

The God Questions
“Preparing For Easter”
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
April 2, 2023

Big Idea: Be a host that makes people feel welcomed at church.

“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” **Romans 1:16 (NIV)**

Three Ways We Can Prepare For Easter

1. Remove The Barriers That Keep People From Seeing Jesus

“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.”

Luke 19:1-2 (NIV)

“He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.” **Luke 19:3-4 (NIV)**

Barriers:

Notes: _____

2. Invite Someone To Easter Service

⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. **Luke 19:5-6 (NIV)**

“I pray that you may be **active** in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.” **Philemon 1:6 (NIV)**

" 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' ²² "'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' ²³ "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that **my house will be full.** ²⁴ I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

Luke 14:21-24 (NIV)

Notes: _____

3. Become A Host On Sunday

All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the **guest** of a 'sinner.'" ⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the **poor**, and if I have **cheated** anybody out of anything, I will **pay back four times** the amount."

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." **Luke 19:7-10 (NIV)**

"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." **Romans 15:7 (NIV)**

What does a Host do?

- A. **Look** for someone you don't know.
- B. **Introduce** yourself.
- C. **Show** them around our campus.

My next right step, I will:

- Invite a friend to Easter.
- Promote our Easter celebration through Social Media.
- Join an Easter Series discussion group or lead one.

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[This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss.]

Big Idea: Be a host that makes people feel welcomed at church.

Open your group with a prayer.

Icebreaker: What is one of the most memorable parties you have experienced?

Three Ways We Can Prepare For Easter

1. Remove The Barriers That Keep People From Seeing Jesus

Read Luke 19:1-4

The MacArthur Study Bible. 19:2 chief tax collector. See Mt 5:46 [note]. Zaccheus probably oversaw a large tax district, and had other tax collectors working for him. Jericho alone was a prosperous trading center, so it is certain that Zaccheus was a wealthy man. It is striking to note that only a chapter earlier, Luke recorded the account of the rich young ruler, and Jesus' statement about "how hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God" (18:24). Here Jesus demonstrates that with God, nothing is impossible (cf. 18:27).

What barriers did Zacchaeus face to meet Jesus?

How would being a chief tax collector affect his ability to get to know Jesus?

What are some barriers people have today that make coming to church hard?

2. Invite Someone To Easter Service

Read Luke 19:5-6

Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus' home, which in their culture was a great honor. Who is someone you can invite to celebrate Easter with you?

Read Philemon 1:6

Why would sharing our faith help us understand “every good thing we have in Christ?”

The Parable Of The Great Banquet

Read Luke 14:15-24

What character in his parable can you identify the most?

What do you think the “Great Banquet” represents?

How spiritually hungry are people today?

3. Become A Host On Sunday

The MacArthur Study Bible. 19:8 I will give back four times as much. Zaccheus' willingness to make restitution was proof that his conversion was genuine. It was the fruit, not the condition, of his salvation. The law required a penalty of one-fifth as restitution for money acquired by fraud (Lv 6:5; Nu 5:6, 7), so Zaccheus was doing more than was required. The law required 4-fold restitution only when an animal was stolen and killed (Ex 22:1). If the animal was found alive, only two-fold restitution was required (Ex 22:4). But Zaccheus judged his own crime severely, acknowledging that he was as guilty as the lowest common robber. Since much of his wealth had probably been acquired fraudulently, this was a costly commitment. On top of that, he gave half his goods to the poor. But Zaccheus had just found incomprehensible spiritual riches and did not mind the loss of material wealth (see 14:28 [note]; Mt 13:44-46 [note]). He stands in stark contrast with the rich young ruler in 18:18-24.

Read Luke 19:7-10

Why did Jesus dine with him?

Why did this bother others?

What do you think of the words of Jesus in 9-10?

Where did Jesus first find you?

How did He get you to join him?

Discuss what it would look like to be a host on Sunday.

Close In Prayer: