



INTRODUCTION

As we approach the dawn of a new year, it's time to take account of where we're heading. For some, the Coldplay song "Fix You" might describe where you've been the past year: "When you try your best but you don't succeed, when you get what you want but not what you need, when you feel so tired but you can't sleep, stuck in reverse." The good news is God has charted a way forward for every person in 2018. Two stories from the gospels illustrate how God can take us the next step. For Zacchaeus, his encounter with Christ leads to a decision to cross the Faith Line and experience a changed life. Thomas' journey is marked by doubts about Jesus' resurrection until the risen Savior personally approaches him. In this week's message, we learn we attain fullness of life when we trust Christ and maintain this fullness as we continue to follow Him.

DISCUSSION

Read **Luke 19:1-10** and **John 20:24-29**, and discuss the following.

1. Lori, a believer, is having coffee with her friend, Heather, when their conversation turns to children. Heather says, "I know with my kids getting older I should be taking them to church. But I'm afraid I'll run into somebody from work. Around the office, management likes me, but I'm despised by the workers. They'll probably think I'm the biggest hypocrite if I show up for a service." What lessons from Zacchaeus' conversion might Lori share with Heather to encourage her to take a step of faith? In what ways is her workplace situation similar to Zacchaeus, and in what ways is it different? What fears do the two of them share?
2. Alan hosts a weekly Bible study in his home until the day he receives a layoff notice from his employer. Shaken by the experience, he tweets out to the study group, "I can't lead something I no longer believe in." When one of his friends asks him what's happened, Alan blurts out, "I'll believe in God when a new job offer shows up in my mailbox." Is there a similarity between Alan's doubts and the doubts Thomas faced about Jesus' promises in the Gospel of John? What would you share with Alan from Thomas' story that might help him re-confirm his faith?

THINK ABOUT IT

One good way to remember a message is by memorizing acronyms. An easy way to remember the lessons of Zacchaeus and Thomas in today's message are the acronyms "AAA" and "MMM." Zacchaeus [AAA] Attained his faith through Action, first climbing up a tree to see Christ and then welcoming the Savior into his home, before showing an Attitude of reconciliation to those he'd cheated. After first doubting, Thomas [MMM] Maintained his faith by recalling the Memory of Christ's works and then proclaiming the Savior's greatness with his Mouth.

DO SOMETHING

Considering the acronyms in "Think About It," where are you today? As you begin the New Year, start working on the acronym that fits you best – AAA or MMM.

1. [AAA] Is there something that's kept you from making a commitment to Christ? Reach out to a believer and ask them to explain how you can begin a new life in Him. If you're having attitude issues, let Christ transform your heart as He did for Zacchaeus.
2. [MMM] Are you like Thomas, facing doubts about what God's doing today? Ask Him to help you recall what He's done for you. Then begin and end each day by expressing praise with your mouth.

