

Jesus Dines With Matthew and His Sinful Friends Luke 5:27-32

by David Servant

Jesus' purpose is to call sinners to turn from their sins, and He demonstrates this by associating with and sharing His message with those who need to be saved.

Scripture: Matthew 9:12, Luke 5:27, Luke 15:1, Romans 3:23, 1 John 1:8

Topics: "Repentance And Salvation", "Holiness And Redemption"

Description

David Servant preaches on the transformative power of Jesus' call to Matthew, a sinful tax collector, who repented and became a disciple. Despite criticism from the Pharisees, Jesus willingly spent time with sinners to call them to repentance and salvation, demonstrating that true holiness involves reaching out to those in need of redemption. The Pharisees' misunderstanding of holiness and their failure to recognize their own sinfulness serve as a cautionary tale for believers today, challenging them to reflect on their attitudes towards sinners and their own need for salvation.

Transcript

Apparently Levi, also known as Matthew, had been touched by Jesus' ministry in Capernaum. Perhaps he had listened as Jesus taught by the Sea of Galilee or heard the testimonies of people who had been healed. When Jesus called Matthew to be His disciple, he didn't hesitate for a minute, but left everything behind to follow his new Lord.

What was so amazing about Matthew's calling is that he was a very sinful man---at least until he met Jesus. Matthew was a tax collector, which meant that he worked for Rome, the country that occupied and controlled Israel at that time. The Israelites hated the Romans, and naturally they had no respect for any fellow Israelite who worked for them. Tax collectors were considered traitors by their countrymen.

Beyond that, tax collectors had a reputation for being very dishonest, forcing their fellow Israelites to pay more in taxes than Rome required and then keeping the extra money for themselves. In so doing, they became rich at the expense of their own neighbors. Thus, the only type of people who would have been Matthew's friends were fellow tax collectors and other people of very low moral character. Those were the type of people who came to Matthew's banquet.

Matthew, however, had become a disciple of Jesus, repenting of his sins, and as is the case of anyone who is a true follower of Jesus, he wanted his friends to meet Jesus also and be saved. That is the reason he held a banquet in Jesus' honor. It was a low-key evangelistic meeting, and Jesus, who loves everyone, gladly accepted the invitation to spend some time eating with Matthew's sinful friends.

Because He did, He was criticized by the Pharisees and religious teachers, who would never associate with such people. Jesus responded by informing them that the purpose of His coming was to "call sinners to turn from their sins" (Luke 5:32). In order to do that, He had to spend time with sinners, and that is exactly why He attended Matthew's banquet. Jesus didn't spend His time at that banquet talking about sports or the weather! He was telling sinners that they needed to repent and follow Him, just as their friend Matthew had!

Q. The Pharisees and religious teachers we read about today didn't understand two important things. First, they thought holy people shouldn't associate with sinful people. But just the opposite is true. If people are truly holy, they will associate with sinful people, because holy people are motivated by love to share Jesus with those who need to be saved.

That should give you a clue concerning the second thing about which the Pharisees and religious teachers were mistaken. What was it?

A. They thought they were holy, but actually they were themselves sinners who needed to be saved. Jesus referred to this fact when He said, "I have come to call sinners to turn from their sins, not to spend my time with those who think they are already good enough " (Luke 5:32, emphasis added). Jesus was speaking of the Pharisees and religious teachers.

Q. What would you think if your pastor accepted an invitation to a party that was hosted by a newly-converted drug pusher for his drug pusher friends?

Application: Jesus in us loves evil and sinful people. Do we? Or are we like the Pharisees who considered themselves too holy to spend time with sinners?

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