



The Table Part 1

November 5, 2023

The Gospel of Saint Matthew 9:1-13, “And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. ² And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.” ³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.” ⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic — “Rise, pick up your bed and go home.” ⁷ And he rose and went home. ⁸ When

the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men. ⁹ As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. ¹⁰ And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Words Today, in Jesus Name. Amen!

Some of the greatest revelations of Christ was given sitting around a table!

Jesus reveals the Heart of God sitting around a table

A Pastor friend of mine recently shared the following quote and it spoke to my heart in regards to the message that I am set to present today. "We don't need a Jesus that fits our theology. Rather, our theology must be compatible with the Jesus of the Bible."

So often, the teachings of Christ are manipulated, twisted, or completely misused for the sake of the agenda of man and flesh.

Friends, we don't need a "Jesus" that fits our theology but, quite on the contrary, we need a theology must be compatible with the Jesus of the Bible.

Could this be the definitive nature of what the Apostle Paul was referring to when he recorded the following statement in 2 Timothy 3:1-5, "But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people."

And I fear that what Paul prophetically spoke about in 2 Timothy 3 is a present evil in our present-day. Unfortunately, the American Church has become more indulgent, egocentric, and paltry as time has passed.

We are indulgent because allow petty things that will have no impact on eternity to wreck our faith thus we throw our faith away, backslide and make shipwreck of our testimony. We have no perseverance because we want our faith the way we desire our American dream; easy and comfortable without stress, difficulty or toil.

We are egocentric because far too many church folks expect the church and its functions to meet the need of every matter of life without the willingness of said church folks being willing to be stand in support of the church in their time (attendance) talent (volunteerism) and treasure (tithes and offerings to support the mission and vision of the House). We have embraced consumerism above contribution.

And lastly, we have become paltry because if anything makes us uncomfortable, if a Pastor is honest or forward or if the music isn't our preference or we don't get to choose the play list, if the preaching challenges us or other church members hold us responsible for our actions then that church is "too judgmental, legalistic and doesn't love people".

Again, 2 Timothy 3:5, "having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people." We need an experience with the God of the Bible! Not the god of self, the god of me, the god of you.

Friends, that is not the kind of Church that Jesus died to build! As the great theologian, Johnny Cash said, "Being a Christian isn't for sissies. It takes a real man to live for God - a lot more man than to live for the devil." And friends, if Jesus is calling the sinner to the table of Mercy then we must not become angry at the Master of Ceremonies! It's His Table. It's His Church. It's His Body. It's His Bride. We would do well to remember that!

Again, we don't need a Jesus that fits our theology but rather, we need a biblically and fundamentally based theology that must be compatible with the Jesus of the Bible! May we learn from the Heart of Christ demonstrated at the Tables of Scripture!

1) Jesus Demonstrated the Heart of God by Being Open to Ministering to People who were Broken!

- a) Note verses 3-7, “³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.” ⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic — “Rise, pick up your bed and go home.” ⁷ And he rose and went home.
- b) Church, Jesus never denied the broken from touching Him but He also had an issue with the religious challenging His authority to do the impossible!
- c) The Heart of God is to Minister to the Broken Hearted and when we refuse to model this Heart, we must ask ourselves if we are truly in the faith!
- d) Church, which is harder to say? God can heal the broken OR God is done with you? Sometimes the impossibilities of faith are overridden by the declaration of faith!

e) Thus I ask of you, “⁵For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’?”

f) But not only is the heart of God to minister to those that are broken... Point #2...

2) Jesus Demonstrated the Heart of God by Being Willing to go after The Lost and not just Cater to the Saints!

a) Verses 10-12, “¹⁰And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.”

b) Sick vs Well or perhaps better said to the Church of Today:

The Mission of the Church VERSUS Ministry to the Church

c) Church we have a Mission! Jesus gave us the Great Commission to take ALL of the Gospel to All of the World!

d) BUT!!!! The Church also has a responsibility of Ministry to the Church once the Lost have become Found!

e) Now there are those who have taken this passage of text found in verse 11-12 to validate or perhaps excuse their decisions of action or association by virtue signaling that they are doing what Jesus did.

f) Church, Jesus reached out the destitute of society because He was the only one who had the authority to redeem the destitute of society. But just because He ate with them does not mean that He excused their behavior nor validated their misdeeds. His Grace ALWAYS comes with Correction!

g) Thus my point, Jesus did not just strive to cater to the Saints but rather stated on Mission to reach the Lost as well as created the Church to give the Lost a place of Refuge when they are Founded by His Grace! (PREACH) I'M GLAD HIS GRACE FOUND ME!

h) But not only did Christ go after the Lost... Point #3...

3) Jesus Demonstrated the Heart of God by Giving Mercy to the Sinner for it was the Sinner who Needs to Hear the Call of the Master!

a) Verse 13, **"¹³ Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."**

b) I desire Mercy... for the righteous need not Mercy but rather the sinner!

c) Church, we have a Ministry to the Saints but we must Never lose sight of the Mission to Reach the Lost! May our hearts be just as on fire for the Sinner as it is to the Saint!