

## Love Starts With A Name

Luke 19:1-10

What does it feel like when someone knows your name?

Learning a name is often the first step to beginning a new friendship or relationship. It is the entry point into someone's life, the doorway if you will. And from that initial point, a relationship can grow.

*Love starts with a name.*

There's something powerful about knowing and remembering a person's name. When someone knows your name, it makes you feel loved, noticed, and seen.

When someone knows and remembers your name it gives you worth, it gives you value.

And a name represents a person's story. Jesus knows your name, He knows your story, and He loves you.

There is possibly no greater example of this than the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus

Zacchaeus is the chief tax collector. He is rich, because he over charges the taxes and pockets the excess, thereby stealing money from his own people. Hence, he is not well liked.

Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but because he was short, he could not see Him while in the crowd.

So, he ran ahead of the crowd, climbed up a tree so he could see Jesus as He passed by.

When Jesus came to the tree, He called Zacchaeus by name; Jesus knew his name!

Zacchaeus came down and went to his house with Jesus.

Not everyone liked what happened, because they did not like Zacchaeus.

Jesus knows the names of people in your life.

He knows them, because He cares about them; He loves them.

Do you care about people? Their lives have the same value as yours.

To the crowd this man was a sinner, a tax collector; a lousy, rich jerk, but to Jesus... he was Zacchaeus.

The simplest way to love someone is to know their name. Know their name and get to know the person and the story behind the name.

So here is my main challenge today for you, are you ready for it?

By sundown tonight; *get to know someone's name*. And remember their name -- that's actually the key point in this process.

It might not be as easy as it sounds. People are skeptical, they are cynical, and it can be difficult to get through people's walls. But if you're earnest, and intentional, you'll learn some names. And God willing you might even begin to hear a little of their story.

That, then, is the second things you should do, ask to hear a little about their story.

And then, ask if you can pray for them.

But remember, it all starts with their name.

So often we only want to know the names of people that we think matter. People that we think may be able to offer us something in return. But, when we look to the example of Jesus we see Him taking the time to know and interact with all kinds of people. From the religious elites to the cultural castaways, He made time for all of them.

If Jesus knows the name of Zacchaeus then that means He knows the names of the people in our lives too.

Jesus knows your name too. He knows my name. And He knows our stories. He's seen them play out.

Sometimes we need to be reminded that Jesus knows our name.

Sometimes we need to be reminded that Jesus knows the name of the Zacchaeus' in our life. Get to know someone's name today, by sundown.

From your neighbors to complete strangers, get to know their names. Get to know their stories. Pray for them. God will use you to love that person and the story behind the name.

And why is this so important? Because their soul is on the line. You may be the catalyst or the conduit that God uses to bring salvation to this person's life. Jesus knew Zacchaeus's name. He heard his story. And Zacchaeus repented of His sins, and became a believer in Jesus for his salvation.

All because Jesus knew his name.

Since we are in union with Christ, just think of what God can and will do through your willingness to love others. Know someone's name and be amazed!

Love starts with a name.