

Part 2: "Friend of Sinners"

## Introduction

Our reputations are important because they impact our influence. But when we look at the life of Jesus, he often risked his reputation for the sake of connecting with the excluded and marginalized. If we are to help repair the reputation of the church—and by extension, Jesus—we may have to follow that example.

## **Discussion Questions**

- 1. If the people in your circle were to pick a senior superlative for you now (Best Dressed, Most Likely to Succeed, etc.), what do you think it would be and why?
- 2. In the message, Samer described how, in the first century, religion was often used as a system of exclusion. Have you ever been on the receiving end of this dynamic? What was that like?
- 3. What are some of the categories modern religious culture uses to delineate between those who are included and those who are excluded?
- 4. Read Luke 19:1–9. What stands out to you about the way Jesus interacts with Zacchaeus (a definite outsider in the Jewish culture)? What do you notice about Zacchaeus's response? About how the onlookers respond?
- 5. When was the last time you made yourself uncomfortable or risked your reputation for the sake of someone else? What might keep you from doing that again?

## **Moving Forward**

By sharing a meal with Zacchaeus, Jesus made him feel seen and demonstrated that everyone was welcome. Jesus invites us to join him in that mission. What would it look like for you to follow Jesus's example and make a marginalized or excluded person feel seen and accepted?