

Abide in Me

John 15:4
*Bible studies for disciples
who make disciples*



Volume 10 - Number 20

The Week of March 30, 2025

Come and Follow
The Calling of Matthew
Matthew 9:9-13

In this week's passage, Jesus sees Matthew, a tax collector, and extends a surprising call that would change his life forever. Despised by his fellow Jews as a traitor, Matthew seems an unlikely candidate for such an invitation. Yet, Jesus called him to follow, showing that God's grace is available to even the most unlikely person. Matthew's decision to leave his tax booth behind illustrates a radical shift—a sudden change from his old life. He walks away from his livelihood, his security, and his former way of life to follow Jesus. In this moment, Matthew's conversion demonstrates the transformative power of Christ to change lives.

In gratitude for Jesus' gracious call, Matthew hosted a banquet for Jesus and His disciples. Matthew invited all his friends—fellow tax collectors and sinners—to the feast. Jesus reclined with Matthew and his friends and ate a meal with them. The fact that Jesus participated in such a scandalous celebration outraged the self-righteous Pharisees, who questioned the disciples as to why Jesus would associate with such people.

In response Jesus answered, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." (Matt. 9:12) Jesus revealed His heart for the lost, the broken, and the sinful. In His reply, we see our Savior's compassion. Jesus explained to the Pharisees that He didn't come to call the self-righteous; He came to call those who know they are broken people in need of God's forgiveness and salvation.

This passage shows us that Jesus' mission was to bring healing to the spiritually broken, and He calls us to join Him in that mission by showing compassion, mercy, kindness, and love to the "sick" and hurting world around us.

TEXT: Matthew 9:13

⁹ As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. ¹⁰ And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples.

¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

SUMMARIZE IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES WHAT THIS PASSAGE IS ABOUT: *(What is the writer's main theme and what is the writer saying about it?)*

INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What was the cultural and social significance of Matthew being a tax collector in Jesus' time? How might this have shaped people's perception of him?
2. What does Jesus' surprising call to Matthew ("Follow Me") reveal about the nature of grace and God's calling?
3. How does Matthew's sudden response to Jesus—"he rose and followed Him"—contrast with how we might expect someone to react to such an unexpected invitation?
4. Can you think of a time when you experienced a "sudden change" in your walk with Christ? Have you experienced a transformation in your heart since becoming a follower of Christ? How did that impact your life and your priorities?
5. Why do you think Jesus chose to dine with tax collectors and sinners?
6. Why did the Pharisees find it scandalous for Jesus to dine with tax collectors and sinners? What was so shocking about this act in the cultural and religious context of the time?

