

a question on LOVE

Mark 2:15-17

SERMON SUMMARY...

Everyone loves to attend a good party. We love to celebrate, whether it be a birthday, anniversary or the accomplishment of a major milestone in our life. What may be surprising to most is the fact that Jesus also loved to celebrate. What was problematic in that time is not that he attended parties, but who Jesus decided to celebrate with.

In Mark 2, we see that Levi (Matthew), a tax-collector, was invited by Jesus to be His disciple. Upon deciding to follow Jesus, Levi throws a party to celebrate his conversion... to celebrate his new life. The guest list included Jesus and his disciples, plus all of Levi's 'notorious' sinful friends. This wasn't a problem for Jesus, but when the religious leaders crashed the party, their one question revealed just how dark the human heart can become. Jesus could have rebuked or criticized; instead He revealed his heart for them... really, His heart for humanity. That is - Jesus came to love ALL and invite ALL people to be part of His kingdom.

A FEW QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER...

1. When you first decided to follow Jesus, was there any type of celebration? How did you tell your friends and family about this new life that you had entered into?
2. Read Mark 2:15 – when Levi decided to follow Jesus he could not help but gather all his friends in order for them to meet Jesus. Levi did not say 'no' to his friends meeting Jesus because his assumption was 'my friends would love to meet the man who I'm now following.' Is there anyone in your life that you're saying 'no' for them? Why do we do this? What might it look like to begin saying 'yes' for them?
3. In the 1st century, meal sharing was significant as it symbolized something much deeper than a meal, it was an invitation to enter into friendship. What prevents us from opening our homes to those that we are seeking to reach with the good news of friendship with Jesus? How might we begin to 'redeem' meal sharing with people as a primary vehicle to evangelism?

4. Read Mark 2:16 – how was it possible that the religious leaders could ever look at anyone and declare them to be ‘scum?’ What happened to their hearts that they could view people through that lens? How often do we do the same thing to the Pharisees as they were doing to the people at Levi’s party? Why do we both rationalize and justify in our hearts thinking ‘they are scum’ for thinking someone else is ‘scum’?

5. Read Mark 2:17 – Jesus does not rebuke or even correct the Pharisees for their question, rather he simply reveals His mission of why He came. Do you believe that Jesus came for you? If no, what holds you back? Do you view yourself as healthy, or one who is sick in need of a doctor, as a sinner in need of a savior?

QUESTION FOR PERSONAL AND GROUP REFLECTION

What impact is God’s amazing grace having on you?

BIBLICAL TEXTS CITED...

“Later, Levi invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. (There were many people of this kind among Jesus’ followers.) But when the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with tax collectors and other sinners, they asked his disciples, “Why does he eat with such scum?” When Jesus heard this, he told them, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.” Mark 2:15-17 (NLT)

“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’” Luke 7:34 (NIV)

SERMON ONLINE...

www.genesisthejourney.com/sermon/a-question-on-love/