

## An Open Table To All Who Feel Undesirable

"After this He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And He said to him, 'Follow Me.' And leaving everything, he rose and followed Him. And Levi made Him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at His disciples, saying, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?' And Jesus answered them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'" **Luke 5:27-32 ESV**

- **Jesus sees potential and a future where others see problems and the past**
- **Jesus values relationship over reputation**
- **Jesus embraces everyone, and offers them forgiveness and full acceptance**
  - **Note: Everyone needs help, but Jesus will only help those who turn to Him for help**
- **Levi sets a great example for us: Introduce your friends to Jesus!**



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JUNE 24, 2018

Open To All Who  
Feel Undesirable

## A Contrast In Mealtimes

**NOW:**

**IN JESUS' DAY:**



*Next Week...*  
Open To All Who Feel Unforgivable



This Study Guide is designed to help you apply Sunday's message. Join one of our message-based Community Groups to do this study together. Visit the Groups table after service to find a group!

**LESSON AIM: The aim of this lesson is to explain that no one is exempt from receiving God's love and forgiveness.**

BELONG in God's family:

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**CHECK IN:** (optional) Let's briefly share with each other how we've been doing this week.

**OPENING PRAYER**

**ICEBREAKER:** How do you feel when someone looks down on you? How do you feel when someone looks up to you? How do you feel when someone looks straight across at you?

BECOME like Jesus:

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1. Read Luke 5:27-32. Jesus often used simple examples to help people understand what He was saying. The Parable of the Doctor who comes to heal the sick is one He told to teach truth to the religious leaders. Why do you think it was so hard for the religious leaders of the time to accept Jesus' message? Why is still hard for people to accept this message today?
2. Let's focus on Luke 5:31. What meaning does this statement have for us today?
3. In Luke 5:32, who was Jesus focusing His ministry on? What meaning does this have for us as we emulate His example?
4. As a tax collector, Matthew likely led a very wealthy life. Tax collectors were given permission by the Roman government to overcharge their fellow Jews for personal profit. When Jesus called Matthew, he left

behind this lucrative position to follow Jesus in poverty. What do you think inspired this change?

5. Who would you say represents "tax collectors and sinners" in our day? In what ways are these folks looked down upon and despised in our culture? Have you ever felt looked down upon or despised? What was that like for you?

BLESS others:

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The Pharisees and their scribes were also invited to the party. At one point they asked the disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with sinners?" If you had been there as one of Jesus' disciples, how would you have answered this question? How could you have used this opportunity to bless others, especially the tax collectors but also the Pharisees? What can you do to follow Christ's example more consciously this week?

BUILD God's kingdom:

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One of the first things Matthew did after following Jesus was to throw a big party and invite all his tax collector friends. Why did he want them to meet Jesus? He invested a lot of revenue and effort in putting on the party. What was he hoping the return would be? How was his enthusiasm helping to build the kingdom?

BELIEVE God and act in faith:

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Why do you think Jesus called Matthew in the first place? What was Matthew's response to Jesus request, "follow Me?" What did Matthew leave behind when he followed Jesus? What did each of us need to leave behind when we followed Jesus?

**PRAYER:** What challenge are you facing this week? How can our group pray and support you?

June 24, 2018



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