



## still waters

home church studies

### Psalm 119.137-144 [Worship]

137 You are righteous, O LORD, and your judgments are right. 138 You have appointed your decrees in righteousness and in all faithfulness. 139 My zeal consumes me because my foes forget your words. 140 Your promise is well tried, and your servant loves it. 141 I am small and despised, yet I do not forget your precepts. 142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and your law is the truth. 143 Trouble and anguish have come upon me, but your commandments are my delight. 144 Your decrees are righteous forever; give me understanding that I may live.

### Reread Luke 19.1-10

#### Consider:

#### [Words]

In a world of self-preoccupation, these readings focus on obedience to God's commands as a way of life and as a source of life. Obedience is the practice of loyal love that keeps us freshly connected to the presence and purposes of God. In the epistle, Paul commends his readers for "every good resolve and work of faith" (2 Thessalonians 1:11). He imagines a church, under great pressure, unyielding in its steadfast adherence to the gospel.

Paul is a child of the Hebrew scriptures. Psalm 119 celebrates that way of Torah and attests that it is "my delight" (verse 143). The psalmist trusts God in the face of adversity and will not yield on the commandments.

The accent on "good resolve and works of faith," the cruciality of the Torah for well-being, and the trust in God's commandments all converge in the gospel reading in which Zacchaeus, by a summons from Jesus, reverses his life and resolves to rectify his anti-neighborly conduct. His attraction to Jesus leads to a daring economic initiative on his part, the kind so urgently required in our world. Obedience becomes the ground for a joyous life. Jesus keeps inviting us—like he invited Zacchaeus—to "otherwise."

– Walter Bruggemann

### [Scripture] 2 Thessalonians 1.1-4, 11-12

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. 4 Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring.

11 To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Question:

Being a "saint" does not mean perfection. It means holiness—a life transformed into a "little Christ;" Taking on the mind (and actions) of Jesus, with our whole being, instead of being slaves to the world's systems—including money.

Who are you; a poor sinner who sits Jesus at his table, or one in the crowd who obstructs his view of God's salvation?