**JESUS CAME TO CALL SINNERS**

Matthew 9:9-13

Key Verse 13

“But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

**Introduction**



Jesus is our best Spiritual Doctor, for He heals our sin-sickness. Matthew 8:17 reads, “He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases” (Mt 8:17). Now, with our incurable diseases and sin-sicknesses we go to Jesus to be healed. In the opening message by Sh. Juan P., we studied how Jesus healed a paralytic man. Now Jesus heals a man named Matthew. And Jesus also tried to heal the self-righteous Pharisees by rebuking them so that they may know God’s compassionate heart and who Jesus is. Jesus has the divine authority to forgive all sins as the Son of God. Also Jesus helped them to repent and know God’s mercy as servants of God. May God bless us to accept Jesus who came to call and heal sinners like us.

1. Read verse 9. Whom did Jesus see? (9a) What kind of person was he? How did Jesus call him? (9b) What was Matthew’s response and why? (9c)

1-1, Read verse 9.

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.

1-2, Whom did Jesus see? (9a)

1-3, What kind of person was he?

***9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth.***

* The Bible calls this part, ‘the calling of Matthew.’ But when we read this passage carefully, this is precisely Jesus’ healing of Matthew.
* One day Jesus saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. Who was Matthew? Other gospels do not call him Levi the tax collector.
* But here, he didn’t call himself, “Levi the tax collector,” he called himself, “Matthew.” “Matthew” means the teacher of mankind.
* In his self-esteem, Matthew, acknowledged that he was no longer Levi, but now a servant of God.
* At that time, tax collectors were known as public sinners. They were hated by their own people because they worked for their country’s enemies and collected fortunes at the expense of their own suffering people.
* To the people, tax collectors were the objects of hatred. The Jews called them, “quislings” and “traitors” and regarded them as the same sinners like prostitutes.
* The tax collectors were called sinners because of their selfishness. These days a selfish person is known as a smart person.
* They do everything to satisfy their selfishness. We don’t call it as selfishness but self interest. In this individualistic society, selfishness has largely been condoned.
* People in our times want to enjoy success, self-esteem, and fun all at the same time with no conflicts between them.
* In order to achieve them, they pursue love and pleasure. For instance, in movies a person’s self esteem goes up when he or she is loved by someone desirable.
* Money is another symbol of individual success. Wealth means one has taken initiative. Money shows that one has succeeded to be enable to buy fancy car or a big house and be a means of increasing personal pleasure and freedom.
* But in the Bible, pursuing self interest only and selfishness is comparable to leprosy. A selfish person is dirty like a leper.
* A selfish person is harmful like two demon-possessed men. Selfish people damage others’ welfare intentionally or unintentionally.
* Mostly selfish people gain money through extortion, stealing, cheating and lying. But mostly they are unhappy.
* How nice it would be if doing such things could make them happy. But they are unhappy people. No one in the world can buy happiness with money.
* Biblically speaking, selfish people are the same as unthankful people and are in spiritual paralysis.
* Matthew was a selfish person. He was sitting at the tax collector’s booth all by himself. Jesus knew that he was a public sinner.
* Jesus also knew that he was an able man. Jesus knew that he was a powerful sinner, while the paralytic was a powerless sinner.
* Jesus did not see Matthew’s human condition. But Jesus saw that he was lost in sin and he was very lonely, even isolated from his family members.
* As soon as Jesus saw him, he forgave all his sins. Jesus saw the image of God in this wretched man. Jesus saw in him the possibility of growing to be a great man of God.

1-4, How did Jesus call him? (9b)

***“Follow me,” he told him,***

* Jesus did not ask him, “Would you like to follow me?” Jesus ordered him, “Follow me.”
* When Jesus ordered him, “Follow me,” Jesus had decided to help him until this selfish tax collector would be changed into a sacrificial man of God.
* When Jesus ordered him, “Follow me,” he decided to make him one of his disciples so he might be a shepherd for all selfish people in the world.
* We must raise many Levi the tax collector type of people as shepherds for the glory of God.

1-5, What was Matthew’s response and why? (9c)

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

* As soon as Matthew heard the voice of God through Jesus, he abandoned everything and followed him.
* To Matthew the things of the world were no longer treasures to him. To Matthew Jesus was the source of joy in his life.
* At the moment Matthew met Jesus, due to Jesus’ messianic compassion, his spiritual eyes were opened; his value system was changed.
* He was so happy that he had a silver lining, that is new life overflowing in him. In the past, Matthew’s life had been full of troubles and the devil’s torment (Ro 2:7-9).
* But since Jesus came into his heart, he could find the new hope, direction of life, and joy was overflowing.

1. Read verse 10-11. Who came to Matthew’s house to eat with Jesus? (10) What might have been the reason that many sinners came? What question did Pharisees ask Jesus’ disciples? (11)

2-1, Read verse 10-11.

**10** While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. **11** When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

2-2, Who came to Matthew’s house to eat with Jesus? (10)

***10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples.***

* In the past Matthew was a penny-pincher. But now to Matthew, money didn’t matter. In the past he did not know what he was doing. But now he was preparing a great banquet.

2-3, What might have been the reason that many sinners came?

* Many tax collectors and “sinners” came and ate with him and his disciples.” First, he invited Jesus and his disciples. Next he wanted to invite many noble people. But he didn’t know any.
* So he invited many tax collectors who were his friends, and who were branded as public sinners by people. The joy of the feast was great.
* The taste of the food was great. Everything was so great that the feast was like a jubilant heavenly banquet.
* Jesus called a selfish sinner and healed him. Praise Jesus who calls us! Thank you, Jesus who heals us!

2-4, What question did Pharisees ask Jesus’ disciples? (11)

***11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”***

* However, there were some unhappy fellows. They were the Pharisees. The hypocritical Pharisees could not tolerate Jesus’ fellowship with sinners.
* Moreover, they could not tolerate seeing that sinners were joyful and eating with much delight.
* So inwardly the Pharisees envied Jesus’ disciples that they were eating with unutterable happiness. In fact, the religious leaders were in essence called to be the shepherds of God’s people.
* They had to take care of those people who were lost in sin. But they didn’t have the shepherd heart of God. They criticized Jesus for eating with sinners.
* Their human segregation was very strict. But Jesus didn’t have any sense of segregation. He was eating with his disciples and all the tax collector class of people.

1. Read verses 12-13. What did Jesus teach those who criticized Him? (12) What does God desire? (13a) What does Jesus’ purpose in coming mean to us all (13b)?

3-1, Read verses 12-13.

**12** On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. **13** But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23393a)] For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

3-2, What did Jesus teach those who criticized Him? (12)

***12 On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.***

* Jesus’ mindset is like not a strict persecutor, but a kind doctor who is concerned about the sick.
* If we know that we are dying because of serious disease, we will do our best to find the cure.
* Just like a lethal virus taking so many lives, the virus of sin spreads quickly and makes people very sin-sick and dead.
* Paul says in Romans 3:9b, “…For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles **alike are all under the power of sin**.”
* We all are under serious sin and we need a doctor with the vaccine who can cure our sin-sickness.
* Doctors believe that if the disease is dealt with, the person will be healed and become useful.
* To doctors, it is not the person, but the disease that is the problem. Likewise Jesus sees sinners like a spiritual doctor.
* Jesus distinguishes between sin and sin-sick people. Jesus sees that if only the sin can be cured, the person can be healthy and become useful.
* So Jesus treats sinners with great hope, deep understanding and tender care, like a doctor who wants to heal them.
* I pray that all of us may come to Jesus humbly with our spiritual disease so that we may be healed by his divine power and live a new life in him.

3-3, What does God desire? (13a)

***13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’***

* We Christians are learners of Jesus. We must learn that Jesus desires mercy, not sacrifice.
* Jesus’ mercy has true hope that the people suffering from their sin-sickness may be changed and used for the glory of God.
* “But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”
* The Pharisees needed to learn something. They had a lot of Bible knowledge, they worked hard and sacrificed a lot.
* But they did not know God's heart. God wants us to know his heart above all. God's heart is filled with mercy. God does not use his power to crush sinners.
* Rather, in his great mercy, God understands, bears with, forgives, and restores people, and gives us new hope to make a new beginning.
* James 2:13b says, “Mercy triumphs over judgment.” No matter what else we may know about God, we must know that God is merciful.
* Without knowing God's mercy, we don't really know God. The purpose of Jesus' coming was to show God's mercy to sinners.
* Like Him, mercy should characterize God's children. Let us examine ourselves and serve people with God’s mercy.

3-4, What does Jesus’ purpose in coming mean to us all (13b)?

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

* Jesus taught them that Jesus came to this world to save sinners from their sins. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”
* Here we learn something about Jesus. Jesus knew why he came to this world. He had a broken shepherd heart to embrace all the sick people of the world and save them until no one was left.
* Jesus came to call sinners. Romans 3:10 says, “There is no one righteous, not even one” We know that we are sinners.
* We often become disappointed when we see our chronic sins. We feel it is impossible to overcome.
* However, Jesus came to call us, sinners. We should come to Jesus with our sin instead of being frustrated. We need Jesus because we are sinners. At the same time, we have a hope because he came to call the sinners.

**Conclusion**

Today we learned that in spite of the criticism of the self-righteous teachers of the law, Jesus called the selfish sinner, Matthew, and forgave his past sins and healed him until he grew to be a gospel writer. Through these, Jesus revealed with his own clarification that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners. We do not have to remain in the self-righteousness of sin. We do not have to remain in the paralysis of sin, too. We do not have to remain in the selfishness of sin. Let’s come to Jesus personally during this heavenly banquet for the forgiveness of sins and be healed by Jesus. Then we can follow Jesus like Matthew and practice Jesus’ mercy toward all others.

**One word: Follow me!**