

# Out On A Limb

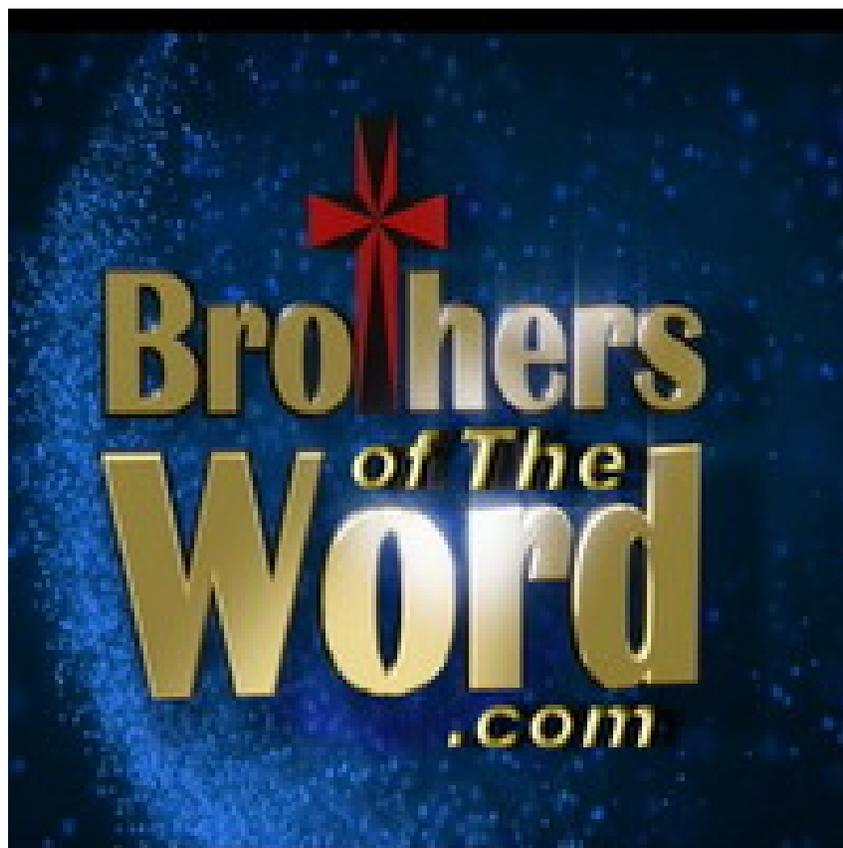
Sermon Title: **Out On A Limb**

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Speaker: **C. Elijah Bronner**

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C. Elijah Bronner: Don't allow other people to come between you and Jesus because when they come between you and Jesus, they are closer to Jesus than you are.

Female Speaker: You are listening to BrothersofTheWord.com. This is the message titled, 'Out On A Limb' by C. Elijah Bronner. This message is #7590, that's 7590. Listen to over 1,000 free messages on BrothersofTheWord.com.

[Music]

Female Speaker: And now for 7590, 'Out On A Limb'.

C. Elijah Bronner: Thank you for joining Brothers of The Word, because brother, you need the Word.

[Applause]

Well, just a little humor I came across this week, a mother asked little Johnny as they are waiting for the bus to tell the driver that he is 4 years old when asked so that he can ride for free. And as they get on to the bus the driver asked Johnny how old he is, I am 4 years old Johnny says. And when will you be 6 years old the bus driver asked? When I get off the bus Johnny answered.

Well, open your Bible, if you will, over to the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 19, the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 19, and we will read Verses 1 through 10, the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 19, we will read Verses 1 through 10. When you get there say amen. Let's read together in unison beginning there at Verse 1, we will read now through Verse 10. Luke, Chapter 19, ready, let's read together.

Luke 19:1-10:

“And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press - or the crowd, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today

I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”.

And I want you to focus in on Verse 4, “And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him:” And I just want to use as a subject today, ‘Out On A Limb’, ‘Out On A Limb’, ‘Out On A Limb’, ‘Out On A Limb’.

Now, this message speaks to us, you know? I love to look at accounts in scripture, not simply from a historical perspective, but I love to look at them to see, what are they saying to us now, what is the Bible speaking to me now? The Bible is God speaking to you.

Turn to your neighbor and say, the Bible is God speaking to you.

Audience Members:       The Bible is God speaking to you.

C. Elijah Bronner: The Bible is God speaking to me. And so I always like to look at accounts in scripture to see what is it that’s relevant for me today. It’s wonderful to know the historical account. You know, it’s wonderful to know that Jesus passed through Jericho and that this Jericho is the same city that they blew the trumpet and the walls fell down. This is the same Jericho. So it’s good to know the historical perspective, but what does that have to do with me today?

So I like to always question and ponder, what is the scripture saying to me, what is God speaking to me? I am going to share some things with you today that this account speaks to me, speaks to all of us today. It says something about pursuit. Zacchaeus was in hot pursuit of Jesus, he was in hot pursuit of Jesus, he was pursuing Jesus with an intent desire.

Now, he was small in stature, but he was big in desire, he was big in desire. That actually convinced me, because he was a sinner and yet he had this kind of pursuits, and here we are saints and sometimes we are very cold and lackadaisical in our pursuit of the master. He had a hunger and a thirst. He wanted him. He knew that there was something more to life than what he was living. He knew he had God shaped void in his life and he wanted to fill it.

He knew his life needed change. He knew his life needed the change, and there was an excitement that he had about Jesus. There was a freshness in his approach. He was willing to do something different, out of the ordinary. He was willing to take a risk. He was willing to get out on a limb just to see Him. What have you done in your Christian walk lately? What have you done in your Christian walk lately?

Is it a drag just for you to pray for 30 minutes, or is it just another ho-hum Sunday to go to church and talk to a few friends to find out where you all are going to eat after church? And is it just the same? Where is that freshness? Where is that aliveness? Where is that passionate desire?

This man wanted to see Jesus, he had an intense desire, a hunger, and he is a sinner, it speaks to us, don't lose your freshness, don't lose your fire, don't lose your will for Christ, don't lose your desire for God, don't let it grow old, don't let it grow stale, don't become stagnant.

There is a freshness. There is a desire. When your eyes open in the morning, you can't wait to talk to Jesus. There ought to be something in you. There should be a burning desire and that's what Zacchaeus had that ministered to me. I was embarrassed, because we can sometimes be in this Christian thing for a while and it doesn't faze us any longer, doesn't faze us any longer.

But here is somebody who just wanted Jesus, he just wanted Jesus, he just wanted Jesus. Where is your original fire? Where is that thirst? Where is the thirst you once had? Where is that hunger you once had, just for the Lord? That's what it says.

It also says to me, we seek God, you seek God with your whole heart, you will find Him. You seek God with your whole heart, you will find Him.

Now, Zacchaeus, his name actually means pure or justified and yet he was a sinner. It's almost like it was written in the code of his name the desire of his heart. He was a sinner, but he wanted to be right, he wanted to be right.

Now, Zacchaeus had two obstacles to overcome, he had two obstacles. Everybody say two?

Audience Members: Two.

C. Elijah Bronner: He had two obstacles to overcome, two obstacles to overcome. Number one, he had the obstacle of the crowd. Everybody say the crowd?

Audience Members: The crowd.

C. Elijah Bronner: The crowd, the crowd.

Now, he couldn't see Jesus because of the crowd. Isn't it interesting to note that the very people around Christ were obstructing the view of Christ? The very people around Christ were obstructing the view of Christ.

Gandhi said, He said, if the world could see the Christ of Christians, they would accept Him, but instead they see the Christians of Christ and they reject Him. What kind of view of Christ do you give? What kind of view of Christ do you give?

People were in the way, he couldn't see because of the crowd, people were in the way. What's keeping you from Christ, is it the opinions of others, is it the opinions of others, what other people are saying, what they think about you? Is it because of what somebody has done to you that there is bitterness in your heart and unforgiveness in your heart, a chip on your shoulder and anger, or is it because of something you have done to somebody else and you can't face them and you can't forgive them and that's blocking your view of Christ?

All of that's in the crowd, all of that's in the crowd. He couldn't see Jesus because of the crowd. Don't allow other people to come between you and Jesus. Don't allow other people to come between you and Jesus, because when they come between you and Jesus, they are closer to Jesus than you are. Don't allow



There was a woman in an accident and she had died and gone to heaven, and the Lord said, I am going to send you back, it's not your time to die, you are going to live another 40 years. The woman came back into earth and she decided now that she had a new lease on life that she would get some things done that she had always wanted to do. So she went and got some nips and tucks and did some plastic surgery and had all type of things done.

And she was walking down the street one day after her surgery and she got hit by a bus and she went back to heaven, and she said, Lord, you told me I was going to be on earth another 40 years. He said I didn't recognize you.

So you change what you can, you change what you can, you change what you can, you change what you can. Don't let the way you were born be a problem to you, you change what you can.

Turn to your neighbor and say, change what you can.

Audience Members: Change what you can.

C. Elijah Bronner: Change what you can, change what you can, change what you can.

Now, this account says to us that you have to get over people, you have to get over the crowd, and you have to also get over your own self-imposed limitations. He was short, he had to get over that, and he had to change what he could. He couldn't do anything about his height, but he could certainly climb to a higher perspective, he changed what he could. You have to change what you can.

Say get over people

Audience Members: Get over people.

C. Elijah Bronner: And also get over your own self-imposed limitations.

There are some other powerful things that Zacchaeus did. Notice here in Verse 4, notice in Verse 4 that he ran before the crowd. Zacchaeus was a leader. He ran before the crowd. He didn't run with the crowd, he went before. A leader sees the

way, a leader knows the way, a leader goes the day. A leader has foresight, has vision. A leader is able to see things that others cannot see and react before others can act. A leader has vision. He ran before the crowd. Notice Zacchaeus was thinking ahead. He was thinking ahead.

Now, he was not merely a publican, the Bible says he was the chief publican. He was the leader, he was in charge, he was over all the other publicans so he thought differently. He was the leader. He was in charge.

Now, publicans in that day were synonymous with the word sinner. When you say a publican, which was a tax collector, that was like saying sinner. That would be like today saying IRS, sinner. They hated publicans, they hated tax collectors, because number one, now, Zacchaeus was Jewish, he was from Israel, but he was working for Rome.

Now, the Jewish people were under Roman oppression, they were under the rulership of the Romans. And so that was a slap in his own people's face, it's like working for the traitor. So he went off, he was working for Rome collecting from the Jews and then he was cheating the Jews on top of that, skimming off the top, heading his own pocket. That's why he was rich. Oh, Zacchaeus was a bad boy.

00:15:07

And so they hated Zacchaeus. They hated Zacchaeus. They hated Zacchaeus. He was the Chief Senate, Chief Publican, but yet he had vision, yet he was the leader, yet he wanted to see Jesus. And so we learned some things from Zacchaeus.

Also notice in Verse 4 that he climbed up, everybody say, climbed up. [*Climbed up*] He climbed up. Now to climb that signifies a conscious, concerted effort. You are doing this on purpose. You don't just fall up a tree. You don't fall off a tree, that didn't happen by happenstance, that was a conscious decision, a concerted effort he made to climb.

I want to ask you a question. What are you doing to take yourself to a higher level? What are you doing to take yourself to a higher level? What are you doing to upgrade yourself? What are you doing? You want to upgrade your life, you are going to

have to change your thinking, you have to change your friends, you have to change your actions, you have to change your environment, you have to change your habits, you have to change your hobbies. There are some changes you have to make if you want to go and upgrade your life to another level.

What are you doing to upgrade your life? I like Pastor Nathaniel and Pastor James, they have -- that's a theme of their company, living on another level. Live on another level, live on another level. What are you doing to upgrade your life? What's the input going into your mind? What's the input going into your spirit? What's the input going into your body? What are you doing to upgrade your life?

Zacchaeus made a conscious effort to climb up, to climb up, to climb up. Everybody say, climb up. [*Climb up*] He upgraded, he got himself to a higher level and raised himself up so that he can have a different perspective and a different vantage point, a different viewpoint so that he could see differently.

Notice, the Bible says, we have been raised up together with Christ, seated together with Him in heavenly places. The position that you are in, it changes your perspective. When you look at things from a heavenly perspective they don't bother you because they are so small when you are seated with Christ looking at them.

And so it changes our perspective when we are seated together. The Bible says, think on those things which are above. Raise your level, raise yourself.

Turn to your neighbor and say, raise yourself up. [*Raise yourself up.*]

Now here is something else I want you to get, I got to move quicker, I don't have the time, but look at verse 5, in verse 5, Zacchaeus only wanted one thing. Now I want to show you all the goodness of God in this.

Zacchaeus only wanted one thing, he wanted to see Jesus. That's all he want. That was his only request. I like it. He wasn't asking for a whole life. He just want to see him. I like this. Simple request, not too much, not too much trouble, not going to

bother anybody, I am doing this on my own. I just want to see him, that's all, that's it.

Now, that's if anything too much. I just want to see him. Just a simple request. Here is what the Bible teaches us from this account. God will always outdo your expectation. God always outdo your expectation. He not only saw Jesus, Jesus saw him. Jesus not only saw him, Jesus conversed with him. Zacchaeus never asked all that. He just wanted to see him. Jesus saw him, Jesus talked to him. Jesus say, hey, come down here, I want to meet you. I want to go home with you. I want to meet the family. I want to meet your wife and the kids and play with your dog. I want to see what you all got in the refrigerator. I want to see what's for dinner tonight.

Jesus not only allowed him to see Jesus, but Jesus saw him, He talked to him, spent time with him, went home with him, changed him, and then reached his whole house.

Jesus finally said, after He spent a day with Zacchaeus, He said, today salvation comes to your whole house. God always outdo your expectation. He will always outdo your expectation. He will do more than you ask or think. He will do exceedingly, abundantly more than you ask for things. He will always exceed your expectation. Zacchaeus was just climbing the tree just to see him. He had no idea it would change his life, it would change his household forever. He changed him forever. It changed him forever.

Zacchaeus was such a changed man when he got finished with Jesus. He said, hey Jesus, he said, hey, I am going to give the faithful what I've got, I am going to give it to the poor. I am now a giver. I am a generous giver.

(00:20:02)

I am a generous giver, I am a generous giver. He said, Jesus, everywhere I go, I am going to be looking to give, I am going to take these resources that You have allowed me to have and I am going to be a blessing, wherever I go, wherever I go, and change his life and change his life and change his life, and change his life, and change his life.

And then he said, hey Jesus, if I have done anybody wrong I am going to restore them for those, for those, for those, for those I am going to restore them.

Now, if you know anything about the law in the Old Testament, you only required -- if you stole something, you are only required to restore what you have stolen at 20% to it. So if you have stolen \$100, you are only required by the law to pay back a 120. Now that's if you admitted it on your own.

Now if you had to go to court and it was found out that you were a thief, then you had to restore four-fold. So Zacchaeus is admitting it on his own but yet he's saying I will do it four-fold, this man was changed, this man was changed, this man was changed.

This is what the Bible calls the fruits of repentance. He was not only changed by his words, he was changed by the way he was now living, that's true repentance. When you change the way you are living that is true repentance. This was a brand-new man, he was full of joy, notice the Bible says, he received him joyfully into his house, he received him joyfully, he received him joyfully into his house.

Let me give you 2-3 things then I am done, there are four quick things I wanted to give from this and then I am actually out of time, I am on borrowed time, I am on borrowed time, I am actually had to borrow this from Pastor James next time he preaches.

Next time Pastor James preaches, he has to be a few minutes short because I am using some of his time. And here are 3 or 4 truths I want you to get from this, there was a powerful message in this. Jesus sees you, He notices you, He saw Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus didn't just see Him, He saw Zacchaeus, He saw Zacchaeus.

God never takes His eyes off of you. The Bible says that you are the apple of His eye. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro. He is always watching you, the Bible says in the 1 Peters 5:8, 'Cast all your cares over him because he cares for you watchfully and affectionately.'

He is always watching over you. The Bible says that's not a stall that can fall from the sky without God knowing it. He says how much more value are you, He sees you. Turn to your neighbor and say, He sees you, He sees you, He knows you, He sees you, He notices you.

Number two, He knows you. Notice when Jesus stopped, He called Zacchaeus by name. He said Zacchaeus, He knew him. They had not been formally introduced, He knew Zacchaeus.

Folks, God knows your name, isn't that good news? God knows your name. God knows your name. God knows your name. God knows your name. God knows your name.

Now I got to tell that that I just got to show you how much God knows you, how much God knows you. Yesterday, I was contemplating what I will speak on the day and I had a couple of things, you know I was thinking about, I have been teaching on Thursdays on overcoming discouragement, I say, yeah Lord, I can go ahead and do part 3 of that, you know, we have been working, building the foundation there.

And I had another title in my mind, something had been scratching in my spirit for quite some while called Out On A Limb, I said, Lord, I can do Out On A Limb or I can do Overcoming Discouragement Part 3, and so I have decided to do overcoming discouragement part 3.

And I went out to my mailbox yesterday to get the mail and this card was on my mailbox, the card says Out On A Limb. The card says Out On A Limb, and you know, I looked up and down the street, I said, oh my goodness, Jesus has driven by my house. Jesus has driven by my house. Jesus has driven by my house.

Folks, I kid you not, I brought the evidence of it, here is the card, right across the top it says, Out On A Limb, this was put on my mailbox yesterday. I couldn't believe it, I said, Lord, wow, You know me, You see me, You know me, You see me, You know me, You see me.

00:24:48

The third thing is, He lifts you up, He lifts you up. Zacchaeus was in degradation and sin and so forth and Jesus lifted him up

out of it, He will lift you up, He lifts you up, He was beaten down by the crowd, everybody had a bad opinion of him, they didn't like him, he lifted him up out of that because he chose Zacchaeus out of everybody else, highlighted him, went home with him. He is the only one, He went home without the whole crowd, He lifted him up.

Folks, when you feel down and out when you feel beat down and buried by just dirtiness of this world, when you feel no good, when you feel like your life doesn't matter, Jesus will lift you up. Jesus will lift you up. Jesus will lift you up. He sees you, He takes notice of you, He knows you, He will lift you up, He will lift you up, He will lift you up, and there is one final point.

He wants you. He wants you. Turn to your neighbor and say He wants you, He wants you. Everything Zacchaeus had done, he had cheated folks, has been a lying scoundrel, robbing, ripping off God's people, all these years, Jesus still wanted him, He still wanted him, wanted to go home with him, still want the fellowship with God.

God still wants you, no matter what you have done, no matter what you have been through in your life, God still want to have fellowship with you, still wants a close relationship with you, He still wants you. He still wants you, still wants you, still wants you, still wants you, He still wants you, still wants to use, He still wanted to use Zacchaeus. He knew He can use Zacchaeus as well to be a blessing to that entire region.

He made a blessing out of Zacchaeus, still wanted to use him for his glory. Man, isn't that good? He knows you, He sees you, He wants you, He wants you, He will lift you up, He will lift you up.

Praise God!

Pastor James, thank you so much for allowing me five of your minutes.

Praise God!

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Thank you so much for joining us today at Brothers of The Word, because brother, you need the Word.

Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen!

[Applause]

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