

**“Is There a Doctor in the House?”**

**Luke 5:27-32**

Feb. 13, 2022

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31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.

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• How did one become a tax collector? Rome sold franchises to the highest bidder. Then pay Rome at end of year what they required, charge whatever you wanted above that. Lend \$\$ at exorbitant interest rates (50%) to those who could not pay. They had Roman soldiers to back them up and enforce the tax.

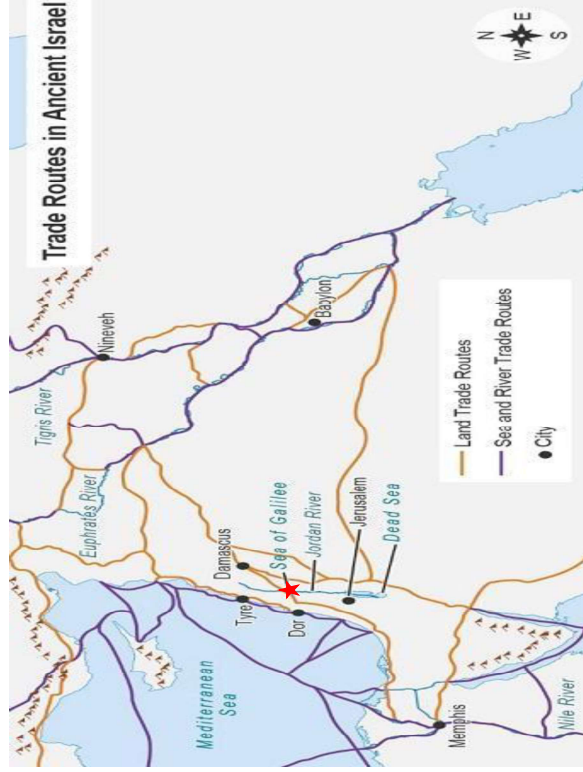
**Luke 3:12-13**

12 And some tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"

13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to."

• Tax collectors were looked at as "scum", along with robbers, prostitutes, gamblers, thieves, crooks. A tax-collector was a liar, cheater, stealer, and abuser.

• The trade between the Orient and the vast populations on the Mediterranean, passed through the Lake of Galilee, making a highly profitable trade for Capernaum and the smaller cities and towns. This was for Levi therefore, a very lucrative position.



- **27 After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me."**
- **2 kinds of tax collectors:**
  1. "Gabbai" - collected general taxes on land and property, and on income, referred to as poll or registration taxes.
  2. "Mokhes" - collected a wide variety of use taxes, import duties, export duties, toll on bridges and roads and harbors, business license fees, and other toll fees. 2 kinds:
    1. Chief or great Mokhes – hired tax collectors to do the work.
    2. Regular or small Mokhes – did all of the work of themselves. This is Watt.
- They taxed anything and everything. They would stop people at random. Seen as traitors to Israel. Beyond repentance. Probably the most hated man in all of Capernaum. Family would disown him. Only friends they had would be other tax collectors.
- Banned from the synagogue ("unclean"). His money was considered tainted and it would defile anyone who accepted it. He could not serve as a witness in a court of law.
- Why did he do it? The money. Tax collector jobs were greatly desired and a sure way to get rich in a hurry.
- Levi also called Nathanael. Thomas was called Didymus. Bartholomew was also called Nathanael. Simon was Peter.
- He was the worst of sinners but after conversion, he was given the privilege of beginning the New Testament (book of Matthew) with the introduction of the great King – Messiah Jesus.
- But it was to this one, the worst of sinners, that Jesus said "Follow Me."

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**Luke 5:10-11** and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." 11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

**Luke 9:23** And He was saying to them all, "if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and **follow Me.**"

**Luke 9:59** And He said to another, "**Follow Me.**" But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."

**Luke 18:22** When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me.**"

**John 1:43** The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "**Follow Me.**"

**John 10:27** "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they **follow Me**; **John 12:26** "if anyone serves Me, he must **follow Me**; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

**John 13:36** Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered; "Where I go, you cannot **follow Me** now; but you will follow later."

**John 21:19** Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "**Follow Me!**"

**John 21:22** Jesus said to him, "if I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You **follow Me!**"

## **28 And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him.**

- This quick response to the call of Jesus indicates that this had been percolating in the heart of Levi probably for some time. He felt convicted.
- He was ready. Money does not satisfy. As someone has said, "Money never made anyone rich."
- It was a lonely life. Nobody likes you. They all despise you.
- People are drawn to Christ because nothing else satisfies.
- Jesus is more important to Matthew than anyone or anything else in this world.
- Matthew said, "I am going to ditch it all."
- What did Matthew leave? 1. All he had achieved to get him into the present position. 2. All the money he had at his booth.

**Matthew 4:19** And He said to them, "**Follow Me**, and I will make you fishers of men."

**Matthew 8:22** But Jesus said to him, "**Follow Me**, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

**Matthew 9:9** 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.

**Matthew 16:24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow Me.**"

**Matthew 19:21** Jesus said to him, "if you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me.**"

**Mark 1:17** And Jesus said to them, "**Follow Me**, and I will make you become fishers of men."

**Mark 2:14** As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "**Follow Me!**" And he got up and followed Him.

**Mark 8:34** And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow Me.**"

**Mark 10:21** Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me.**"

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32 "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

"Matthew was now marching to the drum beat of a different drummer. He no longer listens to the drum beat of Rome or to the crescendo of coins in a bag. No, Matthew abandoned his lucrative job, his power, his authority, his prestige among other tax collectors and Roman officials, to march to the drum beat of Jesus Christ. Marching to the drum beat of a different drummer involves the identification of the proper value of material possessions compared to spiritual matters. Matthew saw the greater value in following Christ than making more money."

- Rod Mattoon

### **Mark 8:34-37**

34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

35 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?

37 "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

### **Luke 14:33**

33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

"He is no fool to give up what he cannot keep,  
to gain what he cannot lose."

- Jim Elliot

• **28 And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him.**

- The text seems to indicate he left everything in his "heart" before he even got up from his chair.
- It all starts in your mind and heart before it gets out into your actions.
- If it doesn't start there, it is just legalism.

**"left everything"** - Does this mean I need to physically give away all that I own?

- Maybe or maybe not. God does not want any competition for your life. He does not want to be competing with anything or anyone else for your allegiance and devotion to Him. He wants you in your mind and heart to "leave it all behind."
- Some things may have to go because you can't control it.
- Your life needs to demonstrate that you have "left it all" – look at your conversations, look at your check register, look at your day planner.
- When I was growing up, my family on Sunday afternoons . . .

"The people who soar the highest in the Lord presently and who will be rewarded in the kingdom eternally, are those who have left things behind."

### **I'd Rather Have Jesus**

1. I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold  
I'd rather be His than have riches untold  
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land  
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand

#### **Refrain**

**That to be the king of a vast domain or be held in sins dread  
sway  
I'd rather have Jesus than anything  
This world affords today**

2. I'd rather have Jesus than vain applause  
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause  
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame  
I'd rather be true to His holy name

3. He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom  
He's sweeter than honey from out of the comb  
He's all that my hungering spirit needs  
I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead,

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- Don't think for a moment that what you give up for Christ and leave behind diminishes your joy and happiness in life;
- First thing Matthew does is throw a big party. He is the "happiest man in the world, so let's invite the world to a party."
- Now his house belongs to God and is to be used for His glory. Use your assets.
- "I want you to meet Jesus."
- "I am a changed man with a new purpose in life because of Him."
- This is Matthew's way of doing "evangelistic outreach."
- He invites other tax collectors, these are probably some of his only friends.
- **"Other people"** - no doubt included robbers, murderers, drunkards, prostitutes, and other irreligious and ungodly people.

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- So here is Jesus hanging out with this group. He had no problem with being there at this "party for sinners".
- Imagine the conversations. These are rough people saying rough things.
- Question: But who is going to reach these people if believers don't?
- We seem to arrange our lives so that we are with non-believers as little as possible!
- We need to be insulated not isolated.
- However if you party or socialize with people for the purpose of uniting with them in their search for pleasure, then it is wrong. You need to draw the line in your life.
- On the other hand, don't be a legalist.

**30 The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?"**

- When the moralists (Pharisees and Scribes) get wind of this, the grumbling begins.
- They have entered into Phase 2: Interrogation – ask questions, raise objections.
- **"grumbling"** – γογγύζω – to complain, murmur, grumble. Synonyms include to croak, grouch, grouse, grunt, mutter, scold; compare, bellyache, crab, fuss, gripe, holler, squawk, whine; groan, moan, and to kick.
- Probably didn't want a confrontation with Jesus after the paralytic experience, so they confront the disciples.
- **Note:** The moralists have 2 classifications: 1. Tax collectors. 2. Sinners.
- These guys are the original "Moral Majority."
- "God is not looking for a moral majority but a holy minority."
- They are playing spiritual "king of the mountain."
- "What are you guys doing?" they ask.

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- This is biting sarcasm.
- Jesus defines 2 kinds of people in this verse: 1. Those who are well (or at least think they are). 2. Those who are sick.
- Moralism is the belief in self-righteousness. It believes that if you are a good, "righteous" person, you are in a totally different category, separated from all others.
- Moralism saves no one. If it did the moralists would be at the head of the pack. In fact it will condemn you right along with the most evil, wicked people on earth. In God's eyes, there is no difference between the policeman and the prostitute.
- The moralists, those who think they are well, are not asking, **"Is there a doctor in the house?"** They don't need one.
- It's like offering money to someone who is not poor, or giving a life preserver to someone who is not drowning.

- Most difficult people to treat for their sin-disease are the moralists, and that is why it is so deadly.
- In the Bible, society is not divided between the moral and the immoral nor is humanity divided between the good and the bad.
- An unbiblical view of moralism by the Church, will prevent the Church from evangelizing a moralist. Only 2 categories: 1. The saved. 2. The unsaved.
- You become a moralist (Pharisee or Scribe) if you see people as either moral or immoral.
- “If you were truly the Messiah, you wouldn’t socialize with this scum, with these lowlifes.”
- “These people need to clean themselves up like we did.”
- The problem with “self-cleaning” is that it is like washing with mud. The more you use it, the dirtier you get.
- It’s like someone today that says, “As soon as I can clean up my life and conquer some of my bad habits, I’m going to become a Christian.”
- That statement is just as crazy as the man who says he is going to the doctor as soon as he gets well.
- The Church isn’t a club. It’s a hospital.

“If you think you are good enough for Heaven,  
then you are not.”

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- Jesus is stating the purpose for why He came – to bring sinners (those who recognize they are sick and in need of a doctor) to repentance.
- It does not matter if you are a religious person, a separatist sitting in a monastery, a winner of the Nobel peace prize, the inventor of a life-saving vaccine, or a philanthropist who has donated millions to the building of hospitals, schools, or houses for the poor. You may be a fine, moral, upright person, but in God’s eyes your standing before God is the same as the most depraved, evil, wicked person that has walked the face of the earth.
- This is why the moralists hated Jesus. He blew up and destroyed their system.

“The kingdom of God is for the spiritually sick who want to be healed, the spiritually corrupt who want to be cleansed, the spiritually poor who want to be rich, the spiritually hungry who want to be fed, the spiritually dead who want to be made alive. It is for ungodly outcasts who long to become God’s own beloved children.”

Are you sick?  
or  
Are you well?