

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Who's Invited To The Party?

Matthew 9:9-13

(Mark 2:13-17)

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Harry Truman said, "Identify your most effective opponent, and hire them."

Jesus just shattered Jewish sanctity

- *Levi/Matthew was no asset to the Hebrew faith community*
- *He was a Roman collaborator, a traitor to his people*
- *Chosen by Jesus, at the direction of The Father (John 5:19)*

Who do Christians disqualify?

- *Would they let The Father tell them to choose the local heretic?*
- **John 13:15**, *"I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done" (Including Judas)*
- **John 20:21**, *"As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."*

.....Matthew

Mark 2:13-14, *Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.*

Jesus had two types of followers:

- 1) *Those who followed along with the crowd (like Deadheads)*
 - 2) *Those devoted to Him above all else in their lives*
- *Here, Jesus is moving along with the crowd following*

When Jesus stops, the crowd stops

- *Their attention is heightened*
- **What's He up to now?**
- *Is He going to heal someone, or perform a miracle?*

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As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus (Matthew) sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

- *In the midst of the crowd, Jesus calls Levi/Matthew to leave his livelihood and follow Him*
- *Not unlike Peter & Andrew, James & John*

Like the leper & the centurion, Levi risked everything!

- *He did this very publicly*
 - *He risked his job & standing with the Romans*
 - *He risked rejection by the Jews*
 - *He risked having no support other than Jesus*
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We must ask, is there anything we would withhold from Him?

- Job, income, social support, family, possessions, reputation, influence...
- Matthew faced all of these things, before he walked out of his office
- **Luke 9:62**, Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."
(Matthew 8:18-22)

It was about who he was going TO...

- **Not** who & what he was leaving

Genesis 12:1, Now the LORD had said to Abram: "GO out from your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.

- **The father of our faith began our faith by leaving his life to follow God**
- Peter, Andrew, James & John, and now Matthew, followed his example
- James the son of Alphaeus appears to have followed his brother

Mark 2:15, Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him.

- Matthew throws a party for Jesus...
- And invites all of his sinner friends
- **So Jesus brings His friends to the party**

If a well-known blatant sinner came to faith in Christ...

- 1) And threw a party at his house with his sinner friends...

2) Would you go, and invite your Christian friends?

- **Whose criticism would you risk if you did?**

Much presented as "the gospel" today is about what's in it for you

- How many would come if they were told, "Here is what it will cost you."?
- Is Jesus after **quantity**, or **quality**?

Matthew 7:13-14, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, **and there are few who find it.**"

Matthew 9:11, When the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "**Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?**"

- Critics still follow faith today
- "Why do you associate with people who aren't like us?"

"Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

- And why do you?
- **Because our Teacher does**

"Sinners" = To miss the mark

- More importantly, "To not share in the prize."

The real question is; **Who decides who shares in the prize?**

- **Matthew 7:21**, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven"

Matthew 9:12-13, *When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and **not sacrifice.**' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

- By implication – the **self-righteous**
- Who believe they deserve it
- **Righteous in their own eyes**

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*To call sinners, **who know they are not sharing in the prize***

- To call them to leave their self-centered lives...
- To follow Christ and **become partakers in His prize**

- His own life of security with The Father

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John 13:15, *"I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done"*

Matthew 10:8, *"Freely you have received, freely give."*

John 14:27, *"My peace I give to you"*

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Romans 12:2, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Philippians 2:5, *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus*