

Mercy Not Sacrifice

Matthew 9:9-13

Welcome back and here we go. Today we look at the Call of Matthew, or Levi! This lesson is a lesson of grace and acceptance. Often, we pull away or shy away from the truly unsavory characters in our life.

Matthew 9:9-13

- 1) What does Jesus mean when He says, "Follow Me"?

Later in Matthew we will have an entire lesson on laying down our lives and following Jesus, but today we focus on grace.

Jesus chose Matthew, out of all of Israel, to be one of twelve, a known tax collector, a collaborator with Rome. Of all people, this seems odd. If you watch the series "The Chosen", they portray Matthew as sort of friendless and possibly autistic. But in Luke we see something interesting.

Luke 5:27-32

There were a great number of tax collectors at Levi's house, which to me intimates he had a social life. I am adding this to say, dramatizations of the Bible stories are fun and cool, but always check the source!

- 2) What can we learn from the *Call of Levi*? What's the lesson?

Often, it is easy to discount people. In fact, maybe you have been discounted at some time in the past. It's obvious that the religious leaders looked at outside practice, not inward to the heart.

Matthew 9:12

- 3) Who are those who are well? Is it you? Are you well?

You know obviously, before we accept salvation, we are definitely not well. But what about after salvation?

When are we truly well? I believe we will always be works in progress. But at some point, we become "*Jesus for others*". They see Jesus in us and respond.

Hosea 6:6

Matthew 9:13

- 4) What does this mean? *I desire mercy not sacrifice.*

In order to truly get it, we need to understand mercy.

“Mercy”: *compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm!*

- 5) How are mercy and forgiveness tied together?

Psalm 51:10-17

David appealed to God in his brokenness.

In seeing David’s broken heart, God in turn showed mercy.... forgiveness.....

We had someone here Friday night, very ominous and threatening looking. I had to make a decision after a brief encounter. I chose mercy and forgiveness.

- 6) How is judgmental-ness tied to unforgiveness?

Today’s lesson is meant to drive home these points:

- a) Jesus called everyone to follow him.
- b) Religious superiority is not better than grace.
- c) Until we understand this lesson we are still sick.

Philippians 2:14-16

Romans 12:9-21

Again, MERCY.

Wherever you have the ability to harm, you also have the ability to forgive!

Let’s pray.