

Good morning everyone. The gospel that was read today seems kind of confusing doesn't it, Like you can't really pinpoint its meaning. Well I am going to try and give you examples to try and help explain it. In this gospel I don't think God or Jesus wants us to focus on the fact that Jesus accepted another sinner, we all know that he always forgave everyone, it's nothing new. But in the story he mentions zacchaeus saying "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." Zacchaeus states that he is willing to give up his possessions for others. In Ms. Piendaks class my freshman year, she explained something to us using a balloon analogy. When a balloon is inflated it's not really able to bend to help anything else you can't really do much with it. But when a balloon isn't blown up your able to stretch it and it can form too many things. I feel that in this story zaccaues starts out being inflated and only wanting to know Jesus and not really paying attention to what was going on around him. But at the end he realizes he has been living his life wrong and is willing to give up his possessions. In my life there are times where (coming back to the balloon analogy) I feel inflated. Such as my freshman year I was coming into trinity and didn't really know many people, I knew coming in that I would lose friends and gain friends, Go through relationships and have many hardships. On my first day I figured it wouldn't be that bad. Until I bumped into someone and I was so mean to them I said " watch out" I couldn't believe what I had said I felt horrible but I just went on throughout my day and then being a cheerleader I went to practice thinking I was all cool and that everyone liked me, I felt so popular. Then as the year went on the play came and went and I became really close with Katie Tremarche who later had told me that she was the person I was mean to. When she told me that I confessed that I had felt horrible and I

hadn't really payed attention to anyone else but myself the first couple weeks of school. Katie and I are closer then ever at this point and then later on that summer I had to call Katie and tell her something that was extremely hard, I had to tell her my dad died and that he pretty much lied to me my whole life. At that point I felt Katie was acting as Jesus and I was zacchaues I had sinned against her and she still forgave me and still helped me through my hardships with my dad. She also gave me faith and hope that maybe my dad had lied to me to protect me and that she had been in a similar situation. I was willing to give up my anger towards my dad because she had made me realize maybe it was for good. Such as Jesus made zacchaues realize. Ok so that was my inflation story, that I didn't really pay attention to anyone else and kind of realized that I had to stretch to become who I am today. But I am also going to give you another story. So as you can tell my life has changed drastically since I came into trinity I know a lot of people, I have many friends, I am captain of the cheerleading squad, im an A B student, im an actor and a singer, most importantly im one of those people that don't like to let other people down. People are always coming to me and saying you always have a smile on your face and you're always happy and I don't see that at all. I see the side of me that lets others down that make others mad and sad at the same time. But then I step back and think about it. My life isn't bad. I have best friends who love me and a family that loves me. I have people like Katie who can come to me and ask me my opinion on things like what she should do about this situation and vice versa. I think that this is where me being flexible comes into play. So maybe im not the perfect daughter who does nothing wrong and maybe im not the perfect cheerleader who can do round off back handsprings but at least I am able to step back and say wow you know Shawna can do a round off back

handspring and im going to applaud her for it. I think that in this gospel that's what Jesus is trying to say. Be flexible, step out of your shell and although it is hard to say you know what I can't do that but someone else can, I should go applaud them for it. So that's my challenge for you this week, figure out something you're not good at and notice someone else who can and applaud them for it. Tell them what a good job they are doing.

Zacchaues was willing to give up his possessions to prove he was not just another wealthy man, so you should be willing to show that you're not just another person, your someone who is willing to be flexible and show others how you support them.