












Come as you are  
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- Welcome!
-  Theme today is 'Come as you are'.
-  So...who was this man called Zacchaeus?  
(Go thru slides to had no friends)
-  And why did everyone hate him?
- Well it's like this!
-  Do you like paying Council tax?
- No we hate it.
-  And what about when you get a bonus or a pay rise and you get all excited  
: what you're gonna spend it in ..... and then you get your pay slip and  
.....oh! It's nothing as much as you were expecting  
cos you've lost loads of it to tax!
- Ever had that happen?
-  t's so infuriating! And we have a good old moan...
- But we do know where that money is going and do accept it, even though we feel disappointed!
-  But with Zacchaeus....when he collected tax, he would pass  
ome of it on to the Romans .... But he would also keep some  
of it for himself!
- And people knew this but they couldn't do anything about it!

- They had to watch him spending their money and getting richer and richer!
-  Dyu remember the news a little while ago about MP's expenses!
- They exploited their expenses from us taxpayers!
-  (See slide)
- How did we feel when that was revealed?
- I was really cross! The cheek of it! And now it is being looked into!
- But back in Zacchaeus' day there was no one to look into it!
-  And people had to suffer and watch Zacchaeus grow richer and richer and buy bigger and better houses.
- Those poor people, no wonder they were angry with him and hated Zacchaeus...he was a cheat!
- But.....dyu know what!
- Zacchaeus wasn't happy.
- He had the money. Which he enjoyed....
- He had a fantastic home. Which he enjoyed....
- He had a really good job (well, in some people's eyes)
-  But there was something missing in his life
- Something he yearned for...
- He had heard the rumours that Jesus was a friend to all.

- So when he heard that Jesus was coming to his town, he wanted to see this man and hear what he had to say!
- He raced out and was met with a huge crowd of people.
- But Zacchaeus was only a short little man and couldn't see a thing!
- He had to see Jesus, so he climbed a sycamore tree (a bit like an oak tree)
- GOOD THINKING ZACCHAEUS!
-  Well, People must have wondered why he was clambering up that tree
- and why he was so determined to see Jesus, when it appeared that he had everything!
- And Zacchaeus ignored any strange looks people gave him and climbed on up that tree, looking eagerly for this man they called Jesus.
-  As Jesus passes the tree, he stops and looks up.
- Then he calls out Zacchaeus' name and tells him to climb down.
- And if that wasn't strange enough.....
- Then he tells Zacchaeus that he wants to stay with him at his house that night!
- Woh! Hold it there!
- These people already hate Zacchaeus who has everything in their eyes!
- And now Jesus has only spoken to him and even wants to stay at his house.....what with this cheat! This traitor working for the Romans!!!

- What is Jesus thinking! Staying with a dishonest man like him!
-  The crowd are so disgusted with Jesus..... they begin to grumble! (Get congregation to grumble)
- The grumbling grew louder! (Grumble louder)
-  But was Jesus bothered?
- Oh no! they could grumble all they liked.
-  Meanwhile..... Zacchaeus is gobsmacked!
- What!!!!.... this man wants to come to my home.....he wants to spend time with me.....he doesn't hate me!!! ..... Someone doesn't hate me!!!!
-  Zacchaeus was so touched by Jesus' acceptance of him....that his heart immediately changed!
- After the meal, Zacchaeus is so touched that he realises what he has been doing is wrong and is very sorry.
-  He stands up before Jesus and says that he will give half of his possessions to the poor.
- Hang on! .....In these days that's like him giving away half a house at Sandbanks and cos he was so corrupt he would probably have a Porsche and a Rolls Royce or two, besides loads of other things.....that is an awful lot of money!
- And he's gonna give it all to the poor?
-  And to anyone he has cheated of money (which is just about everyone), he will pay back four times as much!
- Four times as much! That would leave him with very, very little....virtually nothing.
- I've heard this story so many times, but I've never really stopped to think about how much money Zacchaeus gives away and how little he is left with.

- He is giving away the thing that he was most dependant on, what he worshipped the most.....money.
- And all because Jesus met with him, accepted him for who he was and gave him a chance to repent.
- What an awesome meeting.
- Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus was transforming his life.
-  And to the amazement of everyone ..... Jesus then says that this tax collector, Zacchaeus is a son of Abraham!
- Zacchaeus was lost but is forgiven and made new.
- You see it doesn't matter who you are.....
- What you've said or done.....
-  Jesus is there for you.
-  He is all forgiving....
-  He died to take away our sins.....
-  He died so that we can have a living relationship with him.
- He died so we can say we are sorry and don't have to suffer in silence any more.
- He wants to set us free.
- He wants to be our friend.
- And he wants us to follow his ways
- All we need to do is say yes!

- And walk with him.
- Some of you may not have been to church for a while but know that there has been something missing in your lives.....
- An emptiness maybe,
- Or sense of belonging.
- Whatever it may be..... welcome back!
- For some it may be your very first time.
- Welcome!
- It doesn't matter if it's your first time or if you've been here before and slipped away... nothing changes.
- Jesus loves you
- This church family love you.
- You are so welcome here.
- We're just gonna spend a little time now.... reflecting on how Jesus wanted to be with Zacchaeus.....accepting him totally for who he was.
- And he wants to be with you too!
- So as we play some music, either reflect on the pictures or close your eyes and reflect on God....
- It's your time...
- And it's totally up to you what you do.
- Amen