

He Came for the Sick

Matthew 9:9-17

Main Truth: Jesus came to offer grace and salvation to sinners while opposing those who believe they are saved through their own efforts.

Romans 5:6-8 Matthew 9:9 Matthew (Levi) was a tax collector despised by the Jews and viewed as a traitor, greedy, and an outcast among his own people. He undoubtedly knew of Jesus and the power and authority He carried as a teacher and a miracle worker.

Jesus was a teacher, a rabbi who taught His disciples as He walked. Jesus spoke only two words to Matthew "Follow me." He was telling Matthew to become His student so He could teach, train and prepare him for a spiritual mission.

Matthew immediately obeyed Jesus and left behind his wealth, work, lifestyle and security. He left everything to start a new life as a disciple of Jesus.

Matthew 9:10 Matthew next invites Jesus and His disciples to have dinner at his house where many tax collectors and sinners had also been invited to attend. Matthew did what all disciples of Jesus are called to do: share Jesus with people who need the work of Jesus in their lives.

Matthew 9:11 The Pharisees rebuked Jesus for being in the company of tax collectors and eating with them. Possibly the self-righteous religious leaders felt He should be eating with them instead of those they identified as sinners, thinking He approved of their sin.

Matthew 9:12-13 Jesus came to minister to those who are soul sick and desperately needing new life. Many people think they are doing good, but scripture tells us that we are actually spiritually dead in our sins.

Ephesians 2:1-2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

We may not recognize our spiritual sickness, but Jesus does. The truth is, none of us are "healthy" spiritually without the intervention of Jesus.

It is in Christ alone that we are brought to life, not because of our human efforts, but because of the power and authority of Jesus Himself. Jesus tells the Pharisees that He came to call sinners to Himself, not those who were convinced they didn't need Him because they thought they were already good enough. While they focused on their actions and works in keeping the law as being enough for righteousness, Jesus pointed out that they lacked mercy, making their works worthless.

Hosea 6:6 Jesus quotes this passage because the Pharisees considered themselves to be righteous as they stood in judgement of others while being blind to their own spiritual need.

Matthew 9:14 John the Baptist's disciples were sincere in their question asking why Jesus did not conform to accepted religious standards.

John 3:27-30 Earlier we see John's disciples asking about this man (Jesus) who had been with John and who was now baptizing people Himself.

John uses a familiar example of a bridegroom, a bride and the best man. John sees himself as best man and Jesus as the groom. John was giving away his authority and submitting to the authority of Jesus and by doing so, released his disciples to Jesus. "He must become greater; I must become less."

John's disciples recognized that fasting was important as one of the major expressions of orthodox Judaism. They wanted to know if Jesus believed fasting was important and asked the right question.

Matthew 9:15 Using the relationship between a bridegroom and his groomsman, Jesus knew how weddings worked. They were a time of celebration. Whereas fasting was a time of mourning and contrition deep sorrow for sin.

The Pharisees and the disciples of John who had not yet embraced Jesus had to be noticing that Jesus taught and modeled faith that was very different from their religious practices. Jesus focused on internal conditions, the state of the heart, before external practices.

Matthew 9:16-17

The New Patch – Jesus' new gospel of internal heart change, repentance, forgiveness and cleansing did not attach well with the old external traditions of self-righteousness and ritual. When we respond to Jesus' call to follow Him, we receive spiritual cleansing and healing. We are a new creation with a transformed life.

New Wine – Jesus showed that the new life in Him is what leads to true righteousness when we repent and trust in Jesus for our salvation.

Matthew 5:17 Jesus came to fulfill the law as the ultimate sacrifice for sin, bringing with it a new life in Him for those who repent and believe in the person and work of Christ Jesus.

Change is the inevitable reality of what Jesus is calling for in the lives of those who follow Him. Letting go of old things to make way for our new life in Christ. **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Questions for Reflection:

- Are there things we hold onto that keep us from responding fully to Jesus' call to follow Him as His disciple?
- Are there old patterns of life that no longer work with our new life in Christ?
- Are you resisting Christ and/or resisting the changes He is trying to bring in your life?

The Great Hope We Have:

Jesus came for sick sinners like each of us. He also loves us enough to bring spiritual healing and to help us experience a lifetime of transformation through His Word and His Holy Spirit.

Our call is to let Jesus do his work for us through the Holy Spirit, making us new creations for His glory. We need to let God change us today. Jesus came to offer grace and salvation to sinners

Small Group Discussion Questions

He Came for the Sick Matthew 9:9-17

1. What does having hope in Jesus mean to you?

Matthew 9:9-13

2. Matthew was a tax collector. What was the role of a tax collector and what did that mean to Matthew? What would have been like being a Jewish tax collector and living in a Jewish community.
3. What was Jesus' call to Matthew? What did those two words imply?
4. How did Matthew respond?
5. Following Jesus requires forsaking one's previous life. What are things you gave up to follow Jesus when he called you?
6. Why did the Pharisees complain and how did Jesus respond?

Matthew 9:14-17

7. Discuss how John viewed his role in leading his disciples and directing them to follow Jesus. How was the example of the bridegroom a good explanation?
8. Why did John's disciples ask about fasting? How was their asking Jesus questions different from when the Pharisees asked questions?
9. Are there things we hold onto that keep us from responding fully to Jesus' call to follow Him as His disciple?
10. Are there old patterns of life that no longer work with our new life in Christ?

Questions for Reflection: Work on the following question at home this week. Have your small group pray for one another that the Holy Spirit would speak to them and that they would listen and bring those changes into their lives.

11. Are you resisting Christ and/or resisting the changes He is trying to bring in your life?

Personal Study Guide

Our Hope in Jesus

1 John 5:13-14

1 Peter 1:3-6

Ephesians 2:8-10

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

John 4:13-14

Hebrews 6:19-20

Romans 15:13

Romans 5:1-2

Romans 8:24-25

1 Corinthians 15:57