

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

JESUS IS KING



Matthew Follows Jesus

Text: Matthew 9:9-17

1. Matthew Follows Jesus - Matthew 9:9

Nobody liked the man who sat **at the tax office**.

The Jewish people thought of them as *traitors* because they worked for the Roman government, and they had the force of Roman soldiers behind them to make people pay taxes. They were the most visible Jewish collaborators with Rome.

The Jewish people considered them *extortioners* because they were allowed to keep whatever they over-collected.

And he saith unto him, Follow me: Understanding how almost everyone hated tax collectors, it is remarkable to see how Jesus loved and called Matthew.

In one way this was more of a sacrifice than some of the other disciples made. Peter, James, and John could more easily go back to their fishing business, but it would be hard for Matthew to go back to tax collecting.

2. Jesus Eats with Sinners - Matthew 9:10-13

The context suggests that this was a gathering of Matthew's friends and former business associates. Jesus took advantage of Matthew's decision to reach to his friends.

There is no greater testimony than that of a changed life!

Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners: The answer to this question was simple: Because Jesus is the friend of sinners.

See Romans 5:8

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: This was the principle that the Pharisees did not understand.

The Pharisees were like doctors who wanted to avoid all contact with sick people. Of course they wished that sick people would become healthy, but they wouldn't risk getting infected themselves.

We are fortunate that God calls sinners and not righteous people. Jesus came to those who understood their need for Him (**those who are sick** and the *poor in spirit* of Matthew 5:3).

Yet the proud who see no need for Jesus (**those who are whole**) benefit nothing from Jesus.

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:

See ***Hosea 6:6***

In Hosea's day, God's people were still good at bringing sacrifice (Hosea 5:6), but they had forsaken **mercy**, and they abandoned **mercy** because they gave up the knowledge of God and truth (Hosea 4:1). God would rather have right hearts, full of truth and mercy than sacrifice.

Remember, Jesus is quoting Scripture to the Pharisees who thought they knew everything!

3. A Question About Fasting - Matthew 9:14

The ministry of John the Baptist was strict in its character and had an emphasis on humble repentance (Matthew 3:1-4). John's disciples imitated this, and showed their own humility in light of their own sin and that of their people.

Pharisees were also known for their fasting (often twice a week, according to Luke 18:12), but they did not do it out of a spirit of humble repentance. They often fasted wanting to impress themselves and others with their spirituality (Matthew 6:16-18).

But thy disciples fast not: Apparently the disciples of Jesus did not fast as either of these two groups did. Jesus will next explain why.

4. The principle: New replaces the Old - Matthew 9:15-17

It wasn't right for Jesus' disciples to imitate the Pharisees in their hypocritical shows. Nor was it right for them to imitate John's disciples in their ministry of humble preparation, because the disciples lived in the experience that John tried to prepare people for.

But the days will come: There would come a day when fasting would be appropriate for Jesus' followers, but at the present time when Jesus was among them, it was not that day.

There is a slight dark note in the words, "**but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them.**" It was as if Jesus said, "They are going to take Me away; I threaten their system." It is the first slight hint of His coming rejection.

Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break: With this illustration of the **wine bottles**, Jesus explained that He did not come to repair or reform the old institutions of Judaism, but to institute a new covenant altogether.

The new covenant doesn't just improve the old; it replaces it and goes beyond it.

Keeping the Old Testament feast, holidays, and laws and trying to put Christ into the middle of it is not what God intended.

But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved: Jesus' reference to the wine bottles was His announcement that the present institutions of Judaism could not and would not contain His **new wine**.

He would form a new institution – the church – that would bring Jew and Gentile together into a completely new body.

See **Ephesians 2:14-18**

Jesus reminds us that what is old and stagnant often cannot be renewed or reformed.

God will often look for new vessels to do His new work, until those vessels eventually make themselves unusable.

This reminds us that the religious establishment of any age is not necessarily pleasing to Jesus.

Sometimes it is in direct opposition to, or at least resisting His work.

Jesus came to introduce something new, not to patch up something old. This is what salvation is all about.

In doing this, Jesus doesn't destroy the old (the law), but He fulfills it, just as an acorn is fulfilled when it grows into an oak tree. There is a sense in which the acorn is gone, but its purpose is fulfilled in greatness.