

Hangin' with the Unclean

Mark 2:13-17

The Lord Jesus came into the world to be a physician as well as a teacher. He knew the necessities of human nature. He saw us all sick of a mortal disease, stricken with the plague of sin, and dying daily. He pitied us and came down to bring divine medicine for our relief. He came to give health and cure the dying, to heal the brokenhearted, and to offer strength to the weak. No sin-sick soul is too far gone for Him. It is His glory to heal and restore to life the most desperate cases. For unfailing skill, for unwearied tenderness, for long experience of man's spiritual ailments, the Great Physician of souls stands alone. There is none like him." J.C. Ryle

- I. The calling we received to be followers of Christ had nothing to do with whether we were worthy to receive such a high honor. In fact, we were not. Not one of us can say that God saved me because I deserved it. In many ways, God's grace is a mystery, especially to those who have done some awful things. We know that it is his unmerited favor toward the undeserving sinner. That truth in and of itself should compels us to follow and obey him no matter the cost. Paul sums up this biblical truth beautifully in 1 Timothy 1. *15Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-of whom I am the worst. 16But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.*

Mark 2:13-14

"When a Jew entered the customs service he was regarded as an outcast from society: he was disqualified as a judge or a witness in a court session, we excommunicated from the synagogue, and in the eyes of the community his disgrace extended to his family." Lane

- II. Religious norms, i.e., manmade rules and regulations, often become the standard for what is considered right in the eyes of God. Consequently, their violation is seen as sin by those who live by them. Jesus had no problem breaking them since they were not from him but from the sinful heart of man. Instead, he chose to celebrate with those who had been set free by his grace despite how it was seen by the legalist law givers. Jesus was not only rejoicing with them, but he was also teaching them the value of being a grace giver instead of a law giver.

Mark 2:15-16

1 Timothy 1:14 *The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

"The original language tells us that these dinner quests were not just sitting, they were reclining. This was no average dinner. It was a feast and perhaps a celebration. Levi was the host and Jesus was the guest of honor, but other guests included the whole company of hated tax collectors associated with him and others whom the religious authorities branded as sinners." Guzik

- III. Not everyone sees their need for a Savior due to the god of this age, through religion and secularism, blinding the minds of unbelievers to their need for the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4). God breaks through their blindness using the testimony of true believers by offering them his grace, mercy, faith, love and patience as an expression of his heart toward them. Law givers don't understand this, but grace givers do because they understand how much they've been given.

Mark 2:17

James 2:1-4

1 Cor. 6:9-11

1 Timothy 1:12-16

Hosea 6:6 *For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.*