



"I CAME NOT TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS"

MARK 2:13-17

The hatred of the tax-collector

LUKE 3:12-13

¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do."

The party and the house were Levi's

LUKE 5:29

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.

In Jesus' culture, sharing table represented a significant, intimate bond;

REVELATION 3:20

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, *I will come in to him and eat with him*, and he with me.

Jesus develops a reputation;

MATTHEW 11:19

¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"

LUKE 15:1-2

¹ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

While others looked away from tax-collectors, Jesus looked for them;

LUKE 18:10-11

¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like...this tax collector.'"

LUKE 19:10

¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

LUKE 19:5

⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, *for I must stay at your house today.*"

The Christ has authority to forgive, but He will only forgive those aware of their sinfulness;

MATTHEW 5:4

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

That moral self-awareness is also the work of God;

JOHN 16:8

⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin...

The gospel is not just for outcasts;

ACTS 17:12

¹² Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek *women of high standing* as well as men.

JOHN 11:45

⁴⁵ *Many of the Jews* therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, *believed in him*,

ACTS 18:8

⁸ Crispus, *the ruler of the synagogue*, *believed in the Lord*, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

ACTS 6:7

⁷ And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, *and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith*.

The two calls of God; How is Jesus “calling” these tax-collectors and sinners?;

Closeness without contamination.

Read the following passage of Scripture and consider Paul’s mandate for the Corinthians to “not associate with the sexually immoral.” Does this contradict Jesus’ example in Mark 2? Why or why not?

1 CORINTHIANS 5:9–11

⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰ not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.

The confusion Jesus is causing;

JOHN 3:2

² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, *for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.*”

PSALM 1:1

¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers...

Physicians, Bridegrooms, new wine, patches, and the Lord of the Sabbath;

HAGGAI 2:13–14 (See also; Leviticus 11, Number 19:11-22)

¹³ Then Haggai said, “If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?” The priests answered and said, “It does become unclean.” ¹⁴ Then Haggai answered and said, “So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, declares the LORD, and so with every work of their hands. And what they offer there is unclean.

MATTHEW 15:11 (see also; Acts 10-11)

¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.”

The Son of Man turns everything on its head.

Consider how this radical teaching would have been received by Jesus’ contemporaries. Consider what faith would have been required to completely upend one’s understanding of the Law of God as taught by many (most?) of the teachers of the Law in Jesus’ day.

The Law as it relates to the unregenerate;

ROMANS 7:7

⁷ ...I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

The Law as it relates to the regenerate;

GALATIANS 3:24

²⁴ So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

1 TIMOTHY 1:8

⁸ Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully...

ROMANS 10:4

⁴ For Christ is the *end of the law for righteousness* to everyone who believes.

JOHN 14:15

¹⁵ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

The dual nature of the Law; convicting the unregenerate and directing the regenerate;

Consider how you have thought of the Law of God. Would you characterize your view of God’s Law predominantly as that directed toward the unregenerate (to strip us of self-righteous thoughts and drive us to the cross) or toward the regenerate (guiding us into Christ-likeness)? Why have you thought this? In what ways can the dual ditches of legalism and antinomianism cause stumbling blocks today?

The fundamental misunderstanding that led to their rejection of the New Wine;

LUKE 18:9

⁹ He also told this parable to some *who trusted in themselves that they were righteous*, and treated others with contempt:

ROMANS 9:30-31

³⁰ What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.

The scandal of grace; the shocking quality of true kingdom grace.

Read the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16). How does this parable relate to Jesus' habit of spending time with outcasts? In what ways is true kingdom grace shocking and offensive?

We identify with sinners in their need. We don't identify with them in their sin.

How can this be lived out practically? In what ways do we identify with the unregenerate in their sin? In what ways do we identify with the unregenerate in their need?