

## DREAM BIG - GIVE

Scripture used: Luke 18:18-27 (NIV)

### OVERVIEW

#### Big Idea:

Pastor Hurmon led us through this third sermon in our series on Dreaming Crazy Big. In this message, we were challenged to consider whether we are more like the rich ruler in Luke 18 or Zacchaeus in Luke 19 in terms of the way we respond to Jesus and view the resources that God has given us to manage. While on the surface the rich ruler and Zacchaeus have a lot of similarities (they are both wealthy, yet they are seeking something from Jesus that their money cannot provide them), they have radically different encounters with Jesus. The rich ruler goes away sad because he feels unable to be radically generous with his possessions, while Zacchaeus has such a deep experience of God's acceptance, love, and forgiveness that he proactively responds with radical generosity. The extent to which we have an authentic spirit of generosity and how we utilize our possessions is invariably a sign of whether we've experienced God's grace in a deep and authentic way. We all have the capability of internalizing this radical experience of God's love and grace as we reflect on the extravagant love that Jesus demonstrated for us all on the cross.

### KEY POINTS

- 1) Our Scripture contrasts the accounts of a righteous and well-meaning "young ruler" against the tax collector Zacchaeus of Luke Chapter 19. While Zacchaeus had to climb a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus, the young ruler simply approaches Jesus and earnestly offers his adherence. The unsettling outcome of the encounter is Jesus' reminder that it "is difficult for wealthy people to enter the Kingdom," yet "What is impossible with man is possible with God." ([Luke 18:27](#))
- 2) The story begs a bigger question about the character of our dreams. What is our capacity to dream and utilize our imagination? The Bible (Abraham and Sarah story) shows that even in old age, we can dream & envisage life still ahead of us. Am I dreaming about myself or about the world? Am I dreaming of being a millionaire or impacting the lives of millions?
- 3) Zacchaeus and the young ruler are both wealthy, anchored in Jewish culture and religion, curious about Jesus, and lacking something that money can't provide. Money is a significant component of both of their identities. The major difference is that when Zacchaeus encounters Jesus, he has a deep experience of God's grace and mercy, and he is humble and desperate enough to know that Jesus is his only hope for salvation. This experience of Jesus transforms Zacchaeus, and one of the key ways that we know his transformation is genuine is that he is able to be radically generous with his resources in a way that honors God. We are challenged to take a hard look at the state of our own hearts; are we in touch with the incredible love and grace of God? Knowing that God has generously provided abundant resources for our us, are we joyful in our generosity toward others and the purposes of God? Like all faith decisions, we should be prayerful and pre-decide what faithfulness looks like, and build our priority for generosity first into our schedule, whether at NBCC or elsewhere - there are so many great places to give that are doing good!

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Are you more like Zacchaeus or more like the young ruler? What makes it hard for you to be generous? Have there been moments in your life when generosity came more easily? What were the circumstances of those times?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Before you focus on what you will do with your resources, consider honestly the state of your trust and commitment to God. How have you experienced the extravagant grace and love of God? How can you reflect on God's goodness to you so it is a consistent focus that shapes your lifestyle, priorities, and choices?
- 3) **DO** - What are your stretch goals for giving? Do they entail sacrifice and some hurt, yet embed the promise of more blessings? How has your heart been transformed by giving? Pray and act within the opportunities offered by our church in the ramp-up to Christmas. Decide ahead of time how much you will give this season. Envision your own transformation from lavish living to lavish giving!