



Sermon Discussion Questions

February 25, 2024

Jesus in Galilee

FOLLOWING MAY REQUIRE FEASTING

Luke 5:27-32

1. **Opening Discussion Questions** (in a group setting you will probably only want to do one of these questions)
 - a. Have you ever been at a large group meal (perhaps socially or professionally) in which you felt uncomfortable about your dining companions? If you are comfortable doing so, share the details. What was it about them that made you so uncomfortable? Did it change how you thought about the person who invited you?
 - b. Have you ever felt questioned or judged by parents, friends, or colleagues because of the people you associated with? How did you feel about that at the time? If it's been a few years since that situation, have your feelings changed?

2. Sermon Outline/Key Points

- a. Levi Answers the Call to Follow Jesus and Throws a Feast
 - i. Jesus calls and Levi answers (Luke 5:27-28)
 - ii. Levi throws a feast so other outcasts could meet Jesus (Luke 5:29-30)
- b. Jesus' Mission Is to Save Sinners Who Answer His Call
 - i. Jesus seeks those desperate for a Savior (Luke 5:31-32)
 - ii. We answer His call by believing and following like Levi
- c. Your Following Should Reflect Jesus' Mission
 - i. Levi provides a great example of truly following Jesus
 - ii. Sometimes we follow Jesus but still tend to follow ourselves
 - iii. We must connect with unbelievers to call them to repentance in Jesus

3. Study/Discussion Points:

- a. **Sunday Afternoon** – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to prayerfully ponder these questions:
 - i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
 - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
 - iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
- b. **Monday** – *Levi Answers the Call to Follow Jesus and Throws a Feast*

- i. This week's focal passage is both dramatic and well-known, particularly the concluding words of Jesus. Read the focal passage, Luke 5:27-32, and the parallel passages Matthew 9:9-13 and Mark 2:13-17. As you read, jot down details in the account that you believe are important.
 1. When Jesus encountered Levi (aka Matthew), he was at work, collecting taxes for the Roman Empire. This was both lucrative and unpopular with his fellow Jews. What was the invitation of Jesus and how did Levi respond?
 2. Levi went on to write the gospel of Matthew, so he obviously kept following Jesus. What might have compelled him to get up and leave his tax booth behind that day? What could have compelled him to stay with Jesus for the many years afterward?
 3. Was your decision to follow Jesus as sudden and dramatic as Levi's or was it a more gradual process? What have you left behind to follow Jesus?
- c. **Tuesday** – *Levi Answers the Call to Follow Jesus and Throws a Feast*
 - i. Read the focal passage again.
 - ii. Levi was so excited about the invitation of Jesus that he threw a huge feast for Jesus AND all of his fellow tax collectors in the area.
 1. What does it say about Levi/Matthew that his first action was to gather as many associates as possible to meet and eat with Jesus? Why do you think he did this?
 2. Most people love to share whatever they're excited about with others. Are you presently, or have you ever been, excited about Jesus in a way similar to Levi? What did you do (or are doing) because of that excitement?
 3. What's the most unconventional, extravagant, or outrageous things you've ever done to introduce people to Jesus? What could you do?
 - iii. In 1st century culture, reclining at a formal table to eat with someone represented a deep level of social acceptance. Tax collectors were viewed by their fellow Jews as Roman collaborators and traitors against Israel. To the Pharisees, they were almost as unclean as the leper from Luke 12-16.
 1. How does this explain their complaint to the disciples in verse 30? Try to imagine being in their shoes. Would you agree with their complaint or not? Be honest with yourself!
 2. Jesus was eating with the tax collectors and "sinners". What does that mean about His acceptance of them? What does that mean about His approval of their sinful behavior? How do you know???
- d. **Wednesday** – *Levi Answers the Call to Follow Jesus and Throws A Feast*
 - i. Before rereading the focal passage, close your eyes and form a mental picture of that dinner party. Now read Luke 5:27-32 once more.

1. A recent series of “He Gets Us” ads during the Super Bowl have generated both excitement and criticism amongst Christians and non-Christians alike. Some of that controversy is reminiscent of this story.
 2. If you saw the ad (or can find it online), how do you feel about it? Was it too accepting of sinful people or situations? Did it accurately capture the attitude of Jesus expressed in this story?
 3. How would you change the ad, if at all, to more fully capture Jesus as we see Him in this story?
- ii. Levi immediately tried to connect his unbelieving friends to Jesus.
1. In what ways have you tried to introduce your unbelieving friends, neighbors, or relatives to Jesus?
 2. Studies show that after 2-3 years a new Christian’s circle of friends will almost entirely consist of fellow Christians. Godly fellowship with other Christians is vitally important. However, if this statistic describes you, how could you intentionally meet and form new relationships with non-Christians to help them meet Jesus?
 3. Who are today’s “tax collectors” – sinners so unacceptable that religious folks are uncomfortable seeing Jesus eat with them? What would it look like for you to go to them and bring them to fellowship with Jesus?

e. **Thursday** – *Jesus’ Mission Is to Save Sinners Who Answer His Call*

- i. In verses 31 and 32, Jesus is very blunt about why He’s eating with tax collectors and sinners. He uses the analogy of a doctor treating patients. Read these verses again.
 1. Who is the physician in this analogy? What kind of healing can He provide? What kind of healing is He offering at this party?
 2. Obviously, Jesus is very aware of the spiritual, moral, and ethical condition of His tablemates. That doesn’t stop Him from eating with them. Why not?
 3. We don’t have a record of the conversation at the table, but they obviously didn’t just discuss the weather, sports, and politics. How would you imagine Jesus calling them to repentance? What sins might they need to repent of?
- ii. Given that we’re all sinners, whether we’re Pharisees or tax collectors, what is Jesus really saying about who He came to minister to?
 1. The Pharisees were sinners but too self-righteous to see it. Did Jesus want them to repent? Were they His primary focus?
 2. Who did Jesus primarily focus His attention on? How should that inform our own efforts to share the Gospel with others?
 3. How can these words of Jesus help us “move on” from those we care about who are highly resistant to the Gospel to reach more people?

- f. Friday – Jesus’ Mission Is To Save Sinners Who Answer His Call*
- i. We answer the call of Jesus by believing in Him and following Him like Levi did. How have you answered His call in your life?
 - ii. Receiving and accepting the invitation to follow Jesus is purely a gift of grace. Following Him, however, involves actively doing things like Levi did. Read Luke 9:23-25.
 - iii. Are you truly following Jesus? If not, what holds you back? If you can’t bring yourself to fully follow Jesus, talk to a mature Christian friend or advisor who can help you overcome whatever holds you back.
- g. Saturday – Your Following Should Reflect Jesus’ Mission*
- i. Most Christians love Jesus and love doing things for Him, finding great joy and satisfaction from that service. However, sometimes our following tends to look very similar to what we already enjoy doing. It may or may not reflect the mission of Jesus to call “sinners to repentance.”
 - ii. Read Luke 19:10. Would you say this is also true of you?
 - iii. How does what you do for Jesus help sinners come to repentance?
 - iv. It wasn’t sufficient for Jesus to just eat dinner with the tax collectors. If He had, the Pharisees would have been right. Instead, He called His tablemates to the repentance that was available through Him. In your relationships with unbelievers, are you intentional like He was to introduce them to Jesus and call them to repentance?

4. **Application:**

- a. Jesus is very clear in this passage regarding His purpose – to call sinners to repentance. Think carefully about how you follow Jesus. How do you invest your time, talent, and treasure for Jesus? Is the way you follow Jesus closely aligned to His purpose of helping sinners come to repentance? If not, how might you realign your following to help more people meet Jesus?
- b. Levi provides an excellent example of connecting unbelieving friends to Jesus. Do you regularly pray for the salvation of unbelieving friends and relatives while actively trying to introduce them to Jesus? If so, keep going and don’t grow weary! If not, what holds you back? Consider taking LRBC’s online Summit course, “Overcoming Barriers to Sharing Christ” through Right Now Media if something is hindering you from introducing people to Jesus.

5. **Prayer Points:**

- a. **A**doration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. **C**onfession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. **T**hanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. **S**upplications – Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19