

## Evangelism 3 - Loving our neighbour: Sermon Guide

1. Do you think today it means something to share a meal with someone else?
2. Have we lost the significance of this or is it still special?
3. How did you become friends with the people you are friends with?
4. What brought you to this group? How did you get connected? Do you consider this group a group of friends?

Read Mark 2:13-17

5. If you spend time with spiritually or morally unhealthy people, is that contagious? Does it rub off on you?
6. What was Jesus teaching? Pre-resurrection, what would the good news message be? What would their view of the kingdom be? What would Jesus have said about the kingdom of God?
7. \*How did the Romans collect taxes?
8. \*What would the other Jewish people think of Levi? What would be a modern day equivalent (if there is one) to a tax collector?
9. \*What would it be like to befriend the friendless? To dine with the outcast? To attend a party with people who are completely opposite of you in almost every way?
10. Are there people in your life now that others consider unsavoury? How do you deal with the criticism of who your friends are and where you spend your time?
11. \*Given the two extremes of being alienated from Christian community to living solely in a Christian bubble, which one are you more susceptible to? Do you need to reach a better balance? How can you better live in biblical community OR create bridges to nonbelievers?
12. Jesus was unique as a Rabbi, because He called people to follow Him rather than have them request permission to follow. What are the implications for us? Does that create a sense of duty in your calling?
13. \*Why is Levi hosting a party for Jesus? What is his hope? What would this look like today?
14. Does this group have the capability of hosting a “Matthew Party” for our neighbourhood? For our colleagues? What would it take to pull something like this off?
16. \*How can you further the Gospel without manipulating people or seeing them as projects? Is this a danger for you?
17. How does 1 Corinthians 15:33 speak into our discussion about inviting sinners to dinner and welcoming the outcast into our company? What is the right thing to do?
18. \*Read Romans 12:21. How can we overcome the evil that is all around us? How can this group help? When you read this verse, do you take a militant, no holds barred approach, or is the intent more of overcoming evil with kindness,

compassion, and love?

Read Romans 10:13-15 and discuss these questions.

19. If the Gospel is for sinners, how will they ever hear Jesus' call and respond to His call, if I don't have dinner with them? If I don't talk to them; if I don't get to know them; if I don't take an interest in their lives...how will they ever hear my call and respond to my call? How will they ever hear the Good News of this Kingdom where they can finally become what they were created to be...if I don't hang out with them?

20. What is this group's responsibility in taking the Gospel to others? How will we do it?

21. Are we a Jesus-like church? Is our message the same as his was? Do we get criticised by religious-types—like Jesus got criticised? Do we relate to our community the same as Jesus related to his community? Are we here for sinners? Do people like the kind of people around Levi's table? Non-religious, secular people? As a church, are we sending the message that we honestly love and care for them and are here for them?

22. Am I living a Jesus-like life? "Am I involved in real relationships with people who aren't Christians?" Younger-brother types. Levi's dinner table types?

24. Do we need to repent of the attitude that whole-hearted involvement doesn't mean moral compromise?

25. Jesus chose Levi (Matthew) a tax collector and Simeon an anti-Roman, political extremist to both be His followers. What does that tell you about the kingdom of God? What does that tell you about how the church should be? Are you helping to create an environment where people of different viewpoints are welcome?

Key Words and Further Study: TAXES- Owning a tax collector's booth was like owning a franchise—like owning a Burger King franchise. So the Romans divided their territory up into regions, and each region had a tax collector's booth. And they would auction off the tax collecting franchise to the highest bidder. And if you acquired the franchise, Rome would make it clear how much tax revenue they expected from you each year: here's what you will owe us. And here's the thing: anything you collected beyond that was yours to keep. And then Rome would supply the soldiers to make sure people didn't try to wiggle out of paying their taxes. Josephus on Pharisees: "The Pharisees are a body of Jews with the reputation of excelling the rest of their nation in the observances of religion, and as exact exponents of the laws." In other words, the Pharisees were looked up to, and revered, and respected, as the most devout, religious members of society. They were very nationalistic in their love for Israel.