

# Growing Together

## Inspired by the Christian Faith

### WHO LOVED FIRST?

#### Read together

and decide who in the story loves first...

##### A retelling of Luke 19:I-10

I am good with names - Abigail, Benjamin, Caleb right through to Zachary. It's my business to know everyone in this place and everyone knows me. And everyone turns away when I walk down the road.

I am friendly, I smile, I wave, I speak to people; 'Good morning Joseph', I call, 'how is your lame donkey?', 'Leah, how are you? Isn't it a beautiful day?'

But nobody talks to me, not even a grunt. They just turn away.

Everyone talks about me of course. I hear them in the market. 'Look out,' they say, 'here comes the little man'. They never speak my name.

Today is different, no one talks to me, but they don't turn away either.

What is happening?

Ah! They are all too busy talking about someone else.



Jesus, the teacher and preacher is going to pass through this place!

I have heard so many wonderful things about Jesus sharing God's love with people. I must see him.

Everyone will want to see him, so how will I get through the crowds?

It's true I am a little man.

It's been a long day sitting up here in this tree. I can't move. If anyone sees me I know they will all laugh at the little man hiding in the tree.

At last Jesus is here. He is friendly. He smiles and waves and speaks to people and blesses the children.

Where has he gone now? I can't see him any more. He should have passed by.

'Zacchaeus', 'Zacchaeus'.

Nobody speaks my name or talks to me.

I nearly fall out of the tree!

It's Jesus who is calling my name and talking to me. He wants to come to my house for tea!

I have lots of money and my job is to collect taxes for the Romans, so everyone thinks I am a thief and a cheat, but Jesus wants to come to my house for tea!

My heart is beating so fast. 'I promise you this Jesus, if I have cheated anyone or stolen anything I will pay it back not just once, but four times and I will give half of everything I own to the poor'.

Now everyone has turned towards me.

Now everyone is speaking my name.



## Did you know



There are four different Greek words for love used in the Bible:

**agape** – which means selfless love or a gift of love

**philia** – which means deep friendship

**storge** – which is like family love, loving with empathy, steady and sure

**eros** – which is romantic love

Jesus spoke a language called Aramaic. In Aramaic love was a verb, a doing word.

## Courageous Advocacy



Bravely making the world better

Try being an angel or hero for a day, by doing a kind action or actions, but without saying a word about it.

## Create & make



There are many verses in the Bible about God's love. For example; 'We love because God first loved us.' 1 John 4:19. Can you find any other verses?

You may like to write out and decorate your favourite and put it on your fridge. Follow this weblink to find a maze of love, which will lead you to other verses about God's love.

[www.gloucester.anglican.org/growingtogether](http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/growingtogether)

Can you create your own maze?

## Prayer space ideas



Design a paper bracelet to wear all through the month to remind yourself God's love is everywhere. For every member of your household place some wool somewhere to help them remember that God's love is everywhere eg steering wheel, school bag, fridge door, mobile phone case, dog's lead.

St Patrick's breastplate is a prayer from Ireland which reminds us that God loves us always and everywhere.

**Christ be with me, Christ in the heart of me,  
Christ behind me, Christ in front of me,  
Christ next to me, Christ to find me,  
Christ to encourage and strengthen me,  
Christ under me, Christ over me,  
Christ in quiet, Christ in difficulty,  
Christ in hearts of all that love me,  
Christ in the words of friend and stranger.**

## Family Fun



Go for an outside adventure. Maybe climb a tree or a hill, in a safe place make a cairn (tower) of pebbles or decorate a pebble you find to remind you 'God rocks'. You might want to leave it somewhere for others to find.

## Idea for Pre-schoolers



Make a list or look at photos of people you love and people who love you. Talk about love never running out. No matter how many people we love, there is always more love in our hearts. Love is endless to receive and endless to give.

## Web Links & Extended Ideas



St Patrick's Breastplate has been set to music. See if you can find a version you really like.

Share books that are on the theme of love, for example: *Guess how much I love you* (Sam McBratney) and *The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe* (C S Lewis)

