



**Sermon Series:** Trouble, Part 2

**Sermon Title:** Isolated

**Date:** 2/19/2023

### Mark 2.13-17

Today's Bible Text is crucial for our interaction with non-believers.

**Big Idea: DON'T ISOLATE YOURSELF FROM NON-BELIEVERS**

Let me give you the three *reasons* shown in the text:

#### **1) SOME ARE BEING CALLED TO DECISION**

##### Mark 2:13-14

Jesus was being challenged everywhere he went but seemed to be highly respected, especially by the people following him. Levi, on the other hand, was a tax collector. In that society, Levi was about the most hated man in the community. If you were there, he took whatever amount of your income he thought he could get away with. On top of that, he was one of your own family, but working for your enemies.

When Jesus said to him –follow me, Jesus was inviting him to accompany him. It's not a request to follow like a lost child; it's an invitation to join in a relationship with Jesus.

Here's the truth: The Holy Spirit can call anyone to faith. No one alive is excluded from becoming a follower of Jesus.

#### **2) SOME ARE DRAWING CLOSE**

##### Mark 2:15

Here we have a slight Change of scene for Jesus and Levi. We move from Jesus walking around teaching and calling followers to a feast thrown in Jesus' honor by Levi. (**Luke 5:29**)

Jesus Calls Levi – Levi – calls all his friends!! Because of Levi's invitation, many were drawing close to Jesus, and Jesus was not afraid to draw close

to them. Jesus is not afraid to spend time with people that are seen as outcasts by other people.

If we use this dinner party with Jesus and Levi as an example: In Eternity, the "HOME" Jesus gathers in and the "TABLE" He sits at will be filled exclusively with people who know they were sinners in desperate need of a savior. And they will NOT be guests; they will be considered family. Sinners saved by Jesus.

Does that describe you and your understanding of eternal life?

### 3) SOME DON'T KNOW THEY'RE IN NEED

Mark 2:16-17

Don't forget, Jesus has become a famous Rabbi (a Teacher), but Jesus is under the microscope here by some pretty harsh critics. These religious people are present but are not reclining or eating, or taking part.

The religious leaders have forgotten their own need to draw near. They don't see a beautiful moment of God's salvation; instead, they are blind to their own need. Be more concerned about healing others than somehow being infected by sin.

Satan wants to use your faith in Jesus as a way to keep you from interacting with people that are lost. You will be tempted to say, "they aren't my people." "they might corrupt me," - But I challenge you: Remember YOUR story. Remember the sin Jesus saved YOU from. And the people he used to make it happen. They weren't afraid of you...

Let's make sure, as followers of Jesus - we are the first ones to recline at a table with someone who has not yet come to faith – but is showing an interest. Jesus went to the feast because he was invited. The guests (sinners) came because they were invited and wanted to hear from Jesus.

Like Levi, how many times have you heard this plea? Make today the day you imitate Levi – stand up from what you are doing and FOLLOW Jesus. Make Him the Master of your life. Make today -

Isaiah 55.7

let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. [Isaiah 55.7 ESV]

### **Discussion Questions:**

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **List reasons why some Christians isolate themselves from non-believers.**
- **Why is it important for Christians to interact with non-believers?**
- **When is it appropriate/ wise to isolate yourself from a non-believer?**
- **How frequently do you talk about Jesus when you are with someone who doesn't follow Jesus? Explain**
- **What is one piece of advice you would tell someone about being an effective witness for Christ?**
- **If an unbeliever asks you to stop witnessing to them, would you? Why or why not?**