

The Messiah

NO ONE EXPECTED

MATTHEW 9:1-17

19: A Messiah No One Expected (Matthew 9:1-17)

Have you ever changed the channel because the show wasn't what you wanted nor expected? Jesus was the Messiah no one expected, so many wrote Him off rather than hear Him out. Discover that how the Messiah no one expected is the Savior and King that we all need.

beourguest

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teachingnotes

In our last study we ended with Jesus casting out demons from 2 men and sending them into pigs in the region of Gadarenes.

Matthew 9:1-2 (NIV) Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When **Jesus saw their faith**, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; **your sins are forgiven.**"

His own town is referring to **Capernaum**, where Peter's house was - where Jesus made His home base for ministry around the Sea of Galilee. Matthew gives us the cliff notes version of a story told by Mark and Luke as well (**Mk 2:3-12; Lk 5:18-26**).

These men brought their **paralyzed** friend to ask Jesus to heal him. Mark & Luke give us more detail and tell us that they couldn't get their friend to Jesus through the door because there were so many people in the home. So...they went to the roof, removed part of it, and lowered him down to where Jesus was all because *they expected Jesus to heal him*. **Jesus saw their faith**. They really *believed* that Jesus could heal this man!

They watch what Jesus will do as they lower their friend a step or 2 of his healing hands. It was a dramatic moment, and all eyes shifted to Jesus to see what He would do. "**Your sins are forgiven**" is NOT what these guys came for. They wanted their paralyzed friend to walk again. All this effort...for THAT!? To many watching, this would have been quite a let-down.

BLASPHEMY?

Matthew 9:3 (NIV) At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

The religious leaders consider what Jesus says to be **blasphemy** (i.e. "to speak harm.") **Blasphemy** is an attitude of disrespect directed against the character of God, 1) speaking evil about God or even 2) claiming to be God. They rightly understood Jesus was claiming equality with God as Mark and Luke note what they further said.

Mark 2:7b (NIV)...Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

② Is that TRUE? Can ONLY GOD forgive sins?

- *WE can forgive others for their sins against US, but we CAN'T forgive their sin against God. THIS is what Jesus claimed, **to have authority to forgive sins on behalf of God.***

But the Pharisees had a *Biblical system*. And THIS wasn't it. Come to the Temple on *the Day of Atonement*. Bring your animal sacrifices to die as an offering for your sin, year after year. *THAT'S how God forgives sin.*

If only God can forgive sin, and Jesus claims to forgive sin, then *He is claiming to have the authority of God..and this is blasphemy* - a most serious accusation.

Leviticus 24:15-16 (LSB) And you shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin. Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of Yahweh shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

> Jesus is accused of **blasphemy** several times after this (**Jn 8:58-59; 10:31-33**). In fact, the accusation of **blaspheming** is what condemned Him to the cross (**Mt 26:65**).

Matthew 9:4-5 (NIV) Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

- It's easier to SAY 'Your sins are forgiven.' It's easier to SAY it cause no one can SEE it.
- But if you were to SAY "**Get up and walk**" then the audience WOULD see whether it happened or not.
- *But what if Jesus really COULD forgive sin? Wouldn't THAT be **The Greatest Miracle of All?***

The Greatest Miracle of All is 4 words: You're Sins Are Forgiven!

Had the paralyzed man overlooked his **ultimate need**, because he was so focused on his **immediate need**?

› How about YOU and me? We might be focused on what we consider an **immediate need**: health, wealth, successful relationships & successful business, popularity, & authority. *But what if we have all that...and die without seeking the **Greatest Miracle of All** - hearing those 4 precious words: **'Your sins are forgiven'**?*

Matthew 9:6-8 (NIV) But I want you to know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.**" So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home." Then the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

Followers of Jesus - *What are WE to do with this?*

- FIRST, thank Jesus WE have experienced **The Greatest Miracle of All!** Don't take it for granted.
- SECOND, as we go into the community to be the hands, feet, & voice of Jesus - don't meet the *immediate* need and fail to address the **ULTIMATE** need. May we be 'whatever it takes' kind of friends who want our friends to hear the 4 precious words: **'Your sins are forgiven.'** Pray for their salvation and tell them how Jesus offers forgiveness.

Matthew introduces..himself!

Matthew 9:9 (NIV) 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.

Rabbis choosing their disciples would pick good students who obeyed the Scriptural laws. But **Matthew** is a **tax collector**, a Jewish traitor - collecting taxes on behalf of the Romans, and banned from the Jewish synagogue and essentially a social outcast. **Matthew** was the last one you think would follow Jesus.

Notice this: **Matthew wasn't pursuing Jesus**...instead - Jesus was pursuing Matthew! Jesus calls this guy to **follow Him** and be His disciple. Where Jesus goes, Matthew would go. Matthew quit his lucrative job to follow Jesus.

Matthew 9:10 (NIV) While **Jesus** was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples.

Luke notes that this was a "great banquet for Jesus" (Lk 5:29). Matthew threw a dinner party...**for Jesus!** He invited other friends to hang out with Jesus in his home. *WHY? Matthew wanted them to experience what he had experienced...*

The Greatest Miracle of All is 4 words: You're Sins Are Forgiven!

- May our homes be a place where Jesus is honored and people are welcomed! Sadly, many American Christians view their homes as a place of personal comfort rather than a tool to honor the King. May we use our homes to welcome brothers & sisters...and **invite a sinner to dinner**...like Matthew did.

In fact, Matthew invited **many tax collectors and sinners to dinner.** *Most Jews wouldn't want to be ANYWHERE NEAR this motley crew,* but Jesus accepted the invitation and took his disciples with Him. Dinner meant they would recline on a couch or a floor full of pillows as they ate & talked together for a long time.

Friend of Sinners, but No Friend to Sin

Matthew 9:10-13 (NIV) While **Jesus** was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who **need a doctor,** but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For **I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.**"

When the Pharisees became aware that Jesus was there, they wondered *WHY.* They would never have contaminated themselves entering a sinner's home. So they either waited outside until the disciples of Jesus came out or filed their complaint days later, "**Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?**"

Why is it 'wrong' to have dinner with a sinner? In that society, table fellowship implied mutual acceptance, so eating with another person communicated that you agreed with them. *But couldn't Jesus be **a friend of sinners & yet NOT be a friend of SIN?***

Jesus compares Himself to **a doctor** who comes to heal **the sick.**

› **Who DOESN'T go to the doctor?** People who aren't sick...or people who refuse to recognize they are sick. Since these Pharisees didn't view themselves as being sick...*they had NO NEED of a doctor* - especially if that was Jesus. But the tax collectors at Matthew's house were very sick. Even the Pharisees believed that. So Jesus' argument in question form might sound like this: "*What exactly do you expect a doctor to DO? Stay away from sick people?*"

The Pharisees act like Jesus is there to applaud their sickness, but Jesus is there...to help them get well. **He is a Friend of Sinners, but not a friend of sin.** Jesus loves us right where we're at, but He loves us too much to leave us there!

Jesus points back to the Scriptures from Hosea 6:6. **"I desire mercy, not sacrifice."** In quoting this, Jesus then shows the difference between *HIM* and *THEM*:

- Jesus demonstrates the **MERCIFUL LOVE OF GOD** caring for people far from God,
- These pharisees are only concerned checking the boxes of the sacrificial system, while people around them go to hell.

② **Are WE like that?** Who are we going out of the way to care for, share with, and invest time in? It's a lot more comfortable to stay with **OUR PEOPLE** rather than reach out like Jesus trained His disciples to do.

☀️ Missionary **C. T. Studd** wrote, *"Some want to live within the sound of Church or Chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell."*¹

Matthew 9:14-15 (NIV) Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the **bridegroom** mourn **while he is with them**? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast."

The only fast prescribed in the Scriptures was on *Yom Kippur* - the Day of Atonement², as people came clean from their sin and blood was spilt on their behalf, to atone for their sin. During the lifetime of Jesus on earth, many Jews fasted every Monday and Thursday.³ But Jesus' disciples didn't.

Disciples of Jesus will fast in the future, but not right now. **WHY NOT? The bridegroom** - Jesus - is here and it's time to celebrate! When He leaves, they will find time to fast, but right now was time to celebrate His presence.

Matthew 9:16-17 (NIV) "No one sews a patch of **unshrunk cloth** on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse." Neither do people pour **new wine** into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, **they pour new wine into new wineskins**, and both are preserved."

Holes in garments needed to be patched - but not from an **old patch** on an **old garment**, or the new patch would shrink up over time and washing, and tear the **garment** even **worse**. **Wineskins** were made from animal skin that would stretch by the gases produced as the **new wine** fermented. To pour new wine into old wineskins would result in a skins that burst and wine that is lost.

Jesus is not trying to patch up a messed up religious system - like **old wineskins** not willing to stretch and grow. Jesus had come to fulfill the Old Covenant and **pour the New Covenant into new wineskins** - people who were willing to trust, grow, and obey Him.

✗ Jesus isn't calling old garment religious leaders & their disciples who valued following man-made traditions over God-breathed truths, offering sacrifices without showing mercy.

✓ Jesus IS calling tax collectors & fisherman to him - brand **new garments/new wine skins** - to carry His message to others.

Jesus FORGIVES SIN, calls SINNERS to Him rather than stiff-arming them and keeping us at a distance.

Jesus is the Messiah no one expected, but He is the Savior and King that we all need.

He is the Messiah who did all kinds of miracles...

The Greatest Miracle of All is 4 words: You're Sins Are Forgiven!

- Followers of Jesus should appreciate what the Lord Jesus has done for us. We ARE FORGIVEN!
- We can't keep that to ourselves. We must go care for and share with others.
- Not yet a follower of Jesus? Turn from sin and trust Jesus with your life. If you're still breathing, there's still HOPE! Have questions? Contact us with the numbers below!

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

¹ C. T. Studd, quoted in William Barclay, *Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, repr. 2003), p. 62.

² Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 223-224.

³ *Ibid.*

discussion questions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. **Read Matthew 9:2-8.** What surprised or challenged you most from this part of the passage? Spend some time here digging down deep; things to consider: Jesus forgiving sin, blasphemy?, 'whatever it takes' compassion of friends, & The Greatest Miracle of All)
2. What is the danger of meeting an immediate need but never addressing the ultimate need? How can meeting an immediate need help to be able to address one's ultimate need? Do you know of anyone's immediate need that we can meet as a family/group?
3. **Read Matthew 9:9-13.** Why was Jesus choosing Matthew as a disciple so unexpected? What's the difference between how Jesus and Pharisees dealt with sinners? Which are YOU more like and what changes might you need to make?
4. How was Jesus a friend to sinners without being a friend to sin? What's the danger of doing one or the other? How can caring for sinners without condoning sin lead to making a spiritual impact in someone's life?
5. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching?
6. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.