

When You're Misunderstood

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Matthew 9:9-26

If you follow Jesus... you will be misunderstood.

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

Be misunderstood for the right reasons.

- **If you're misunderstood for the wrong reasons... make it right.** (Matthew 5:23-24; 1 John 1:8-10)

Right reasons to be misunderstood...

- **Mercy, rather than sacrifice...** (Matthew 9:11-13)
When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Matthew 9:11
- **New wineskins for new wine...** (Matthew 9:14-17)
Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?" Matthew 9:14
- **Here comes the new wine...** (Matthew 9:18-25)
...he said, "Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. Matthew 9:24

Trust God and have the courage to be misunderstood for the right reasons...

- **Caring about lost people and sharing Jesus with them.** (Matthew 9:12-13)
- **Taking off the old and putting on the new in Christ.** (Matthew 9:16-17)
- **Believing God is able to do the miraculous and praying for it to happen.** (Matthew 9:23-25)

Let's Connect

- What are some ways you like to be appreciated?

Let's Talk About It

Nobody likes being misunderstood. If you've ever been misunderstood or rejected for doing what's right, Jesus understands. While there are wrong reasons to be misunderstood, Jesus was misunderstood for the right reasons. He cared about lost people and was willing to be rejected for it. He brought a new way of living and demonstrated how the power of God can transform a life.

Matthew 9:9-26; Matthew 5:23-24; 1 John 1:8-10; John 8:34; Revelation 20:11-15; Ephesians 4:22-24; John 14:12

- Which part of the message impacted or challenged you?
- Why do you think being misunderstood and rejected hurts so much?
- Read Matthew 9:9-13. How does knowing that Jesus was misunderstood help you when people reject you for being bold in your faith?
- Read Matthew 9:14-17. If you are a Christian, Christ has created you a new person. How can you, by faith, take off the old you and put on the new you to walk in that reality? What attitudes or habits would need to go? What would you need to do more of?
- Read Matthew 9:18-25. How have you seen the miraculous (healing, salvation, life transformation) open the door for the Gospel? What step can you take to trust God to do something miraculous through your life?

Take a Step

- Trust God to work through your life this week. Take a step, share your faith and pray for someone. Ask God to do the miraculous through your life.

Here's My Prayer

Father, thank You for caring enough about my salvation to endure the rejection and shame of the cross. Strengthen my faith so I will stand strong for You when I'm misunderstood for the sake of the Gospel. Show me old patterns and ways of thinking that I need to let go of to "put on" the newness You offer. Work through my life to bring about the miraculous for Your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.