

# Zacchaeus: Wee Man Turned Tall Tree Man

I've always been challenged and impressed by the steps of courage taken by Zacchaeus in the Bible.

I can't get past the plethora of reasons why Zacchaeus could have *not* climbed the tree. The insecurities and pride that must have gotten in his way to prevent him from taking that step had to be enormous (not to mention the people who probably didn't want him to succeed!). But he took that large step of initiation! Or what appears to be initiation ...

Please begin to consider all the little intricate details that had to go into this situation in order for it to occur. The sycamore is a great tree for a short man to try and climb. It has low branches, yet is tall enough to tower over a large crowd. How did that specific tree get in that specific place, and specifically where Jesus was going to be teaching?

Zacchaeus has the ability to climb—lucky him. There are so many things that could have eliminated that tree from the picture. And yet, it is there. And who created the sycamore, Zacchaeus, his abilities to climb, hear, see, and so-on-so-forth?

God. So, who really initiated it? (see Eph. 1; John 17)

So often, I think that initiation is something that has to originate solely in myself; that the calling of a man to initiate really begins with me; that I am the "Alpha" (see Rev. 22:13).

In actuality, my initiation is a response. It is a response to the initiation of a loving God through many avenues.

For Zacchaeus, the interests of a crowd caught his attention,

the divinity of Jesus kept his attention, the tree enabled him to focus his attention, and the voice of Jesus called him to attention. Zacchaeus' initiation was a response.

Therefore, the challenge for us as men is not to see something that doesn't exist and initiate, or to make something from nothing. Rather, it is to see what God has initiated and respond with further initiation. We need to see the tree God has put before us, and have the courageous obedience and chutzpah to climb it!

I have often wondered what would have become of Zacchaeus (or will become of myself), had he not been looking for the window of opportunity to hear/see Jesus. But now I am struck with wonder as I meditate on the gracious pursuit through a small detail that gave Zach far more than he set out for—he met Jesus.

How many of these small, intricate and loving details have taken place in my life? How many more will occur? And how will I now view the world around me as I live in light of that reality?

This truth changes the way I interact with my environment.

Take heart that God has initiated, is initiating and will initiate. Guidance is something that God not only gives, but *does*. See the tree and respond. See the old trees God has placed in your path and praise Him. Choose to no longer see the world as a place of coincidence, because we serve a deliberate and loving God.

Much like a future tree that would change the world (see I Pet. 2:24), its value lies in the initiating grace of a loving, powerful, sovereign and relentless God. Zacchaeus was a little man, but is no longer.

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