

WHO is the Bible's central figure?

The Bible is a constellation of a thousand points of light. It is filled with brilliant stories about colorful people and stunning word-pictures. Yet, its simple truths are accessible even to young children. The secret is to concentrate on one shining facet at a time. Connect the points of light as you continue to search the Scriptures.

The Bible's narratives are mostly about real people. The view we get is like peering into a mirror; we see a reflection of ourselves. In Job's suffering we contemplate our own suffering. In Jacob's wrestling match with God, we see ourselves wrestling with God for a blessing. In Thomas's doubt, we examine our own wavering faith. God has written us into his literary masterpiece. We may not find our own names, but we are there—only none of us is the main character. God reserved that honor for his own Son.

Jesus Christ is the main character of God's story. He is God's obedient Son. He accomplished everything God expected from us when he first created us.

The story of Zacchaeus helps us see how God embeds us in his Bible narratives. In this story, we learn that Jesus wanted to have a loving relationship with Zacchaeus, and each of us.

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus—a chief tax collector, who was quite wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but Zacchaeus was short; he could not see over the crowd. So he ran and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down. I must stay at your house today.” So he came down and welcomed Jesus gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He is the guest of a sinner.”

Zacchaeus stood up and said to Jesus, “Lord! I now give half of my possessions to the poor. If I have cheated anyone, I will return four times the amount.”

Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:1-10)

Did you see yourself in the description of Zacchaeus? Zacchaeus was searching for something. Do you think he found what he was looking for when he met the man named Jesus? It was a big deal to have Jesus come to his house. But to hear Jesus say, “Salvation has come to your house” was an even bigger deal. Jesus always delivers more than we are looking for. He delivers *what we need*.

Salvation is our greatest possession. So, maybe the question we should be asking is not who is the main character of the Bible; but, rather, *who is this Jesus*, and *what kind of relationship do I have with him?*

What to Look For

Look for yourself in the Bible. Find yourself kneeling by Jesus's manger, in the shadow of Jesus's cross, and at his empty tomb. It could have been you in those places, because the Bible tells the stories of ordinary people.

The Bible often explains who Jesus is and what he has done for us in terms of his many roles (*Savior, Lamb of God, Prophet, Priest, King, the Vine, Light of the World, Living Water, the Good Shepherd*, etc.) Each of the Bible's names for Jesus is significant. Whenever you discover a new name for Jesus, consider its importance to you.

Then, see yourself and Jesus in the same frame. He is God's Son, the central figure of God's Word, and your personal Savior and divine Friend.

Discussion

How did you get to know Jesus? Describe your relationship with him now.

What would be the main topic of conversation if Jesus came to your house for dinner?

Can you think of any new names or roles that Jesus assigned to you and other believers?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, strengthen our relationship with you by making our faith in you grow. Amen.

Helps

Bible discussions can be intense and exhausting work. Don't wear each other out by making a good discussion last too long. And don't allow the members of your family get too caught up in disputes about things that are not important.

Activity

Create a list of names and titles used in the Bible to refer to God, persons of the Trinity, or Jesus. Try to find texts in Scripture that contain these divine names.