

## Courage and Calling

### Matthew 9:9-12

<sup>9</sup> As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

<sup>10</sup> While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. <sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

<sup>12</sup> On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

### Children's Message: The Tax Man

Every year your mom and dad have to pay the government to take care of the country and city – roads, health, streetlights, police, community centres. This is called tax and the government takes a portion of what your mom and dad makes from their work.

In our country it is the law that we pay taxes every year.

Those who have more pay more and those who have less pay less.

Do you think people like paying taxes?

No! Most people don't.

Here are some cartoons people made of tax collectors [Show pictures]

We understand that our taxes should go to good things and that makes it a bit better.

But in Jesus' time taxes had to be paid but the money went to the Roman emperor who was mean to them.

There were people who made sure everyone paid taxes to the Romans.

If you didn't pay your taxes, they would send these soldiers after you! [picture]

People in that time hated the tax collectors.

That was because they often cheated people and took money for themselves!

But guess what? Jesus called one person named Matthew who was a tax collector to follow him and he did.

We are told that Matthew simply got up and followed Jesus.

It did not matter what people thought of him.

Jesus had called him.

That Matthew wrote about Jesus and we all have what he wrote in the Bible.

He wrote the Gospel of Matthew.

We learned about taxes and how Jesus chose someone a lot of people didn't like.

Jesus loves everyone and calls them to follow him.

How they answer his call makes all the difference in their lives.

How you answer Jesus will make all the difference in your lives too.

## **Courage and Calling**

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#### **Context: "As Jesus went from there..."**

From where?

Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5-7)

Leper, Centurion, Peter's Mom, Demon possessed, storm, 2 Gedarenes (8)

Paralyzed man is forgiven (Chapter 8)

All the wrong people.

"He saw a man named Matthew sitting in his tax collector's booth."

Who sees you?

Tax booth – obvious what the man did.

All the outward trappings of someone who is unholy, disreputable, shunned.

What kind of existence does he have?

Loneliness, despised?

#### **"Follow me"**

Jesus audibly calls Matthew – chooses him of all people.

It is an invitation, a call.

#### **"Matthew got up and followed him."**

Without hesitation from his place of work, his booth.

The Call always demands a response.

Not everyone responds.

The rich young ruler stands in contrast to all others.

He had everything but when he is invited to let go of all the things that held him, the answer was no.

**“Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s House”**

How many people in this church have you eaten with?

It’s not a scientific measure, but God always wants to eat with us.

It is the primary social means of expressing association in every culture.

You can have coffee, tea, breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack.

The measure of the health of the church is how many people eat with each other.

The measure of a missional church is how many people eat with outsiders.

Food is conversation and conversation is relationship.

The hope is that those conversations are not just about the Canucks and fashion but it is a start and the potential for significant conversation arises.

There is an art of conversation we have lost.

We stay in the shallows without depth but there is a way to dive and surface.

God wants to eat with us and meet with us – that is the meaning of communion.

**“and many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples.”**

There is nothing more missional than bringing your friends to eat and meet Jesus.

That was what Matthew did – invite his friends.

Networks of friendship expands.

Missional lunches.

Missional coffee.

Not everyone follows Jesus like Matthew – but that’s the point – they don’t have to.

**When the Pharisees saw this they asked his disciples, “Why...”**

They didn’t get it.

It was always about appearances for them.

They didn’t associate with others.

They thought holiness meant segregation, protection, exclusion.

A maturing Christian knows what she/he believe and is unafraid of challenges.

Invitation to atheists, Jews, street people to conversation.

Whether we become friends is up to both of us.

But it’s just a meal, a sign of hospitality

Friendships take a longer time.

But what about us?

Singles, marrieds, married with children, students, professionals, East side, West side, Richmond, Asian, Caucasian, 20-somethings, 40 somethings.

It’s not easy but it’s just lunch!

Invite someone for lunch today!

**“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.”**

Two ways to read this – who is the one who is sick and who is the healthy?

Face value of course is that the sinners need the doctor.

But it is also a simple fact.

So what sickness is worse?

Self-righteousness or shame?

The Bible is clear – self-righteousness because it precludes relationship.

**“Go learn what this means: I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”**

Jesus quotes from Hosea 6:6

It is a judgement on Israel that they only pay lip service to God.

Religious practice without true knowledge of God.

So is where the rub really is.

How many of us talk about God without talking to him?

Are we living the way we want to or the way he invites us to?

That is the rub.

**“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners.”**

Jesus reiterates himself even more clearly.

He calls sinners.

The self-righteous need not apply because inasmuch as they need Jesus, they will inevitably keep him at arms length.

In fact these are the people we have trouble eating with.

They have the knack of making themselves feel big and making others feel small.

We never outgrow our need for salvation – for Jesus.

In fact the deeper you grow the more your weaknesses stand out and the more your need grows.

The more chaotic, the more complex and yet the more grace there is.

**Questions:**

Who are you called to invite to a meal?

How are you independent of others?

How are you independent of Jesus?