

Mark 2:13-17 – Dealing With The Dregs In Society

TSK, GreekLexicon, Handfuls, Henry, Robertson, Trapp, Poole, Calvin, Barnes, Geneva, Gill, Eclectic, Clarke, Reinecker, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: It is easy to have a bias (偏见) against Muslims because of the terrible things they have done to Christians for over 1000 years. They have been the worst and longest persecutors (起诉官, 控告者) of God's people, even cutting the throats of Christian children. But are you justified (证明...为合理) in doing so? Do you think you should avoid Muslims...walk on the other side...pretend you didn't see them? Would you avoid sharing a meal with a Muslim? Would you avoid sharing the Gospel with them? You will learn today from God's Word how you are to respond, not just to Muslims, but to all those you think are so wicked that they don't deserve the Gospel...only condemnation and punishment.

Our headings are:

Jesus Called Matthew to salvation and service

Jews Condemned Jesus for Mixing with Sinners

Jesus Corrected the Jews for being unmerciful

Our goals are: **That you will understand how anyone in any condition can be redeemed (被救赎, 被赎回) through the sacrifice (献祭) of Jesus.**

Jesus Called Matthew to Salvation and Service

13 Then **He went out again by the sea**; and all the multitude came to Him, and He **taught them**.

1. Jesus went out by the sea to continue his work of calling men to himself. It was a convenient place to go as the sea breeze rushed in to the hot land during the day helped to carry his voice.

14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

2. But not all men went out to hear him, so Jesus came to those who did not want to hear him. As he passed by Levi's (Matthew's) house he called on Matthew to follow him. Matthew was a Jewish tax collector (税吏) for the Roman government. He probably collected taxes or duties from the Jews just for crossing the Sea of Galilee – or maybe based on the amount of fish they caught! Tax collectors were known for being corrupt, often taking more taxes than they needed to and pocketing the rest. So tax collectors were some of the most hated people in Israel. You can learn about tax collectors from what John the Baptist (施洗约翰) said:

Luke 3:13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." 14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

There is only record of one tax collector whose grave was marked with this quote: Here lies an honest tax-collector!

3. Jesus' call to Matthew was an effective call(有效呼召)- a call to his heart. Matthew did not choose Christ nor did he look for Christ first; Christ moved first. This is the recurring theme of the whole Bible.

Ezekiel 16:6 "And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!'

Isaiah 65:1 ... I was found by *those who* did not seek Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' To a nation **that was not called by My name.**

4. To what was Matthew called? Matthew was called to follow and serve Jesus! He had served his own desires for too long. Now Jesus wanted him to serve God and man.

5. Matthew then arose and followed Jesus. When there is an effective call, response is absolutely certain! **Matthew left his life of sin.** He left a profitable job. The Romans would not have trusted him again and the Jews would not have believed that he truly changed. But as the saying goes: Faith fears no famine! And **don't think that he left his family!** No one is permitted to leave his wife for the church. A soldier goes to war temporarily, but he doesn't divorce his wife.

6. Lessons:

a. Jesus calls people from any state in life: plumbers, pie-makers, or parliamentarians(国会议员). **Jesus calls teachers, tellers, or terrorists.** So do not prejudge(持有偏见) who might come to know the Lord or not. **There is a cathedral in England that had widows made by an unpopular glassmaker from glass that was rejected and broken in pieces.** Others rejected both the glass and the maker, but what beautiful things come out of it. Even so with Matthew.

b. What a privilege(特权) to be called by the Savior. You did not look for him. You did not want to

look for him. But he looked for you. I sought the Lord and afterward I knew....he was the one who sought me first!

c. If the people don't come to where you are...go where they are. Sound advice for this new location for worship!

d. What are you prepared to give up to follow Jesus? If your job is bad...and causes you to sin...but it earns you a lot of money...are you willing to give it up? If your relationship is not good and a hindrance (阻碍) to your service to the Lord, but the gal is really good looking, are you willing to give her up? Would you be willing to give up a promising career if it hinders your Christian life? Think of the things you love the most...are you willing to give them up?

Jews Condemned Jesus for Mixing With Sinners

15 Now it happened, **as He was dining in Levi's house**, that many **tax collectors and sinners** also **sat together with Jesus and His disciples**; for there were **many**, and they followed Him. 16 And when the scribes(文士) and Pharisees(法利赛人) saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "**How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors** and sinners?"

1. Matthew then started to work for Jesus and his neighbors. The thief then became the giver...giver of the Gospel. Tax collectors were covetousness 贪婪, but Matthew wasn't covetous anymore. This is **what you would expect from someone who has been truly saved!** Matthew moved from a sinner to a saint(圣徒). (As my pastor use to say...from a gutter rat 排水沟老鼠 to an aristocrat 贵族.) And he became an ambassador of the Lord. So he organized a dinner for other tax collectors...and other bad sinners. (Luke said it was a great feast.) He knew they needed the Gospel just like he.

2. Jesus knew they needed salvation also. So Jesus engaged them. He did not go after nice people who had the Christian expression on their face or on their lips. He went after **the ones he knew needed complete conversion(改变) and the scums who knew they needed help.**

1Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, of whom I am chief.

But the Scribes and Pharisees had no regard (尊敬) for Jesus and what he taught.

3. So the Scribes and the Pharisees complained about mixing and meeting with the unbelievers, especially wicked tax collectors. The **Scribes and Pharisees treated** the tax collectors as pagans (异教徒)– and would not even enter their houses. They had no sympathy for them. They saw the tax collectors as beyond hope – as damaged goods without any value. They cared nothing for the flock like the Good Shepherd. These Scribes and Pharisees were evil:

Ezekiel 34:4 "The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. 5 "So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered.

Jesus was the only Good Shepherd(好牧人). He cared for the ones who strayed...and he bound up the broken. He saved them from the mouth of lions.

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

4. Lessons:

a. Be ready to invest your time, money, and talents so that the lost might have an opportunity to be introduced to the Savior.

b. Don't be surprised if people mock or attack you for the words of the Gospel. Take their insults or snickering(偷笑). Though they don't care about the lost, you must. If you care too much to preserve your good name, you won't care **too much to preserve the good news.**

Jesus Corrected the Jews for being Unmerciful

17 When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but **those who are sick**. I did not come to call the righteous, **but sinners**, to repentance."(耶稣听见,就对他们说:"康健的人用不着医生,有病的人才用得着;我来本不是召义人,乃是召罪人。")

1. Jesus corrected the Jews by way of illustration. He said he was like a doctor who came to heal those who were sick – the spiritually sick. (It is silly to use this illustration to teach that this was speaking of physical healing. The parallel application shows that it was spiritual healing (sinners)! **John Gill summarized the sickness of the wicked: There are others that are sick...they see the impurity (污秽)** of their nature, how unsound and unhealthful they are; that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in them, nothing but wounds (伤口), bruises (瘀青), and putrefying sores (腐烂的疮): their loins are filled with the loathsome disease of sin; they are sensible of their inability to cure themselves, and that no mere creature can help them; and that all besides Christ, are physicians of no value..." Christ's blood became a balm (香膏) to every imaginable wound.

2. And this has always been the way the Lord worked; he always came close to sinners. He cared for the broken hearted and those trapped in spiritual prisons.

Jeremiah 3:14 "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. 15 "And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

So **Jesus rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees who thought that they were spiritually healthy, (Jesus uses sarcasm 讽刺), but he welcomed the sinner.**

3. Matthew's account gives more detail of Jesus' response to the false accusation.控告

Matthew 9:13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

This was a quote from Hosea 6:6. Jesus meant that **the Pharisees loved to make sacrifices for sin** – the ritual (礼仪的) requirement of the law, as oppose living a life of mercy and grace. He wanted them to know that obedience was better than sacrifice. Jesus used this phrase again in Mathew 12:7, where the Jews were aggressively condemning the innocent...showing no mercy.

Matthew 12:7 "But if you had known what *this* means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ('我喜爱怜悯, 不喜爱祭祀.' 你们若明白这话的意思, 就不将无罪的当作有罪的了.)

4. Lessons:

a. There are many who fool themselves about the power of their abilities and their possessions,

Jesus makes it clear that man does not have the ability to heal himself, but he could heal him.

b. Jesus always welcomes the poor in spirit – the one who knows how needy he is.

Conclusion:

The Lord Jesus graciously and effectively called Matthew to be his disciple. But the Pharisees roundly condemned Jesus for his work. They saw Matthew and his friends as unworthy of the Gospel. So Jesus strongly corrected their erroneous view and charged them with ignoring the law of God that called for mercy.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You must not reject people because they don't fit into your idea of what a Christian ought to be.

Rather, you must positively and mercifully bring that same message of Jesus Christ's – the message of his death as a substitution to the lost – regardless of what the people look like, regardless of their attitudes, regardless of their religion. (Mockers, atheists, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists) What will make you do that?

2. You must remember your condition...all your secret thoughts...all your harsh words...all your evil actions before God saved you. And then remember the cross; remember how God saved you – through no work of your own. The more you have received, the more you will give.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, a word to you: The gospel offends the proud and saves the humble. Which one are you? Only the humble in heart will be willing to submit to receiving...receiving the accomplished work of Christ on the cross.