

Last Week's Sermon Summary

"To See Jesus"

Pastor Takaaki Inoue

1. John 1:1~4, Luke 19:1~10

❶ **【Zacchaeus's good longing】** There was a tax collector named Zacchaeus in the city of Jericho. The tax collectors were hated and ostracized by their fellow citizens, and were not included in the worship community. Zacchaeus was such a tax collector and a rich man. This Zacchaeus "wanted to see what kind of person Jesus was." He must have heard a rumor that there was a disciple of a tax collector like him, and he became interested in the person named Jesus. I went out to see Jesus, but because I was "short" (19:3), I couldn't see him because I was blocked by the crowd. He ran ahead and climbed a fig mulberry tree and saw Jesus in the shadow of its leaves. When I read this story, I am reminded of Adam in the Garden of Eden. A long time ago, Adam hid among the trees in the garden, avoiding the face of God, but Zacchaeus climbed the tree to see the face of God. Here we see the beginning of human recovery. Zacchaeus' short stature symbolizes our weakness, sinfulness, and immaturity. But Zacchaeus' desperate desire to see Jesus overcame his weakness. No matter how sinful we are, it is not an obstacle to meeting God. The real obstacle is not sinfulness, but the lack of expectation of Christ.

❷ **【The importance of seeing Christ】** In this story, the word "see" is repeated five times: "to see" (v. 3), "to see" (v. 4), "to look up" (v. 5), and "those who saw this" (v. 7). The five human senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, were originally created as tools to

know God. But it came to be addressed to the world other than God. It is written, "When a woman looked at it, the tree was so delicious that it attracted her eyes" (Genesis 3:6). The tree of knowledge of good and evil is a symbol of this world. The first Fall began with "seeing" the world. The monks said, "The devil comes in through the holes," but our souls were polluted by dirty images from our eyes, unclean words from our ears, and excessive eating and drinking from our mouths. But when you come to church, you will see the icon of Christ in your eyes, the voice of praise and prayer and the recitation of the Word of God in your ears, the smell of frankincense in your nose, and the Eucharist in your mouth. When we return to church, our senses are reset correctly toward God, so we can return to who we are. We don't want to know the immense effect of seeing God. We think that the things of this world will satisfy us, and we try to see the things of this world rather than God. But when Jesus came to the bottom of the fig tree, He stopped in His tracks, looked up, and said: "Zacchaeus, hurry down and come down, I want to stay at your house today." (19:5) Amazingly, Jesus approached Zacchaeus and asked for fellowship. The Lord insisted on fellowship with Him, knowing not only his name, but also all of who he was and what sins he had committed. Zacchaeus knew that Jesus wanted him more than he wanted Jesus, and that he knew before he knew it. I think Zacchaeus was delighted. He hurriedly came down from the tree and joyfully welcomed Jesus into his home. When we see Christ in this way, He also sees us, and our eyes meet each other's. That's when great blessings come in.↗

Weekly Report

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February 16, 2025 No.1807



《The Lost Son》

Miyakojima Church's 2024 Mission Policy

Motto : "Let's prepare for the construction of the church "

Scripture : "No one can lay any other foundation, ignoring the foundation that has already been laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11)

Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 27 people to attend services.
- 2 We invite one person to worship in one year.
- 3 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.
- 4 Cultivate the consciousness of building a church together.