

Luke 5:27-32

²⁷ After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, “Follow Me.”²⁸ And he left everything behind, and got up and *began* to follow Him.

²⁹ And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other *people* who were reclining *at the table* with them.³⁰ The Pharisees and their scribes *began* grumbling at His disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?”³¹ And Jesus answered and said to them, “*It is* not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

1. Jesus calls Levi the publican to follow him.
 - a. After the healing and confrontation with the Pharisees, Jesus makes another controversial move.
 - b. What exactly was a “tax collector” or “publican” in Jesus’ day?
 - i. Publicans were men who paid bids to Rome for the opportunity to collect local taxes.
 - ii. Any money that was raised over that bid went to the publican.
 1. This encouraged graft and theft.
 - iii. Publicans raised the money that supported the Roman legions.
 1. Publicans directly funded the Roman occupation of Israel.
 - c. This event most likely occurred at Capernaum.
 - i. This was the home town of Peter.
 - ii. This means that Matthew most likely stole from Peter and the other fishermen.
 - d. It’s not possible to overstate how hated and despised the publicans were.
2. Levi hosts a large reception for Jesus.
 - a. Note: The host was most probably financed by Matthew’s illicit gain.
 - b. The guests at this reception include Jesus, the disciples, tax collectors, and sinners.
3. The Pharisees and scribes question the disciples about attending the feast.
 - a. The Pharisees and scribes wonder if it is proper for them to consort with such people.
 - b. Jesus responds by describing the mission God the Father has given him.
4. Jesus’ Mission:
 - a. To heal the sick, not the healthy.
 - b. To call sinners, not the righteous to repentance.
5. Observation 1: Jesus can save anybody.
 - a. We can’t miss the significance of Jesus’ choice of Matthew.
 - b. There are several reasons for this:
 - i. We are all equally guilty.
 1. Romans 3:23
 2. Psalm 14:2-3
 3. James 2:10-11
 - ii. We have nothing to offer God.
 1. Isaiah 64:6
 2. Acts 17:24-25
 - iii. Therefore, salvation is completely dependent on God, not man.
 1. Ephesians 2:4-5
 2. Colossians 2:13-14

6. Observation 2: The followers of Christ should be transparent.
 - a. Those associated with Jesus were clearly known for what they were.
 - i. Jesus makes it clear that he associates with those labeled sinners, not those labeled righteous.
 - b. Therefore, in the Church there should be transparency.
 - i. This is for several reasons:
 1. We were all formally living lives of sin and rebellion.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
 2. Transparency about our weakness comes from humility and brokenness.
 - a. Psalm 51:17
 - b. James 4:6
 3. To act as if we do not struggle is to call God a liar.
 - a. 1 John 1:8, 10
 4. Confession is a critical component of Sanctification and the work of the Church.
 - a. 1 John 1:9
 - b. James 5:16
7. Observation 3: Only those who are transparent before Christ receive his healing.
 - a. *"It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick." ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."*
 - i. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees.
 - ii. There is an incorrect and correct interpretation of Jesus' words.
 - iii. Incorrect:
 1. Jesus has come to call the sinners because they are sick and need him. The Pharisees, however, because they follow the law are righteous and do not need Christ.
 - iv. Correct:
 1. Jesus has come to call the sinners because they are the ones honest enough with themselves and with Jesus to realize they are sick and fall on his mercy.
8. Conclusions:
 - a. Jesus can and will save anyone who falls on his grace, regardless of their past.
 - b. Historically, followers of Christ were honest about where they came from and where they were.
 - c. We must do a better job of humbling ourselves and confessing our sins to one another.
 - d. If we are not honest with Christ we will not receive his healing because we will be convince ourselves we don't need it.

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