

(Luke 19:1-10, NIV84)

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. 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. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'" 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." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

Midnight tonight is the deadline. Usually we face this deadline in April, but this year due to COVID-19 we have been given a three-month reprieve. Of course, I'm referring to the fact that today is Tax Day. If you are just getting started now in preparing your taxes, you may be too late. I confess, I put off preparing my taxes this year and I was outside my comfort zone until they were done.

There is far more crucial deadline that every human being faces in life; it is the deadline to be in God's family before the end of one's life. Thankfully, by God's grace, all who trust in Jesus are in God's family and don't need to fear the end of life no matter when it comes. But this "deadline" also reminds us of the urgency that exists for all people to come to the knowledge of the truth. May that reminder bolster our resolve to have that heart-to-heart conversation about Jesus with our friend, relative, associate or neighbor before it is too late.

Heir of salvation with you in Christ,  
Pastor Golm

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July 15

Afraid You Are Too Late?

Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2 Corinthians 6:2

A man who had spent a wicked life lay critically ill. Turning to his pastor, he asked: "Do you think that a deathbed repentance does away with a whole life of sin?" "No", answered the pastor quietly and reassuringly, "but

Calvary does!"

Calvary does away with every sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin", says St. John. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

It is not a question of being late or being early, of being more guilty or less guilty, of being old or young-it is merely a question of accepting NOW the abundant pardon which is ours through the limitless love of Jesus Christ our Savior. There is love, mercy, and pardon for all alike.

Do you feel that you have been clinging to some secret sin too long to be forgiven, that you have trampled upon God's grace too long to ask for pardon? Take heart! Where sin abounded, God's love did much more abound. If you are still able to read (or hear) these words, it is not too late! "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

The penitent thief on the cross was very late, but not too late. The hour was late in the life of Zacchaeus, but not too late. He still was privileged to hear from the lips of the Christ: "This day is salvation come to this house!" This day! Have we recognized this day as a day of grace? Whatever our present circumstance, let each of us lift our heart to the throne of grace, and say with the Christian poet:

Today Thy mercy calls us To wash away our sin.  
However great our trespass, Whatever we have been,  
However long from mercy Our hearts have turned away,  
Thy precious blood can cleanse us And make us white today.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)