

When our unconverted George is still a „friendly participant“ after four or five Discovery meetings, some believers are rightly wondering where it will go next. We are not pushing anyone, but our desire is for George to start communicating with Jesus himself! We want him to accept Jesus as his Savior and Lord, and then to continue to grow, and immediately serve others...!

First of all, I assume that one of us believers has personal contact with George; that we see him also outside of Discovery itself. That's important!

And second, in the discoveries of God's Word, we adhere to the three-thirds structure, and naturally put our personal dimension of contact with living Jesus present!

For example, if we have talked through Zacchaeus (Luke 19) a little, with others I wonder what this tells us about the people: "It strikes me why Zacchaeus's response to Jesus' challenge was so strong? Jesus did not ask him to distribute half of his possessions. It seems that meeting living Jesus changes a person quite profoundly."

I like the question what we can take for our own lives: "It feels like sitting in a tree here with Zacchaeus. We also want to get to know living Jesus! :-)"

One of the answers to the question „what does this say about people“ may be a fifteen-second lightning story: „I think I've experienced something similar to Zacheus: There was a time when I felt terribly lonely and depressed. Later I said: Jesus, please COME into my life, FORGIVE me all the bad things I have ever done, GUIDE me. Jesus has come and since then I have been talking with Him and experiencing His closeness. This I see here with Zacchaeus as well...

And my buddy looking at the ceiling can add: "Jesus, I admire you for accepting such Zacchaeus and forgiving him. Thanks for accepting me, too, and forgiving me! "

In other words, we show our Georges again and again in a natural way, from God's Word and from our own experience, that living Jesus is present there with us and that it is really worth inviting him into our lives.

The basic starting point should still remain only our passage today, or what we've read together before! No sermons, nor our monologues of sharing spiritual experiences...

For the second or third meeting, I have a pad with a paper and a thick marker ready: "This



is how Zacheus experienced meeting with Jesus. One illustration helped me a lot to invite Jesus to my life: In the beginning, God and man talked to each other normally. Then man left God and did things God did not like. This created a huge gap between them, caused by human evil. But without contact with God, people live empty lives. So they have always been trying to bridge the gap. Some try good deeds, some religion, or spiritual experiences. But none of this reaches to God. This is exactly Zacchaeus's situation! He tried everything and nothing filled his life. So Jesus went in!" And I would go on to the prayer of surrender and a challenge!

If I've shown the bridge over the gap to George before, I don't consider it an obstacle. No way: „One illustration served me a lot - I already showed it to George - you can help me...!“

At Discovery we not only want to discuss more and more biblical stories, but at the same time we naturally invite people to living Jesus who is there with us, and we also add personal elements, how we surrendered ourselves to him and what it brought us...

*I long, Lord Jesus, for many, many more Georges to start life with You - through our reading of God's word and through our community...*