confirmed his experience of salvation in line with the mission of Jesus Christ. Because He said, *for this reason the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

Friend, do you have a divine encounter with the Lord? Do you want a divine encounter with the Lord? The crux of the encounter Zacchaeus had with Jesus was salvation; salvation that dealt with his sinful life. Jesus met Zacchaeus a dishonest tax executive and left him an honest disciple. Jesus met Zacchaeus a sinner, and left him a saint.

How about you? He will touch you.

PRAYER:

Father, thank You again for Your Word. May You touch my friends in radioland: their limitations notwithstanding. Help them to have curiosity for You; help them to desire to experience Your touch, in Jesus Name. Amen!