

# Bubbles

## Bursting The Bubble

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We have spent time in this series, first recognizing that living inside a bubble is way easier than we thought. In fact, we are born living inside a bubble, so our natural instincts are to not only stay inside our bubbles, but when given a chance, we will naturally choose to increase the size of our bubbles. (“I know what I will do, I will build bigger barns”)

The last two weeks, however, we have been talking about what it takes to prepare to leave your bubble. (Stay Focused; Travel Light; Aim for the Hurting & Disadvantaged; Move on from rejection but never stop praying; Give as is you have an endless supply.)

Today we look at bursting the bubble. It sounds like a huge event in a person’s life and there are aspects of it that are terrifying but also thrilling. When a person comes to that place in life, when they say to themselves, “This does not satisfy any longer and they look to God and say. “What about you, can you shed any light on this life of mine?”

**Henry David Thoreau** “Most men lead lives of quiet desperation and go to their graves with their song still in them.”

**Ben Franklin** “Many men die at 25 but are not buried until they are 75”

**Another Author**, “ Some people are only alive because it is illegal to shoot them.”

Today we look at a man who has come to that point.. The text does not give us even a hint before hand that change was coming.

The story simply starts: Jesus was in Jericho and it says:

*<sup>2</sup> A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.*

This particular man had hit the mark he was aiming for. He was not just a tax collector, he was a chief tax collector. These people would pay the Roman government for the privilege of extracting taxes from the people. History describes this profession as filled with people usually of a higher rank, in that they rode horses, but of the lowest moral character. Zaccheus was a chief, meaning, he farmed out some of his duties of tax collecting, to others. This guys bubble was secure.

- He would have been the quarterback on the HS football team
- The captain of the cheerleading squad
- The top salesman in the company

From all outward appearances he did not NEED to see any body, much less some Jewish rabbi:

But then the bubble began to burst, Like snapshots in slow-motion. I want to capture those 4 snapshots

## 1. It is an individual decision

*“He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him...” Luke 19:3-4a*

We are relational organisms, and if we are not careful and intentional there can be a dangerous side effect of living in a society like ours. That side effect is that people stop making individual decisions and they wait to see what the crowd thinks or what do the rules say to do. So great is this influence that to ask an individual that is a part of the crowd, “Did you make up your own mind?” They would say absolutely.

When anything out of the ordinary happens the crowd always makes up stories about that occurrence.

Bursting the bubble requires that we separate ourselves from the crowd.

Zaccheus could not see Jesus clearly, because of the crowd. He had to get away from them in order to be able to see him for who he was. He was running, perhaps for the first time in his adult life, there was an undeniable yearning that propelled him. That alone should have clued him in that his heart was hungering for change. Here is my question to you. **What have been clues to you that your heart is yearning for change? When are you going to burst the bubble, run ahead of the crowd and make up your own mind about who Jesus is and what his purposes are for the next section of your life?**

The second snapshot from this Bubble Bursting Story is:

## 2. You must let go of control

*“When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup> So he came down at once...” Luke 19:5-6a*

Zaccheus did not realize it, but his actions had positioned him to come face to face with Jesus. He had scampered up that sycamore tree, thinking I will just, check this guy out. Little did he know that he had a date with eternal truth.

Some of you have come here in the last few weeks, or months or years and you thought, “I will just check it out.” But there is an encounter that is happening that is going beyond, “just checking it out”

The sycamore tree represented the last little thing that Zaccheus’ was holding onto before he fully gave himself over to Christ. The question I have is; What’s your sycamore tree?

*(A story that a missionary told – catching monkeys)*

The sycamore tree was Zaccheus’ last vestige of control. That section of the story says, *So he came down at once...*” It was a public show of letting go, of the way he thought life should go.

If you are going to let God burst your bubble and start a whole new life, you are going to have to leave the sycamore tree behind. So my question here is, **What is your sycamore tree?**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> snapshot:

## Allow persecution to drive you closer to God

*“All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”<sup>8</sup> But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord...” Luke 19:7-8a*

Here is the definition of Mutter: to make a low rumbling sound; to grumble

(A demonstration of Muttering)

In real life it is not so funny is it. It is hard enough to leave the bubble that you have grown so accustomed to for so long, now when you leave it, you have to face muttering

Persecution can come in many forms but I watch many people, who have done their best to separate from the crowd and burst through their bubble, just let the bubble close right back over them when they become the victims of the disapproval of the community.

1. A church full of undisciplined people can literally become a mob of mutterers.
2. A church of disciplined believers has as one of its absolute guiding principles that people will get out of their bubbles and follow God's calling and direction. It just becomes an expectation.

When a person

1. Responds to the clues that their heart has been giving them
2. Then leaves the last vestige of control behind – their sycamore tree
3. Encounters the muttering or whatever form persecution takes and keeps going anyway

Then they step into a hold new place. The bubble, meaning: the way they thought life was suppose to work is left behind and they join a whole new family.

## Join the family

*“Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.” Luke 19:9*

(Interview with John Roberts) I want to end this message today with an interview. John Roberts recently burst a bubble in his life and joined a ministry called Karios. Would give him a warm welcome.

1. Tell us what Karios is?
2. Does this team become family?
3. What personal persecutions did you have to encounter and overcome in order to go?
4. What happens to the men during this weekend and after?
5. What happened to you?

**The family that we join is a family made up of people who have decided that living life inside a protective, comfortable bubble is not what Christ came to die for.**

It is a family made up of people who are not simply doing nice things for other people out of the goodness of their hearts, but their hearts have heard the words, “You are part of the Family” from Christ himself.

It is this larger family that Zaccheus entered into

What about you? What is your heart yearning for? Let's Pray

1. If you are under the influence of the dangerous side effect of living in our culture and you can't make up your own mind to fully commit – then break free from the crowd that is keeping you from getting a good look at Jesus and make up your own mind.
2. If you have been hurt in the past by church people, family, jobs, whatever and you are hanging onto that sycamore tree – In the name of Jesus – be healed from that and let go.
3. If persecution either externally or internally has sought to drive you away from God – turn it around and cause it to drive you toward God.
4. Then remember – there is a seat at the table for you. Because you too are son or daughter of the Most High God.