



# Messy Money



## #discipleship: individual



**No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.**

Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

**Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income.**

Ecclesiastes 5:10a (NIV)

**But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.**

1 Timothy 6:6–10a (NIV)

**Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.**

1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

**Jesus was going through Jericho, where a man named Zacchaeus lived. He was in charge of collecting taxes and was very rich. Jesus was heading his way, and Zacchaeus wanted to see what he was like. But Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree. When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, 'Zacchaeus, hurry down! I want to stay with you today.' Zacchaeus hurried down and gladly welcomed**

**Jesus. Everyone who saw this started grumbling, 'This man Zacchaeus is a sinner! And Jesus is going home to eat with him.' Later that day Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'I will give half of my property to the poor. And I will now pay back four times as much to everyone I have ever cheated.' Jesus said to Zacchaeus, 'Today you and your family have been saved, because you are a true son of Abraham. The Son of Man came to look for and to save people who are lost.'**

Luke 19:1–10 (CEV)

It has often been said that among those who decide to follow the Christian faith, the last thing to be converted is their attitude towards money. Having money or being short of money can exercise a disturbing and sometimes dangerous influence on many of us. Although physical coins and notes, or more usually nowadays the printed figures on a bank account, are really only symbolic of an indebtedness to each other for goods or services bought or received, they can nevertheless take on a life of their own, bringing out the worst in human nature. It's no wonder that the Bible has plenty to say about attitudes towards money.

Within the Judaeo-Christian tradition, wealth has usually been viewed as a blessing, although sadly that has often become corrupted into the notion that rich people must be especially favoured by God because of their 'righteousness'. This in turn can lead to an insensitivity towards those who have less, rather than an opportunity to show generosity, work for justice and offer thanks to God.

Greed has long been identified as one of the seven deadly sins, and this shows itself in an unreflective use of money that is focused totally on how it benefits us, to the detriment of its effect on others. Becoming richer, but in a way that only harms others, is clearly to break the commandment to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Whether we are rich or poor, it is what we do with our money that matters. Do we see it as a gift from God to be used wisely, for ourselves as well as for the good of others? Do we, in the words of John Wesley, 'earn all we can, save all we can and give all we can', so that we can honour God with all our living? Do we pray about what we give away, about what we keep for ourselves and those close to us, and about how we spend and invest our money so that it can do the most good, for the most people, in the most ethical way? What does our church, locally or nationally, do with its spending, savings and investments?





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The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) helps Christians make wise choices in their use of money in order to create a more just and sustainable world. ECCR works with churches, faith groups, organisations and individuals to bring about positive change to corporate behaviour, i.e. so that businesses do good, not harm, in the world. ECCR has a national programme called **Money Makes Change**, which provides Christians with simple, accessible resources to spark conversations about faith and money.

Earning and spending our money thoughtfully and prayerfully is a matter for all. Even if we have very little, or nothing, in the way of savings and investments, we can still raise our voice to influence the way that our church spends and invests its money. This resource, in partnership with BRF's Messy Church, aims to open up important questions around this topic for children and adults to explore as they engage in related activities, participate in a service of celebration around the theme and share a community meal together over a two-hour service of interactive and conversational learning.

The Bible story on which this session is based is that of the tax collector Zacchaeus, whose encounter with Jesus totally transforms his life and with that his attitude to money - indeed so much so that it becomes a blessing to the whole city of Jericho.

## #discipleship: team



### Messy health check

What shapes my attitude towards money?

### Messy team theme

- In what ways and how soon on our life's journey should we be learning 'the value of money'?
- When did you first have money of your own? Share with the team how you handled it well or carelessly.

- What do you think should be our priorities in how we spend our money?
- In what ways do you choose to give money away to help others? Why?
- What Christian teaching about how we should use money can you recall?
- How often do you think about the people who produce the items in your shopping basket or the clothes that you buy? How does your everyday spending affect your global neighbours?
- Have you ever wondered about just what happens with the money you deposit at your bank or which you invest in a company?

### How does this session help people grow in Christ?

This story comes near the end of Jesus' ministry of teaching and healing. After about three years on the move around the villages of Galilee, as well as regular journeys south for festivals, Jesus is now in Jericho, from where he will set out next to Jerusalem for the last time. The story of what happens when he meets Zacchaeus is typical of all the encounters that have gone before. Jesus notices the ones others don't see - in this case, Zacchaeus hiding in the tree. Jesus cares about the ones others think aren't worthy of God's love and rescue - tax collector Zacchaeus belongs to that group who have betrayed their country and their God by working for the Romans. And Jesus turns lives around for the better - just as rich Zacchaeus becomes a blessing to Jericho, repaying his debts four times over and providing money for the poor of the city. Zacchaeus turns from being public enemy number one to public benefactor. Only an encounter with Jesus can produce such a miracle. We have no record of what they said to each other at the meal in Zacchaeus' home, but whatever it was, everyone is astounded by the change that comes over this little man. Here is a man who had lost his way but who, on meeting Jesus, comes home to God again in a profound way, discovering his true identity as one of God's people.

What happened to Zacchaeus is a picture of what happens to all who have come to God through Jesus, and this still goes on today. His conversion, though, isn't just a matter of believing something new in his head and heart, but it is worked out in practical action in his life. His decision to become a disciple of Jesus affects his lifestyle and in particular his attitude to his money. His commitment to the redistribution of his resources is ongoing, not a one-off action. We aren't told that he gave it all away, but what he did give transformed the lives of his fellow citizens and in particular the poorest in that



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community. Rescuing the lost and bringing good news to the poor is what Jesus came to do, and this is ultimately what can also transform the world.

## #discipleship: families

### Mealttime card

- How much pocket money do you think is average today? How much do you or did you used to get?
- Is there something that you once saved up for or are currently saving up for?
- Do you have a favourite charity to which you like to give money?
- What prompts you to save and what prompts you to give money?
- Is there a limit to how generous you should be?
- When you hear that the world's 26 richest people together own as much as the poorest four billion people (Oxfam), what's your reaction?
- If you have a bank account, do you know what the bank does with your money? Does it matter how your bank makes your investment grow?



### Take-home idea

Work together at home over one week to record how you each spend your money. Keep an account of what goes out on food, clothes, treats, outings and entertainment. There will also be expenditure on water, heating, lighting and other services which will be harder to calculate – but using bills, you should be able to make a rough weekly estimate. Maybe you can turn this into a pie chart! For some of the younger members of the family, the actual figures will feel a little abstract, but it should at least give an idea of where the money goes. Use this to think about how much beyond this could be saved (including how and why) and how much could be given away. Could you make different choices at the supermarket that would benefit the environment or the people who produced your favourite foods?

Read what Jacob promised to God about his money when he prayed after his dream of angels going up and down a ladder

to heaven in Genesis 28:20–22. Is this a promise you could make?

### Question to start and end the session

So... if money were no object, what would you buy?

## #discipleship: extra

Find out more online about ECCR and the work that it does. Take a look at ECCR's other resources, including this YouTube video ([bit.ly/money-makes-change-video](https://bit.ly/money-makes-change-video)) which explains the simple ways we can do good with our money.

There are other secular and Christian groups who work on issues related to money, debt, stewardship, and financial justice and inclusion. These include:

- Christians Against Poverty (CAP): [capuk.org](https://capuk.org)
- Church Action on Poverty: [church-poverty.org.uk](https://church-poverty.org.uk)
- Credit Unions: [creditunions.co.uk](https://creditunions.co.uk)
- Green Christian's Joy in Enough project: [joyinenough.org](https://joyinenough.org)
- Jubilee Debt Campaign: [jubileedebt.org.uk](https://jubileedebt.org.uk)
- Just Finance Foundation: [justfinancefoundation.org.uk](https://justfinancefoundation.org.uk)
- Stewardship: [stewardship.org.uk](https://stewardship.org.uk)

### Social action

Celebrate and support local ethical businesses, social enterprises and cooperatives. You could plot them on a map and organise a guided prayer walk between them all to give thanks for signs of hope in your local community.

Check out the ECCR Take Action page ([eccr.org.uk/take-action](https://eccr.org.uk/take-action)) for further ideas – and send your own ideas to [info@eccr.org.uk](mailto:info@eccr.org.uk)

Each year ECCR and other agencies support events and activities for **Good Money Week**, which takes place in early October. Find ideas from their website ([goodmoneyweek.com](https://goodmoneyweek.com)) and see how your family and your Messy Church can get involved. If you or your church take action as a result of this resource, please let ECCR know by emailing [info@eccr.org.uk](mailto:info@eccr.org.uk) with your story, or tweet [@ECCR1](https://twitter.com/ECCR1) on Twitter and use the hashtag **#MoneyMakesChange**.







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## Activities

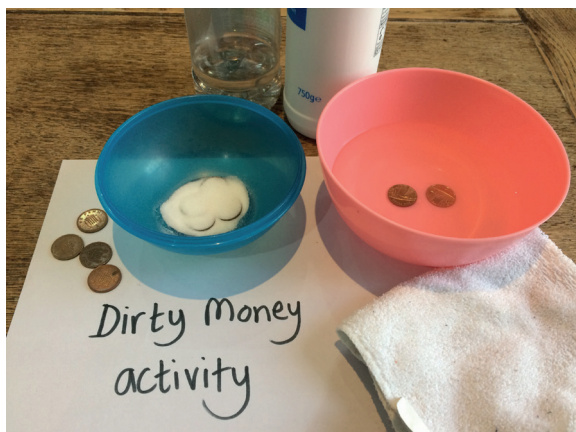
### 1. Dirty money

**You will need:** dirty pennies; white vinegar; table salt; shallow plastic bowls; bowl of water; cloths/ kitchen roll; disposable gloves

Once in circulation, coins become dirty because they are made of copper, which reacts with oxygen in the air. Money in itself is neither good nor bad – clean nor dirty, as it were – but it is all about how it is used. Similarly, the coins that Zacchaeus amassed weren't bad in themselves. His wealth came because the Romans allowed him to charge the people more than the usual rate for taxes so he could keep a percentage for himself. His patriotic Jewish friends, however, would certainly have called Zacchaeus' money dirty!

Wearing the gloves, put some dirty pennies in a shallow bowl and cover with salt. Pour over a little white vinegar and watch it fizz. Rub the salt and vinegar mix over both sides of the pennies. Take the pennies out and wash off the mix in clean water. Buff the pennies to a shine.

**Talk about** the concept of dirty or clean money: for example, once you have a clean pile of pennies alongside some dirty pennies, encourage adults and children to divide up the pennies into two columns, naming what they consider as good uses and bad uses of the coins.



### 2. Ethical money boxes

**You will need:** food tubs with plastic lids (with the inside rinsed and dried); black felt-tip pens; the largest coin in your currency; cutting boards; craft knives; scissors; patterned paper; glue; extra decorations such as stamps, stickers, ribbon, etc.

Tax collectors like Zacchaeus working for the hated Romans, who at that time governed Israel, were extremely unpopular. There is no doubt that he would have needed to keep his money in a secure place.

Using the felt-tip pen draw a coin slot in the lid top, using the largest coin in your currency for reference. Carefully cut out the coin slot with a craft knife, testing the hole to make sure it is big enough for your money to go through. Choose a piece of patterned paper that is long enough to wrap around a tub and glue the paper on to it, adding any additional decorations once the paper is firmly in place.

**Talk about** the idea of saving money – what for, where and how best to save. Your money box by itself won't increase the amount of money you put in there, but a savings account will offer this. However, it does this by using your money to invest in goods and services, some of which you might not be happy with, such as making and selling weapons, factory farming or industries that are contributing to climate change. It's like investing in a bank run by Zacchaeus who uses your money in Roman ways that would harm your country or hurt other people. Introduce the idea of 'ethical investment' – growing your money but without it being used in ways that damage our neighbours and the natural world.





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## 3. Making money

**You will need: a set of seven flexible tubes from a pound shop or pipe insulation tubes (ones which allow your smallest currency to fall through); seven empty jam jars; a large rectangular piece of cardboard; garden ties; black card; a set of investment cards (below); a pound's worth of pennies (or equivalent in your currency)**

Zacchaeus had become a wealthy man through his tax collecting on behalf of the Roman administration, and so there is no doubt that he would have sought to protect and grow his money by whatever means possible in his day. We may not be as wealthy as Zacchaeus, but we too should take care of our money and spend or invest it wisely. It is interesting to note that immediately after this Bible story, Luke records Jesus' parable about the king-elect who travels off, entrusting his wealth to three servants with the words, 'Put this money to work until I come back' (Luke 19:13, NIV).

This investment game needs preparing before the session. Fix the seven tubes to the card using garden ties threaded through the cardboard. You may be able to twist the tubes back and forth before they end up above each of the seven jars below when the card is held upright. Arrange the black card so that it is not possible to see how many coins are going into each jar. Prepare the investment cards, numbered or colour-coded to match each of the seven tubes, with these:

- **Keep this money safe and don't spend it**
- **Give this money away to charity**
- **Invest this money in a savings scheme which increases it by 1p every year in ways that you know are not going to harm the planet or its people**
- **Invest this money in a savings scheme which increases it by 5p a year but in ways that could harm the planet or its people**
- **Spend this money on treats for you and your family**
- **Lend this money to friends and family, expecting to be paid back with interest**
- **Lend this money to friends and family, but not expecting it to come back with any interest for you**

As each family group comes to this activity, give them a set of ten pennies. Invite them to read the choices of what they can do with their money. Let each decide what they will do by putting their pennies into one or more of the tubes. Listen to the money falling through the tube into the jars. Once all the investments have been completed, take away the card from the jam jars to reveal what most people have gone for.

**Talk about** which options were the most popular. How do you think God wants us to save or grow our money?

## 4. The money tree

**You will need: A3 piece of paper with a drawn outline of a sycamore tree with trunk and branches; brown and green card; scissors; glue sticks; a variety of coins to act as templates; pencils**

Despite the comfortable circumstances that his wealth must have given him, Zacchaeus clearly still feels he is missing something, and the visit by Jesus to Jericho excited his curiosity to see this radical teacher from the north. Maybe he had heard how his fellow tax collector Matthew had dramatically given up his lucrative job to follow Jesus. Because Zacchaeus wasn't tall, he decided to climb a sycamore tree in order to see over the crowd and get a good view of Jesus.

Draw around real coins to create card versions which should be cut out. Cover the outline of the tree with these card coins – using brown for the trunk and branches and green for the leaves. This is an ongoing activity for all groups to join in with some time over the session.

**Talk about** how we often joke that 'money does not grow on trees', and indeed the excessive spending plans of governments are often mocked because they depend on some sort of 'magic money tree'. The truth is that money has to be honestly earned and wisely budgeted. No doubt Zacchaeus could have bought up all the trees in Jericho with his wealth, but he couldn't buy an audience with Jesus. It was Jesus who invited himself to tea at Zacchaeus' mansion.

What things can money not buy? You could also make the link with charitable giving and ethical investment through the tree theme. We plant a small seed in the hope that it will grow into a tree to shelter and provide for others, even if we ourselves don't see the tree reach its full height. What could we use our money for today that could benefit future generations?





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## 5. Fair money

**You will need: a ripe yellow banana; a measuring tape or ruler with 30cm visible; paper and pens; five cards marked as: farmer, plantation owner, shipping company, importing business, supermarket or shop; a plate of banana pieces, cut up ready to eat**

Zacchaeus made his money because he was allowed to collect more than the agreed tax and keep the extra for himself. When John the Baptist started preaching in the desert, he challenged people to stop treating each other unfairly. To the tax collectors who came he said, 'Don't collect any more than you are required to' (Luke 3:13, NIV). The principle of taking a cut of the costs in order to make money applies to big business, banking, investment markets and international trade. As in Zacchaeus' case, these cuts do create wealth for some but also poverty for many.

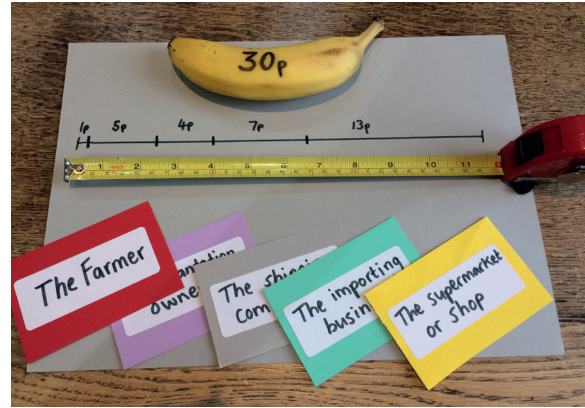
(This game is based on the banana split game from CAFOD: [cafod.org.uk/content/download/733/6290/version/3/file/Primary\\_Fairtrade\\_banana-split-game.pdf](http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/733/6290/version/3/file/Primary_Fairtrade_banana-split-game.pdf).) This activity is a money challenge. Explain that the banana you can see costs you 30p in the shops, but there are lots of people involved in bringing that banana from overseas into your home. How much of this 30p do you think goes to everyone involved? Invite teams of adults and children to work out their answers together and mark off the division of the 30p on a 30cm line that they draw. You could provide the figures below or make it harder by asking people to guess (and then reveal the figures which could be written on the back of the cards).

Here are the approximate figures:

- The farmer – 1p
- The plantation owner – 5p
- The shipping company – 4p
- The importing business – 7p
- The supermarket or shop – 13p

**Talk about** how the trading and money systems of the world can be unfair for some of the poorest. Fairtrade ([fairtrade.org.uk](http://fairtrade.org.uk)) is a movement that seeks to make the financial share fairer, particularly for the farmers in this example. But are you prepared to pay more for a Fairtrade item in order for this to happen, or would you instead go for the cheapest possible option? There is a justice issue whenever we spend or invest our money.

You might like to use the curved banana to become either a smile or a frown depending on what people say and think about all this! Share banana pieces with the groups that come.



## 6. Rich and poor

**You will need: literature from a Christian charity or mission agency supported by your church (look for a pie chart of some sort that shows how much money has been collected and how much spent); a stopwatch facility on your phone; a variety of sponsorship challenges such as those listed below**

Just as in any big city, Jericho had both rich and poor people. On his way to Jericho, as recorded by Luke just before our story, Jesus had met with blind Bartimaeus, who was begging for money in the streets. I wonder if Zacchaeus ever walked past him. I wonder if he ever stopped to spare some change for this poor man.

Giving money away to those in need was a religious duty that the Jews of Jesus' time would have observed – although we also read in the gospels that some of them tried to get out of this. Christians today are encouraged to be generous, and many will put aside a percentage of their income to give away to good causes. 'Taking the collection' is part of most Christian church services, and the apostle Paul in the Bible urges his readers to 'set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collection will have to be made' (1 Corinthians 16:2, NIV). We know that Paul made more than one collection in his lifetime, once to help those suffering from a famine and on another occasion to help his own mission work around the Mediterranean.

Choose a fun activity which people agree to take on in return for a small gift to the charity you decided on for this activity. The fun challenges could include:

- Saying the alphabet backwards
- Running backwards around a track a number of times





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- Eating a number of doughnuts without licking lips
- Balancing a number of items on your head for a minute
- Transferring a set number of chickpeas from one plate to another using chopsticks in a given time

**Talk about** the sort of charity giving that attracts you and what governs your choices in the charities you support. Whatever money is made during this activity should go to the chosen charity.

## 7. Money games

**You will need: a chalkboard (or equivalent) which provides a good slippery surface (roughly 14x20”), with ten equally spaced lines to create nine ‘home’ spaces, the bottom line being four inches from the start; 2p coins (or equivalent); a score-pad; pencils**

Zacchaeus used his money to make more money – to keep him ‘winning in the game of life’, you might say! There are several board games linked to making, spending and investing money, such as: Payday, Monopoly, Go for Broke, shove halfpenny. We’re going to play shove halfpenny.

The aim is to shove the 2p coins up the board to land in between the lines. To do this, you position the 2p coin just overlapping the start line and then use any part of your hand to propel it forward. There is one point for every coin that lands in between the lines. The aim is for a player to be first to score two points for each of the nine sections. Each player has five coins to play with each round.

**Talk about** the competitive drive that many of us have and how this affects attitudes to money, riches and poverty. I wonder what motivated Zacchaeus to be the man he was. Was it greed? Revenge? Ambition? Whatever it was, it makes his transformation on meeting Jesus even more amazing.



## 8. A new leaf

**You will need: a supply of large fresh leaves from a tree – a sycamore tree if you can; some rubber mallets; pieces of plain white cloth; felt-tip pens**

Zacchaeus ‘turns over a new leaf’ because of his meeting with Jesus! But what is particularly amazing is the impact this has on his attitude to his money. His wealth is no longer something just for himself, but a resource from which he can give away. He not only restores what he stole four times over, but he donates half of his wealth to the poor. The presence of Jesus in his home has liberated a spirit of generosity and justice in his heart.

Place a fresh leaf between two pieces of plain cloth and beat on it with the mallet. The leaves will release chlorophyll, which will produce a delicate leaf pattern on both pieces of cloth. Next, on one leaf print, write words or draw pictures with the felt-tip pens to represent those things that have spoilt Zacchaeus’ life up to this point (and which indeed can spoil all our lives too). Zacchaeus, for example, may have written: greed, hurting others, pride, betrayal and selfishness. On the second leaf, write new words or draw pictures expressing how Zacchaeus and we can be different with God’s help – for example, generosity, being more caring, faithfulness, thoughtfulness, etc. Pin these two leaf patterns together and make this into your ‘I’m sorry’ and ‘Please help me’ prayers to God.

**Talk about** the different ways we can ‘turn over a new leaf’ with our resources (money, time, possessions). What would you do differently? What would you like to commit to exploring? How could you show kindness, generosity or act for justice? Does it make a difference whether you think of money as ‘my money’ or ‘God’s money’?

## 9. Edible coins

**You will need: packets of round biscuits – find a variety of different sizes; icing sugar; water; yellow food colouring; teaspoons; paper plates; hand wipes; cocktail sticks; edible decorations**

No doubt many other homes in Jericho had hoped to entertain Jesus that day – maybe they had already put out their best china and had cakes in the oven! The news that Jesus chose to dine with the city tax collector must have come as a complete shock to everyone. Jesus was always upsetting and challenging expectations like this. And in contrast, maybe Zacchaeus’ family and servants weren’t at all prepared for their unexpected guest, and a meal had to be very hastily prepared for that teatime.



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Prepare the icing with the water, icing sugar and food colouring so that it is fairly thick. Use the back of a teaspoon to smooth the icing on to your biscuits. Use a cocktail stick to engrave your biscuits with monetary values for different sorts of coins, or use edible decorations. If you have enough differently sized biscuits, maybe you can create on a paper plate the shape of a person. This could be 'Mr Money-Bags' Zacchaeus, who gives away his money when he meets with Jesus.

**Talk about** what you think Jesus and Zacchaeus talked about during that historic meal.



## 10. Good money

**You will need: paints; brushes; paper; water pots; examples of local charities or community initiatives from your area, such as: homes for those on the streets, food banks, safe play-spaces for children, youth clubs, skateboard parks, sports centres, allotments, day centres for the community, environmental schemes and plastic recycling centres, etc.**

After the events in this story, Jericho must have never been the same again. Suddenly Zacchaeus' money was being used for good to help the least, the last and the lost of the city. We aren't told exactly how his big giveaway was used to benefit the poor, but surely Zacchaeus would have been as wise a benefactor as he had been unscrupulous a tax collector. So, I wonder, what good did his money do?

Choose one project that the Zacchaeus Trust Fund might have helped to start. Design what it looked like and paint this, giving a title to the project linked to the story if possible, for example 'The Sycamore Homeless Shelter'.

**Talk about** how money is being used for good in your own community. What are you concerned about locally, and what would you like to see happen?

## Celebration

*Begin by celebrating the activities.* What did you enjoy? What made you think? What surprised you?

There are lots of emotions in today's story. Let's step into the story with some of these.

*Invite everyone to turn outwards to face a wall and not look at the others. On the count of three, ask them to turn and become statues of various feelings in this story, for example: excitement that Jesus is coming to town, anger that Zacchaeus wants to join the crowd, amazement that Jesus calls Zacchaeus down from the tree, curiosity and puzzlement that he invites himself to Zacchaeus's house for a meal, shock when people learn about Zacchaeus' change of heart.*

The story of Zacchaeus is one of the most dramatic in the gospels. Zacchaeus heard the voice of Jesus, and it turned his life inside out and upside down. When any of us hears the voice of God breaking into our lives, new beginnings are possible. For Zacchaeus, it was a voice of invitation that surprised him in his hiding place in the sycamore tree – the voice of Jesus, whom he thought would never have bothered with the likes of him. Everyone loves the story of Zacchaeus – the little man whom everyone shunned with good reason, but who met with God in the person of Jesus and who found a new start in life. It changed him, and his newfound generosity and sense of justice also transformed the town of Jericho where he lived.

The trouble is that his story is so familiar to many of us that we forget the impact it had at the time. Let's hear the story in a new context – the streets of London rather than the streets of Jericho – and draw on imagery from one the most famous of London's money-making board games. What follows is the story of Zacchaeus and his new beginning... told with the Monopoly board!

*Show a big Monopoly board as an ongoing visual aid.*

You couldn't live in a Big City without paying your taxes.

You couldn't pay your taxes in this particular Big City without meeting the tax collectors.

And when it came to raking in the taxes, there was one tax collector who had a **Monopoly**.





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Nothing moved on the board of life in this city without going past his **Go!** and paying him **£200**. He had houses on **Park Lane** and hotels on **Mayfair**. It was enough to bankrupt you, if you ever landed there. No amount of **water works** would change his mind.

Nobody liked this player of the game – this tax collector – this Zacchaeus.

The other players turned their backs on him whenever he went by **in his top hat** to make him look taller than he was. They wanted to give them **the boot**, but he had **the banker** behind him. They hated him because he held **all the cards** and it was rumoured that he had even stolen from the **Community Chest**. This tax collector even charged for **Free Parking** and ruled with a rod of **iron**.

This City had had about enough, when by **Chance** – or so it seemed – a new player arrived in town.

This man played by a different set of rules. He was happy to land on **Old Kent Road** or be seen in **Pentonville**. He mixed with the politicians in **Whitehall**, the tourists in **Trafalgar Square** and the shoppers in **Oxford Street**. He was everyone's **Pall... mall**. He loved all the players. Nobody was beneath his **Station**.

Even the tax collector was impressed by this **Angel** of a man and wanted to meet him too. So he took a **Chance** one day. Choosing some **Electric Company**, he climbed up a lamp post... to see the new player pass by in **Leicester Square**. But he had the shock of his life... and not just from the lamp post!

'It's your turn, Zac,' said the new player, calling him down. 'I'm coming to your home on **Park Lane** for tea... today.'

Everyone held their breath with anger and surprise... and **missed a turn**. 'Why is he bothering with a man who treats us worse than his **Scottie dog**? A man whose lifestyle is decidedly **dicey**? A man who is on every board... on the board?'

Now, nobody knows exactly what went on during that meal. Nobody knows what the surprising player actually said to the surprised tax collector. But everyone knows what happened next.

Zac took a turn... for the better! Zac sold half of his hotels and houses and shared the money with the other players! Zac paid back the exorbitant rents he'd collected... four times over! Zac even surprised the banker with his financial

generosity! Zac had decided it was time to start playing the game all over again!

And then it was the stranger's turn to speak. 'This is why I joined in,' he said, 'to help everyone play by the original rules, to take everyone back to the start, to help everyone **get out of jail free**. And how? All because of... what I will do... at... **King's Cross!**'

Jesus called Zacchaeus, who found a new beginning. Zacchaeus was a prisoner of his own greed and wealth. Jesus broke into this and set him free so he could use his money fairly and for the good of others.

Christians believe that Jesus can bring a change of heart to all who meet with him: a change of heart that affects the whole of our life, including the way we spend, save, invest and value our money, which is a gift from God.

## Prayer

Distribute some small coins (real or plastic) so that everyone has a few. Have a jar or collection plate at the front and invite people to come up, individually or as a family/group, to drop their coins into the jar. As they do, encourage them to think about how they can serve God this week with their money, or in another area of their life. When everyone has finished, pray to close:

Lord God, thank you that we can use our money and other resources to serve you. Help us to use our money for the good of others and for your kingdom. Amen

## Meal suggestion

Encourage the idea of sharing and fair distribution. For example, you could give one person on each table all the food and everyone else an empty plate and see how long it takes for the food to be shared around equally. Or cut a cake or pie into different-sized slices.

You could serve mini pizzas with toppings arranged in the shape of numbers or go for a money-themed feast with all things circular, e.g. burgers, rolls, round pasta wheel shapes, slices of carrot/cucumber or banana/kiwi/orange, bagels, scones, doughnuts.

You could take some simple snacks and present them as money. For example, serve mints, sweets, biscuits, mini rice cakes or even chocolate coins in small fabric see-through bags such as those used for wedding favours. Try to choose Fairtrade options where you can e.g. chocolate coins from a company like Divine ([divinechocolate.com](http://divinechocolate.com)).



# Messy Money



**Money Makes Change** is a national ECCR programme, opening up conversations around how Christians use, spend, save and invest the resources they have – however big or small. If you’ve enjoyed Messy Money, then do check out **[eccr.org.uk](http://eccr.org.uk)**. We are developing a set of thought-provoking, accessible resources for individuals and churches, starting with an interactive workshop for small groups, to inspire reflection and action. We will share stories of a growing community of people making decisions that make a difference – so do get in touch if you have a story to share! You can find us on Twitter **@ECCR1** or contact us at **[info@eccr.org.uk](mailto:info@eccr.org.uk)**

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