

Luke 5: Jesus and Sinners

- ↳ **Luke 5:27-32**, This passage contains one of the most clarifying statements Jesus ever made. To grasp it, is to understand the essential uniqueness of Christianity. The Christian faith is not for good people; it's for those who know their sinfulness. If you don't think you are a sinner, Jesus isn't for you. If you don't think you deserve Hell, Jesus isn't for you.
- ↳ We are all drowning in sin; some know it's true and others don't believe it. It's nearly impossible to rescue a drowning person who doesn't think he's drowning.

1. It is for this message that they killed Jesus.

- ✓ Remember back in chapter **4:18-19**, Jesus speaking to His hometown synagogue, saying He was the fulfillment of the text in Isaiah. They were all drowning and Jesus was trying to point that out to them, so they proceeded to try to kill their Rescuer.
- ✓ Additionally, He didn't just say, "God will forgive your sins;" anybody can do that. He said, "I forgive you of your sins" asserting that He was God. All are sick, but only some will be healed by the Healer.
- ✓ Now, Jesus will challenge another firmly held belief by the religious establishment; all are sinners (excepting themselves), but some cannot be forgiven.

2. Matthew and others like him were considered unforgivable.

- ✓ Matthew must have been an extremely humble guy. He writes the gospel with the longest recorded discourses because of his shorthand abilities, yet there isn't a word of dialogue attributed to him anywhere in the New Testament, especially and including his own gospel.
- ✓ A man of great humility chosen by the Holy Spirit to convey one of 4 presentations of the life of Jesus, but he didn't start off that way. He started off as a tax collector.
- ✓ Tax collectors were 100% crooks of the highest order. Two words used for tax collector in the Greek: the one used for Zaccheus was "gabbai" referred to one who collected standard taxes like property or income taxes. Superficial regulation on behalf of the Romans left plenty of room for extortion in this line of business.
- ✓ The second group was what were called the "Mokus," whereas you only saw the Zaccheus type of tax collector once or twice a year; you saw this second group every day. They collected duties, imports, road, poll, bridge, letter, package, market, axle on carts, and wheels on carts. They were the mafia selling you protection and extorting you in every conceivable way, heartless, cutthroat, brutal, and the most hated of all. They were considered to be the unforgivable ones.
- ✓ This was who Matthew was, a thug, a scum, a traitor, the dregs, the worst. He had not only sold out to Rome; he extorted money from his own people. The amazing thing was that from right out of the midst of this heinous activity is where Matthew is called, "sitting in his tax booth" surrounded by his henchmen.
- ✓ Jesus saw his heart, just like the previous story; the man came for healing, but Jesus forgave his sins because He saw his heart. Immediately, you see his heart change; he leaves his lucrative business, throws a party for his friends, and Jesus is the guest of honor. He wanted to expose them all to the Savior.

Like the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, "I thank you God that I'm not like other people;" he went away unforgiven. **"Have mercy on me a sinner;" he went away forgiven. His word on it.**