

TITLE AND NUMBER: 136. Follow me



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Matthew 9:9-13

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill. But go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'

LOOKING FURTHER: Psalm 139:13-16

What does this Bible passage tell us?

After healing a paralysed man (Matthew 9:1-8), Jesus left the house and came across Matthew, a tax collector, and said to him, 'Follow me'. Clearly, Jesus was on a mission. He had no need to seek the approval of others but instead saw the potential in Matthew. Jesus called, Matthew obeyed and there began an adventure that would change Matthew's life for ever. He became the unexpected host to Jesus along with many other tax collectors and the disciples.

The Pharisees immediately began to criticise Jesus, showing their judgemental attitude towards others. His response was a statement, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor but those who are ill' (v12b). He challenged them to explain the writing of Hosea 'I desire mercy not sacrifice' (Hosea 6:6). The Pharisees followed the religious law for their own wellbeing but had no love or mercy for the people that they considered to be below their status.

The priority of Jesus is always to meet people where they are, not only to deliver them from their physical pain but to meet their spiritual need too. He knows everyone's need. We have a God who cares and desires that people everywhere follow Him, turn from their sinful ways, know forgiveness, find peace and immediately have the promise of a new way of life. There's even more - life for eternity too!

Whatever our situation, wherever we are, Jesus has come to change our lives for ever. The question to us all is – will we let Him?

Reflections:

- If you think that others may consider you to be unimportant, be assured that God never does. He created you for His purpose; ask Him to show what His purpose is for you.
- Never underestimate your potential when you follow the plan Jesus has for you. Are you ready to embark on your biggest adventure yet? If you are unsure, ask God to send His Holy Spirit to encourage you.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

