



Accepted first, then changed

AT A GLANCE



Bible

Luke 19:1–10



Topic

Grace that changes



Takeaway

Not pressure but acceptance changes people for good



10–15 minutes



Object: two cards: “change first, then accepted” and “accepted first, then change”



Preparation: 10 min



indoors or by the fire



Make it personal: In two sentences, share something you have experienced yourself on the topic “Grace that changes”. Real stories stick best.



How the devotion works

2 min

Opening

Lay out the two cards. Ask: Which order do you experience more often – at school, at home, in church?

3 min

Bible text

Tax collectors like Zacchaeus leased from the Romans the right to collect tolls and profited from everything extra they demanded. Zacchaeus was part of a system that exploited people – and he had done well out of it. For the religious it was clear: you do not share fellowship with someone like that. Jesus reverses the order. He invites himself before Zacchaeus changes anything. Only afterwards, over the meal, does change come – from the inside. Jesus says: “This man too is a son of Abraham.”

5 min

Thought

We often think: first someone must improve, then they belong. Jesus does it the other way round: belonging first, then change. That does not mean wrongdoing does not matter – Zacchaeus makes amends. But the strength to do so comes from being accepted. For leaders the question is: which order do we live out in our group?

5 min

Conversation

Whom do you write off too quickly – and what would happen if you accepted them first?



Accepted first, then changed



Prayer to read aloud

Jesus, you accepted me before I changed. Let me look at others the way you looked at Zacchaeus. Amen.



To think further

- What changes people more lastingly: pressure or acceptance?
- Where is the limit – when does acceptance also need clear words?



For leaders

- Leave room for doubts and critical questions – an honest conversation matters more than a quick answer.
- As a leader, feel free to share a personal experience.
- With heavy topics, keep an eye on who is struggling and be available afterwards.



Section: Well-known Bible stories. You will find matching group meetings and more devotions at scouts-cloud.com.