

# Matthew 9:9-17

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles and go with me to the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 9. We will be starting in verse 9 and reading down to verse 17. Matthew chapter 9, verses 9 through 17 will be our text this morning as we just continue to make our way through the Gospel of Matthew.

And we're looking at the great teaching of Matthew as he is pointing out to the Jewish people, here is your king, right? Jesus the king. If you remember, we need to pay special attention to this, especially as it pertains to our text this morning.

Matthew, in particular, is writing to a Jewish audience. You have four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Of those four Gospels, three of them are synoptic Gospels.

Synoptic is the word simply means same, so you have Matthew, Mark, and Luke. So much of what is contained in Mark you can also find in Matthew and Luke and in vice versa. So they seem, they have a lot of similarities.

John is kind of completely different because the bulk of what is contained in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is not contained in John, and John contains some things that are very unique to it. But all of that to say, the reason we have four is because we get a four-dimensional view of who Christ is.

[ 1 : 10 ] We get a, not just a one-person account, right? We have these four-dimensional view of Christ, and each author being moved by the Spirit of God to write the Word of God was writing for an intended audience.

And anywhere we go in Scripture, the author is being moved by God to write something in particular to a people in particular at a point in time in history.

And to rightly understand the text, I believe we have to put ourselves in those positions. Mark is writing to Gentiles, and if you read the Gospel of Mark, some of you are in it, in your daily reading, you will notice that one of the things you notice right away with Mark is by the end of the first chapter, Mark covers more ground than Matthew does in five chapters.

Mark moves fast. He moves very quick. And he's writing to a Jewish audience with kind of a Greek background. And Mark's favorite word is immediately or straightway or suddenly.

Things are happening quick in Mark. And that's because, much like today's culture, the Gentile and Greek audience had to have rapid movement. They just couldn't hang around for a lot of details, right? They wanted things to move quick. And when you read Mark, you have no genealogy because Mark is lifting up Jesus as the Son of God.

[ 2 : 22 ] Now think about this just for a moment. He's writing to a Greek Gentile audience in his speaking of the Son of God. That's not accidental with all these Greek gods and mythology and things like that.

He is pointing up, here's the true Son of God, right? Here's the true God in the flesh doing all these wonderful deeds and all these miraculous events. You've been looking for all these false gods to do it when the real one has come.

So Mark is writing that. Luke is writing to an individual, O Most Excellent Theophilus, that we find in the Gospel of Luke. He connects with it the book of Acts. It's kind of a two-part, right?

He finished the first part, sent it, and then wrote the second letter, sent it to. Evidently, Theophilus, which is transliterated, means lover of God. Some people think he could be writing to a group of people. But the title, O Most Excellent, seems to imply Theophilus held some type of political office, right?

So he's holding his political office, but by the time Luke pens the book of Acts, evidently Theophilus lost his political office because then he is no longer referred to as Most Excellent Theophilus, but just Theophilus.

[ 3 : 29 ] Most people believe that his commitment to Christ led him to leave his job or to be cast away from his job. So he lost his political title. Now, Luke is writing, and he is writing in particular that he is the son of man, right?

So he speaks of the humanity of Christ, and he lifts up that this is God in the flesh, but he's fully man as well. He takes his genealogy all the way back to Adam. When Luke gives a genealogy, it goes all the way back, right?

And brings it back to Adam, the son of God, the son of man. So we see this genealogy. Luke is a physician, so he pays a lot of attention to details. John has no genealogy because when John writes his gospel, Jesus is not the son of God.

Jesus is not the son of man. In John, Jesus is God, right? And now this is not to say they're different. He's just a four-dimensional view. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And God came to dwell among us, and we call him Emmanuel, who is Jesus. That's John chapter 1. And John is lifting him up, and John's writing to the churches in particular, Jews and Gentiles and Greeks and everybody.

[ 4 : 38 ] And that's why his is so different. I hold that to say this. Matthew, Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience, and the Jews were looking for a king.

They longed for a king. If you remember when we introduced the gospel of Matthew, we went all the way back to the book of Isaiah. And we saw how Isaiah, the major prophet of the Jewish people, spoke of a forthcoming king who would sit on the throne of David and rule over his people, and the rod of iron would never depart from his hand.

He would be an eternal king who would reign in righteousness and greatness and superiority and would deliver them. Now, Matthew is writing at a time when God's chosen people, the Jewish nation, are living under the suppression of the Roman Empire.

And he is telling them, here is your king. I say all this here. Because for most of his life, Matthew's fellow Jewish people didn't like him.

He went back and reached the people that hated him the most. And we'll see in our text this morning why they didn't like him. And we'll see how God changed not only their heart, but his heart when he met this person called Jesus.

[ 6 : 00 ] And how it radically changed his heart. Because the reality is, human nature says, you don't like me long enough, I'm not going to want anything to do with you. You push me, prod me, and despise me enough, I'm just going to separate myself and isolate myself from you.

Matthew did the exact opposite. He went to them. He could have written the letter to the Gentiles and Greeks if God would have allowed him to. He could have written a letter to the most excellent Theophilus if God had allowed him to.

But God moved him to pen this letter to his people, the Jewish people, and tell them, here is the king. That is of utmost importance even for our interpretation of our passage this morning.

So if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask you to join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God together. In Matthew chapter 9, starting in verse 9 and going down to verse 17.

As Jesus went on from there, if you remember Jesus had done just all these miraculous events. Matthew had recorded a couple of series of three. And here he has just healed the paralytic.

[ 7 : 02 ] This is the man that they let down on the pallet and the roof. Mark records that as well. And you remember Jesus said, son, your sins are forgiven. And then to validate that, to show that he had the power to forgive sins, he said, okay, pick up your pallet and go home and walk.

And he did. And so he's done all these miraculous things. He's got the power over demons, the power over sin, the power over nature, the power over sickness. And he's really validated his authority. And now we see here in verse 9, as Jesus went on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting in the tax collector's booth.

And he said to him, follow me. And he got up and followed him. Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and his disciples.

When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, why is your teacher eating with tax collectors and sinners? But when Jesus heard this, he said, it is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.

But go and learn what this means. I desire compassion and not sacrifice. For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. Then the disciples of John came to him asking, why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?

[ 8 : 10 ] And Jesus said to them, the attendance of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins, otherwise the wineskins burst and the wine pours out on the wineskins.

Wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for allowing us to have this day.

God, we thank you for the fellowship, which we've already been able to enjoy. Lord, we thank you for the songs of worship, which we've been able to praise you with. We thank you for the rejoicing in the work you're doing with our children.

Lord, we thank you for all that we have been able to witness before us. Lord, we praise you for allowing us to have the opportunity to see your word. And we pray that your word would speak to our hearts.

[ 9 : 11 ] We pray that it would penetrate our minds. Lord, that it would reach to the very depth of our being, and it would conform us more and more to your glory, more and more to your image, and it would all be for your glory and yours alone.

And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. In Matthew chapter 9, verses 9 through 17, I want you to see the call of Jesus to sinful man.

The call of Jesus to sinful man. This is an account that is also retold in the book of Mark, and Mark refers to him as Levi, not Matthew.

Levi would be the Gentile name of Matthew, known to his Jewish countrymen as Matthew, known in his Roman world or in the Gentile world as Levi. But it's interchangeable here, and we do know that he is one of the 12.

Two of the Gospels are written by a couple of the 12, Matthew and John. We know that Mark and Luke are not. Luke is an attending physician. Just a complete side note here, but just say that Luke is an attending physician with Paul in a lot of his missionary journeys, especially when you start reading of Paul traveling on ship.

[ 10 : 16 ] Luke is always with him. It's always, so we went, and we went here, and we went there, and we went there. You can trace where Luke joins and departs from Paul. Luke is with Paul a lot in his missionary journeys. Mark is the one who left Paul behind in his first missionary journey.

So even just the grace of God is displayed there. He is the one that Paul had a sharp disagreement about, would be Mark, also known as John Mark. But later on, Paul made the testimony that Mark is beneficial for the Gospel, that he is beneficial for the expansion of the Gospel.

So again, we just see who God chooses and the wonder of it all. But what we're looking at particularly here is something that is very near and dear to Matthew's heart because it is really the call of Matthew by Christ himself to follow him.

And in this call, Matthew is being open and transparent, and he is telling us more about himself than most of us would. And one thing that we understand about the Gospel authors is they tend to open up more, and they tend to be more honest about themselves than if someone else is telling the account.

If you read the Gospel of Mark, you will find that Peter looks worse in Mark than any other Gospel. Right? Peter seems the dirty laundry of Peter, for lack of a better way of saying it.

[ 11 : 28 ] I don't know if that's the right way of saying it. But we understand that Peter just has kind of a worse light shined upon him in Mark than any other Gospel. Why is that? Many people believe that Mark's Gospel is nothing other than the retelling of Peter's preaching because Mark traveled with Peter, and Mark got to know what Peter thought of himself before his death.

Right? And Matthew here, he kind of opens up in transparency, and he speaks of this thing that was so near and dear to him, and he reveals this. And what we see is the call of Jesus, who is the king, the long-anticipated king.

He is not just the king of the Jews, but he's the king of kings and the Lord of lords. He's the king over all of creation, and he is he who sits on the throne eternally. But we see the call of Jesus to sinful man, and we stand amazed at the reality of the things that are taught here, especially in light of the miraculous events, which we've just seen him do, and especially in the testimony that John records for us in John chapter 3, when Nicodemus came to Jesus by night.

And there's this statement here, and we need to never forget this, especially when we're talking about Jesus. Nicodemus came to him, and it says that Jesus needed no one to tell him what was in the heart of man because he understood man.

One thing we need to understand is that Jesus, the king, needs no one to tell him what's in our heart because he knows us. This is why he answers the question that Nicodemus is scared to ask. Right?

[ 12 : 56 ] He answers the questions most of the time that people are implying without asking because Jesus doesn't need anyone to tell us what's in the heart of man or anyone to tell him what is in the heart of man because he knows man.

And in light of that, we come to passages like this, and we are overwhelmed by his grace and his mercy and his love and his compassion because of who he is and who we are.

And the reality that this king, this Jesus, the eternal son of God, God in the flesh, looking at all four portraits that we have in the gospel, this is Emmanuel.

He calls sinful man to himself. And it is amazing. John Newton referred to it as amazing grace.

And he was right in that because he realized that this holy God came to him and met him in the depths of despair in the middle of a storm-tossed sea.

[ 13 : 58 ] We see this reality being played out. The first thing we see is that when Jesus calls sinful man, he meets us where we are at.

He meets us where we are at. And as Jesus went on from there, when I read that, I was kind of captivated by that statement, though we tend to read it and just move on past it because we see it as descriptive, but I think it is more than descriptive.

I think it is also instructive. It is Matthew himself who records what we call the Great Commission in Matthew 28 when Jesus tells us to go out into all the world and to proclaim the gospel.

Remember Matthew 28 as Matthew ends his gospel with this Great Commission of Christ. And literally what Jesus tells his disciples is, as you are going, that word go, that word go in the Great Commission is really full of meaning.

And it means as you are going. So it's not just a special occasion. It's not just like you're going to schedule on your calendar when you're going to go tell someone about Christ. It is as you are going throughout your day, you're going to tell someone about Christ.

[ 15 : 12 ] Or as you have the opportunity given to you, you're going to tell someone about Christ. So it's as you are going. And the reason I feel like this verse is instructive, because look at what it says. And as Jesus went out from there.

So as he was going in his daily movements, he's moving along, and he comes to what would be just a natural thing to pass in that day and time.

He saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. So as he was going, he saw Matthew at work. And as he was going, Great Commission, as you go, he saw someone in need of what he knew and who he was.

So as he was going about his daily affairs, he saw someone that was working at his daily place of occupation. And he paid attention to this person. He didn't just see a tax collector's booth.

He saw a man named Matthew sitting at a tax collector's booth. You're going to meet people all day long, all throughout your day. And many times you're just going to see them in generalities when sometimes we need to stop and see them in specifics, right?

[ 16 : 17 ] That's an individual with a name that's at that job. That's an individual with an everlasting soul that's at that job. Jesus didn't just see a tax collector's booth. While most Jewish people would have seen a tax collector's booth, and seeing a tax collector's booth, they would have had these fears of anger and animosity aroused within them.

Because let's give a little description about who we have here. Because Jesus sees Matthew and stops. Now, the Romans were good at taxation. Romans had great roads.

They had great infrastructure. They had great buildings. But they also had great taxes. They had a number of taxes that they would impose upon their people. And they had a pretty good system of doing it. The head tax collector, Zacchaeus.

Think of Zacchaeus as a wee little man, right? He was a short man wearing a tunic who climbed a tree. We don't need to get any more visual than that. But he was wearing, essentially, a dress and decided to climb a tree. And he had to go see Jesus.

He was in desperation because he was so short. But Zacchaeus is referred to as the chief tax collector. If you're reading the King James Version, it says publicans there. And that's what publicans means. It is a chief tax collector, right?

[17:18] There's this little bit of differentiation there in the original language. But to be a chief tax collector means you are over other tax collectors. And you're wealthy because you're over other tax collectors. Because it is your job to hire other tax collectors who would get Rome's money.

And as part of your job, you would get some of that money. And this is why Zacchaeus was so wealthy, right? This is why he had so much money. But the people who were the face that the crowds saw each and every day were just the tax collectors.

They weren't the chief tax collectors. They were just the people who were on the streets. They were the people who would stand in these booths. And you would bring to them, because some of the taxation was on what you traded or what you sold or what you purchased or anything, any of the goods.

And what you would do is you would bring that to, say, Matthew. And you would set it on Matthew's table, and he would evaluate it and tell you how much you owed him. He would say, based upon the value that I think that this is, I think you owe me this much money.

Now, let's put that in today's day and time. Every one of you have a tax value of your home, where they tell you what your home is worth. And based on what they tell you your home is worth is how much you owe them in taxes.

[18:24] Some of them, my home ain't worth that much. Well, in today's day and time, it is. But in some markets, you would never be able to get the tax value of your home. But in today's market, you probably could get over that. But anyway, we go back and forth.

And that's essentially what Matthew was. He was an assessor of property, right? So it was his job to tell you how much you owe him. And not just how much you owed him, but you need to pay the Roman government this much.

And the majority of tax collectors would raise the prices so that they could lie in their pockets. Because Rome said this, we require this amount of tax.

We don't care how much you tax them, but this is how much you pay us. You can tax them however much you want to. This is how much of it you're going to give us. So for them to be wealthy, and we have to kind of assume that Matthew is wealthy because he throws a pretty good party.

We'll see that in just a moment, right? He throws a pretty good party. So he had at least the money to fund the food and at least the place to have the residence there. So we have this that they got to determine the amount, and you had to pay them that.

[19:31] And they would give part to Zacchaeus, who would keep a part, and he would give part back to the government. And the government would keep the rest. But because of this, most Jews hated tax collectors.

And the reason they hated them is because they were considered traitors. The Jewish nation in particular did not like having to live under the rulership of anyone else.

Living under the rulership of Rome or anyone else was considered to be cursed by God because God had called them to be a nation of independence and to be a nation of freedom.

And to have another government, a Gentile, non-Jewish government, telling you how much you had to pay them was just offensive to them. But what was worse than that was to take another fellow countryman, a Jewish countryman, and employ him to tell you how much you owe.

Now, those of you that are going through the Old Testament and were going through it on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights, you know you're not supposed to charge interest to your fellow countrymen. You're not supposed to. You're supposed to forgive their debt. But if you're a tax collector, you did.

[20:42] So what Matthew was was a representative of the Roman government ruling over Jewish people. Now we begin to see him in his light. And Jesus is fully God and fully man.

And let's go ahead and declare this. He is a fully Jewish man. Right? His mother, Mary, is of the descendants of David.

His adoptive father, Joseph, is of the descendants of David. And he sees Matthew and stops. He who was probably despised by the overwhelming majority of his fellow countrymen.

He who was hated by many. Seen as an enemy and as a traitor by all that would have to come before him. Jesus sees Matthew at the tax collector's booth and stops.

What does this show us? That when Jesus calls the sinner to himself, he doesn't wait on the sinner to come to him. He meets the sinner where he's at. He met him at the tax collector's booth.

[ 21 : 46 ] He met him at the place of his employment, but also the place that led to the despisement of so many. The thing that made him offensive to the multitude is where Jesus met him at. Let's bring that application down.

The beauty of the gospel is this. You will never be good enough to make your way to Jesus, but Jesus is wonderful enough to make his way to you. While we are yet sinners, Jesus came to us and died for us on the cross.

He meets us where we're at. And it is the wonder of the gospel that we cannot understand. We don't work our way to heaven. Heaven brought itself down to us.

We don't, through effort, clean ourselves up and get our acts together and get everything proper and get it all together. And when I get everything right, then I'll go, that's not the way it works. The way the gospel works is that the king of kings comes to you in all of your mess.

And he meets you there. And he's okay meeting you there. I will never stop, at least I pray, I never stop being overwhelmed by the reality that in all of my ugliness, Jesus met me there.

[ 22 : 57 ] And in all of the things that cause shame and offense to a holy God, he met me there. Because he saw a man named Billy Joe sitting at his tax collector's booth and said, Hey, can you call me by name?

When Jesus calls the sinner to himself, when he calls sinful man, he meets him where he's at.

Number two, it moves us from where we have been. Because just because he meets us there, it doesn't mean he leaves us there, right?

It moves us from where we have been because he sees Matthew. Look at this. And he said to him, follow me. He didn't say, hey, Matthew, how you doing, man? This is great. I appreciate what you're doing here.

And he didn't just walk away from him. Matthew more than likely had heard Jesus' teaching. He more than likely had witnessed a lot of these miraculous events. I mean, he wasn't just, these things, as Jesus said, didn't take place in a corner.

Paul himself declared before the rulers that these things didn't just happen in a corner of a world where nobody would take notice. These things have been opened. Jesus said, I've been teaching daily in your temple, in the marketplace. Yet you come to me in the cover of night to rest me in the middle of a garden.

[ 24 : 04 ] What Jesus did, he did it openly, right? And this is his hometown of Capernaum. And around his hometown of Capernaum, he's doing all these works. More works were done there than anywhere else in Scripture.

And John himself says, if all the words that Jesus did were recorded, that the world would not contain the books. So what we have is just kind of a smidgen of a smidgen of what Jesus did while he walked the earth in public ministry for three and a half years, right?

So Matthew probably had witnessed these things. He had seen these things. I mean, that's a pretty good man over there. And he'd seen what's going on. And all of a sudden, this good man, this king, this God in the flesh, meets him in the place of his ugliness.

He meets him at the tax collector's booth and says something to him, follow me. Because just because Jesus meets you where you're at doesn't mean he wants to leave you where you're at because he wants you to follow him from there.

Here's the beauty of the gospel. He comes to us in our filth, but he leads us away from it in his glory. Right? Just follow me. Henry Blackaby said, you cannot follow Jesus and stay where you're at.

[ 25 : 08 ] Think about that just for a moment. Henry Blackaby, the author of Experiencing God, great pastor in Canada and had Blackaby Ministries in Atlanta, Georgia.

His son still does it. A lot of great missions work, a lot of great teaching that is followed from that ministry. But Henry Blackaby once made this great declaration. You cannot follow Jesus and stay where you're at.

And that's absolutely true. Because while Jesus may meet you where you're at, his call is always the same. Follow me. And it says in our text, right?

And he got up and followed him. Jesus didn't say this is where we're going. If Jesus had said, Matthew, follow me and I'll tell you what I'm going to do. In a few years, I want you to write a letter

back to your fellow countrymen.

You know, the ones who hate you. The ones who want nothing to do with you. The ones you've collected all this money from. I want you to write a letter to them talking about how great I am. Matthew probably would have went, no, I can't do that. That's not what he does. Jesus simply says, follow me.

[ 26 : 09 ] And then the text reads, and he got up and followed him. The call of Christ is a call of commitment and trust and surrender. This is why when we sing the song, I surrender all. You know, I like when we sing the song, I surrender all.

Sometimes I don't even like the way that I sing the song, I surrender all. Because I sing it as if it's a bad thing. And you've heard me say this before. Why is it a bad thing when I surrender all of my filth and ugliness and I gain all of his glory and wonder, right?

So we ought to sing it with a smile on our heart and a joy. And we ought to sing it with this great worship expression because we get to surrender to tax collector's booth to go follow the Savior. We get to surrender that which makes us ugly and filthy and despised by our fellow country and follow the King of kings and Lord of lords.

We leave behind, as Jim Elliott said, we give up what we cannot keep to gain what we cannot lose. We surrender that which is temporal to gain the eternal.

And it just simply says, so Matthew followed him. Now, I cannot tell you that when Jesus meets you wherever you're at and he calls you to follow him and everyone he meets he calls to follow, I cannot tell you where he's going to take you.

[ 27 : 21 ] And the beautiful thing is, is he will not tell you where he's going to take you. I am thankful. And I mean this with all sincerity and I mean this in all honesty. I am thankful that when Jesus met me at my tax collector's booth, he didn't tell me what he was going to do with me when I followed him.

Because if at 201 Canova Court, which was where my tax collector's booth happened to be at that time, that's where we were living, that was Carrie and I's first house. I say first house, we had lived another place prior to that.

We don't always refer to that as a house. One room thing. But anyway, so 201 Canova. If you're looking at the front of the house, there's a garage and then there's a window on the right. And that window on the right, it's still there today, was our bedroom.

And in the middle of the night when Hunter was asleep on this end of the house and Carrie was asleep and that window right there, right there at the corner of our bed, I fell on my face. I'd been reading the book of Romans.

And I heard Jesus meeting me where I was at and calling me to follow him. And I said, you know what, Lord, I give it up to you. I will follow you wherever. I am so thankful he didn't go, okay, what I'm going to do is in about six months, I'm going to put you teaching a Sunday school class.

[ 28 : 27 ] About a year or so after that, I want you to teach teenagers. And then you know what, I'm going to call you to pastoral ministry. I'm so glad he didn't do that because I'm just being honest here, okay. I was 20 years old, a little bit frustrated.

It was about a month or so before I turned 21. I would have said, no, thank you. Because what I want is to get a good job, work 30, 35 years, be comfortable, retire, and enjoy life.

If he would have said, I'm going to do this, you'll get laid off, but it'll be good. And then you'll get to go back to that job you want so much. And you know what, after about four years of getting comfortable there, I'm going to ask you to leave it. I would have said, no, I don't want to do that. I'd rather not. I mean, it's just my humanity, right? But what he said was, follow me. And I said, okay.

All those things happened since then. But thankfully, through my relationship with him, those things have come with joy. Has it been easy?

[ 29 : 32 ] I didn't say it came with happiness. It's never happy when you have a three-year-old and a four-month pregnant wife, and you get laid off, and you lose your jobs, and you lose your insurance.

That's not happy. There's joy there, not happiness. It's not happiness when the economy takes a downturn, and wherever you were working, because you got laid off, it tells you, you know what, you'd be better off if we fired you.

That's not happiness. That's joy. There's no happiness when you take a job. You said your whole life, I would never take this job, never work here. Be careful what you tell God. You'll never do. I will never do that. I'm not wired to do that. And he put you there for three years, even though you know you're called to preach. There's no happiness there, but there's joy. There's no happiness when he gets you back in your dream job, and then after a few years, he said, you know what, you're not made for this.

Go ahead and leave this. Just give it up willingly this time. But there's joy. There's joy. And that's my story. Matthew could probably look at you later and say, you know what, it hasn't all been happiness, but it sure has been joy.

[ 30 : 38 ] Because Matthew ends up dying a martyr's death. He ends up writing to the people who despised him and rejected him, and essentially reject this gospel message. But we praise God because he meets us where we're at, but he moves us from where we have been.

He moves us. We're moving as we follow him. My question here is, how is he moving you? Some things he moves you away from.

Some things he moves you while you're there in the presence of. Right? He doesn't always have to move you. For me, he had to go extreme. He had to move me away from things to show me that I don't trust in them.

I'm trusting in him. He had to move me away from things. Sometimes he just moves you as he allows you to stay there. But he's always moving you. Third, the call of Jesus, a sinful man, manifest his care and concern.

It manifests his care and concern. And I'm trying to go as a respecer of your time, and I know I always get in trouble when I say that. But I want you to see these truths. It manifests his care and concern.

[ 31 : 45 ] Not only did Jesus see Matthew to the tax collector's booth, and not only did he extend a call to him, this next verse is arresting. Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table, sometimes I think we need to go back to eating the way they did then.

Their tables were very low to the ground, and they didn't have chairs. Sometimes I think that because the chair I sit in always tends to get broken. I don't know what that tells me about when I'm sitting at the table. I don't know what that tells me about maybe I sit too long at the table, and maybe I got too much weight on those chairs, and it seems to be groaning under my weight.

But either way, their tables were low to the ground, and they didn't have this problem of chairs breaking because they didn't have chairs, but they would have these pillows, and they would literally lie on their side. This great picture of the Last Supper, no one was sitting around the table. The table would have been more like a U-shaped, right? And the head of the table would have been right in the center of the U, and it would have been laying on their side. This is why John, leaning upon his bosom, asking this question, right?

It's just this intimacy, this fellowship, this nearness, and essentially it's why Americans don't do that because we're like, I would rather have my space than have you lean over while chewing your food in my ear.

[ 32 : 54 ] Parents, you know exactly what I'm talking about. But that's how they did it, right? They would just lounge at the table, laying on their side, and they might have only eaten one meal a day, but that meal was a celebration.

That meal had meaning, right? It was fellowship. Table fellowship in Scripture matters. Really, really matters.

This is why they were very particular about who they would sit at the table with. You remember when Peter gets in trouble because he goes to Cornelius' house? Paul calls out Peter later on because he gets up from the table.

Remember that? Paul says, oh, you're being a hypocrite. Sit back down and eat. If they're serving pork chop, eat pork chop. To us, we're like, praise God. To them, they're like, oh, no.

But anyway, what we see here is Jesus is reclining at the table. He made himself at home with the tax collectors and the sinners.

[ 33 : 54 ] Tax collectors are despised because of their occupation. Sinners. You know what sinners are? Sinners are irreligious Jews. People who don't take their faith serious. That's what the Pharisees would recall them as sinners.

Oh, they're sinners. They're not as serious about their faith or their belief as us. They're irreligious. They don't practice it like we do. Kind of casting a stone. But Jesus is making himself at home here. Look at this. He is reclining at the table. It's a house and there are many. This is why I think Matthew probably was a man of some means. There were many tax collectors and sinners and they came and were dining with Jesus and his disciples.

Okay. Essentially what happens here, we're seeing it. Matthew throws a party. Okay. Matthew is throwing a party and invites all his friends. Jesus said early in the Gospel of Matthew, even the tax collectors like other tax collectors, right?

They're the only ones. He said, what good is it if you like those who are like you, you need to love your enemies? Because even tax collectors like tax collectors. So when Matthew looked around and thought, what friends do I have to invite? Tax collectors and sinners.

[ 35 : 02 ] They're the only people that liked him. So he threw a party. And the reason he threw a party is he wanted to invite all of his friends to come to his house and meet Jesus. It's pretty cool, right? He wanted everybody like him to meet this man he was going to dedicate his life to and he's going to follow this.

I'm going to follow this man. But before I leave, I want you guys to meet him. That's a pretty good practice to live up to, by the way. So Matthew, even at the very first, becomes an evangelist, if you will.

And he just brings people to Christ. And Jesus is okay with that. He brings his disciples in. So let's sit down. Let's recline. Not sit down. Let's lay down. Let's recline here and let's fellowship together. And we see this.

But then the Pharisees saw it too. The Pharisees are very religious. They said, why is your teacher eating with tax collectors and sinners? Why is he eating with them?

This would have made him unclean in Pharisaic tradition. Why is he doing such a thing? He would be unclean, not be able to worship God.

[ 36 : 04 ] And Jesus shows us. This is the manifestation of his care and concern. But when Jesus heard this, again, they didn't ask him the question, but he answered it. It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.

So the first praise we give is praise God. He came to us when we're sick. And we need to understand how sick we are because without him, we are not healthy. But go and learn what this means.

I desire compassion and not sacrifice for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. Here's the manifestation. Jesus demonstrated more care and concern for the sinner than he did for the righteous.

And by the righteous, I mean self-righteous. Those who considered themselves okay. God said, my greater concern and my greater care through my son right now is for the sinners.

And again, this is where we ought to shout hallelujah. Because I know me.

[ 37 : 10 ] What God tells me here through his word is his greatest care and concern is for me. My righteousness is not mine, but it is his. And when he found me, he did not find me in righteousness.

He found me in sin. And he met me in my sin and said, you're the one I'm concerned about.

Application to the church. Does the church spend more time on the righteous?

Or does it spend more time on the sinner? Kind of cutting, right? Do we give our energy and our effort and our ambition and our, don't say it, pastor, finances to the righteous?

Or do we give it for care and concern to the sinner? Telling.

Because Jesus tells us where he is concerned. He tells us where he manifested. He tells us where his desire is.

[ 38 : 13 ] He tells us where he thinks. His call of sinful man manifests his care and concern. Fourth and finally, I promise I'm done. It magnifies the difference between the old and the new.

Jesus' call of sinful man magnifies the difference between the old and the new. Jesus said, go and learn what this means.

I desire compassion and not sacrifice. That's an Old Testament verse, by the way. He's quoting the Old Testament. If you're reading a copy of the translation, it has that in cap font there.

It's a little bit offset. It's because it is a quotation from the Old Testament passage. So this is something God declared in the Old Testament, right? I desire compassion and not sacrifice. In the Pharisees' mind, in the religious people's mind, God's concern is sacrifice.

Sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice. If I give the right sacrifice, I'll be acceptable. If I do the right thing, I'll be acceptable. If I can live right, I'll be acceptable. All these things. And there's this common word that's telling all that, I, I, I, I, I, right?

[ 39 : 18 ] If I do this, or I do that, or I don't do this, or I'll be sure to bring this, and I do all these things, then God will accept me and I can worship him. And all of a sudden, Jesus is going to turn that completely around and say, really, it's not about what you're doing here.

It's not about that. He said, I desire compassion. Compassion towards who? The tax collectors and the sinners, right? The people who are the furthest away. I desire compassion more than I desire your sacrifice. Isaiah calls out, says, what is the sacrifice that God would, what is the offering that God would declare?

A broken and contrite heart. And care and concern for fellow man, paraphrasing a little bit here. Those God would not despise. He will accept that offering, right? It's a fast that he accepts. Those who are concerned about the broken and the destitute.

Those are the things that he will accept. And then we have this question. It seems not to fit here, but really it is just this complete magnification of the difference here.

The disciples of John. Now, that disciples of John is John the Baptist. John the Baptist is the last Old Testament prophet. I know you find him in the New Testament, and I know that kind of makes us scratch our head a little bit. He finds the foretelling of him coming in the book of Malachi.

[ 40 : 25 ] John the Baptist is the last Old Testament prophet, if you will, comes in the same vein as Old Testament prophets. So he ends the Old Testament prophetic ministry with John the Baptist.

And so in that, he is still kind of thought and operated in Old Testament practice, right? Turn, repent, declare, baptize. I'm not saying that it was wrong. I'm just saying we're trying to understand this here.

So the disciples of John and the Pharisees have this question. Why do we fast and the disciples of Christ don't fast? Now, Pharisees would fast twice a week at this time.

And the disciples of John continued that because that was considered religious behavior. And he said, well, you know, this is what we're going to do. We're going to keep this practiced, and we're going to fast twice a week, and we're going to do that, and we're going to move forward.

And John's disciples did the same thing because he didn't separate himself from Judaism. He was trying to call Judaism back to faithfulness there. And so they continued that. And Jesus says, well, do the attendants of the bridegroom, the groom, will they mourn while he's in their presence?

[ 41 : 33 ] No, I mean, you know, the wedding is not a place of mourning. It's a place of celebration, right? No, they're going to celebrate. They're going to do these things. I'm with them. He said, but a time will come when he's no longer there.

Then they will fast, right? And so he begins to separate. And then he says this thing, and it kind of makes a scratcher head. He says, well, then he wants to take a new piece of cloth and sew it onto an old garment. And he said, what does a cloth and garment have to do with any of this?

Just stay with him, right? Well, he said, no, he won't do that because that new piece of cloth, it will eventually shrink. And then it will have today's material, right? It will eventually shrink because we all know none of our material shrinks.

I think a lot of my material shrinks. Either it shrinks or it grows, and I'm going with it shrinks, right?

So that's okay. But anyway, he says, if you put that new on the old, it's going to shrink. And when it shrinks, it's going to pull away. It's going to make a worse tear.

So you won't ever do that. You'll find old material to put it on an old garment. And you won't put new wine into old wineskins. Wineskins were bladders made out of animal hide and been leathered animal hides.

[ 42 : 29 ] They kind of contracted and expanded. He said, you won't do that because the old wineskins are already dried up. And when you put the new wine in there, just a little, you know, historical information, when that new wine begins to ferment, that grape juice begins to ferment, things begin to grow, it's going to burst, and you're going to lose the wine, and you're going to lose the wineskins.

Now, this is one of the ways that God provided for them to have something to drink in the dry periods. We're not really getting into that, but he said Jesus wouldn't do it. So rather, if you have new wine, you put it in new wineskins, because then as the hide begins to dry up and it's expanding, it can move with the wine as it ferments.

He says, you won't do that. So what is he saying here? Is don't try to do the new thing the old way. They're incompatible. When Jesus comes and meets the sinner where he's at, don't try to tell the sinner he still needs to work his way to God.

This is something completely different. But it's really not different. It's what God's been saying all along. Because all throughout the Old Testament, all throughout Scripture, the mercy of God, the compassion of God, the willingness of God to meet sinful man.

Where is that? Think of Abram or the Chaldeans. Think of everybody that God encounters, right? None of them are righteous. Moses in the burning bush. God meets them where they're at.

[ 43 : 56 ] But then man takes this thing called religion, and man begins to build. And God gave this as a safeguard to keep man from his sinful ways. But they twisted it and said, oh, this is our ladder to work our way to God.

This is what we're going to do. And really, all the law does is show man that he cannot do it. It is there to prove to man he is incapable of doing it.

And when man finally comes to the realization, woe am I a sinner, as the tax collector does when he's praying beside the Pharisees, because I know your law and I can't keep your law, Jesus says that man is forgiven.

Because he's not trying to do something new in an old wine skin. He comes to this place of desperation and says, God, I can't come to you, but I need you to come to me. The old wine skin of the law is not going to hold this brokenness in my heart.

And you're doing something new, and I need you to do it in a new way. And Jesus says, I'm right here. Because this magnifies the difference of the old and the new.

[ 45 : 10 ] One of the sad realities that we find, and we're closing, is when we try to put Jesus into our old wine skin of works, we want Jesus to pick up where we left off.

We want him, we'll do the best we can, and I'm going to work as hard as I can, and whenever I get to the end of what I can, then I'm going to trust Jesus to do the rest. I want to tell you something, that old wine skin is not going to hold Jesus.

Because he says, what you can do is not enough, it will never be enough, it will never be good enough. It is all of, as Paul said, all of your righteousness is like filthy rags. The best we can do is filthy rags in the sight of a holy God.

And Jesus says, and when you understand that, I'm ready to meet you there. And I'm ready to lead you away from there. And you'll follow me, and we'll move forward. Let's pray.

Lord, thank you for this day. Thank you for your word. Lord, may we as your people respond to it in obedience, follow you with complete surrender and joy, and Lord, and commitment.

[ 46 : 22 ] We ask it all in your name. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.