

Re.Mark.Able Study  
Week 8, Day 1

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your many blessings. Please be with me today as I dig deeper into Your Word. Help me to hear the message You have for me and to apply it to my life and grow closer to You.

As you read these verses, answer the following questions and then compare them with those that follow.

Who is in the text?  
What is happening in the text?  
When does the story take place?  
Where does the story take place?  
Why is this story in the Bible?  
How does this story relate to me and my life?

**Mark 2:13-17 (NKJV)**

**13** Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. **14** As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

**15** Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him.

**16** And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

**17** When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

Who: Jesus

Levi, who is also known as Matthew and one of the twelve disciples, (I will refer to him as Matthew in this study since that name is the most familiar to us.)

Alphaeus, Levi's father

Tax collectors

Sinners

Disciples

Scribes and Pharisees

What: Jesus is calling Matthew, a known sinner, into His inner circle. Jesus then joins Matthew and his co-workers and friends at a banquet.

When: 28 A.D.

Where: **"He went out again by the seaside"** (v. 13a). Mark 2:1 specifies Capernaum as the location of the healing of the paralytic (2:1-12), the story immediately prior to our Gospel lesson—so it is likely that this visit to the seaside is in or near Capernaum. Capernaum is at the north edge of the Sea of Galilee, is Jesus' home (Matthew 4:13; 9:1), is located in the region ruled by Herod Antipas, and has one or more toll booths where people coming into Galilee from Herod Philip's territory or the Decapolis would pay a toll. It is at such a tollbooth that Jesus encounters Levi, a tax collector, at his post. <sup>1</sup>

Why: Jesus is showing us that even those we consider to be the 'worst of the worst' can be saved and used for His mission. He is also showing that once we are saved we are called to seek those who are in need of salvation and to be in relation with them so that they may see Him through us.

How: (This answer should be personal to each individual.)

Levi, later renamed Matthew, was a tax collector. In these times, tax collectors were considered some of the worst sinners possible. Levi was a Jew working for the Romans. He was hired to collect the taxes and fees of a specific territory. The tax collectors collected money for the government but also needed to collect additional money to provide for their income. Many of the tax collectors charged fees way beyond what was reasonable. We are not told that Levi was dishonest but just being a tax collector who worked for the Romans made him someone disliked by his fellow Jews.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me unconditionally and showing me that You died for everyone and You want to be in relationship with even the 'biggest of sinners.'

Re.Mark.Able Study  
Week 8, Day 2

Prayer: Lord, I thank You for calling me to follow You just as you did Matthew. Help to go wherever You lead me and to reach people for You. Teach me today what You would have me to understand.

**Mark 2:14** .....*"Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.*

Let's take a look at how significant Matthew's decision was. Matthew immediately got up and followed Jesus. As a tax collector he would have been able to afford whatever earthly luxuries he desired. He immediately agreed to a total lifestyle change. Matthew went from eating whatever he desired to not knowing how he was going to eat each day. He went from a lavish home to not knowing where he would lay his head each night. He went from being in control of every decision to following any given command. Basically, he went from being in total control of this life to total surrender to Jesus.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/mark-213-22>

Levi also went from the protection of the Roman army to follow a man who the Roman army was keeping a close eye on. Jesus was challenging the Roman way and beliefs and the were not happy about it.

Levi's job as a tax collector also provided him with political connections. He knew people and could find favor with the Roman leaders who employed him.

Lastly, Levi's choice to follow Jesus meant leaving his co-workers, friends, and family.

Has God asked you to leave anything behind to follow Him? Take a moment to think about how that has affected your walk with Him in a positive way.

Have you held on to something He has asked you to leave behind? How is that affecting your walk with Him?

Matthew not only obeyed Jesus' command but threw Jesus a party! Matthew had a banquet for Jesus, the disciples, sinners, co-workers, and of course, the pharisees. How cool is that! Matthew left his old life behind and formed a new inner circle of friends but he did not forget his former circles. He knew they needed Jesus and wanted to show them a better way of living. He understood their need for a Savior and invited them to celebrate with him and the One who could give them freedom as well. Matthew shows us that Jesus calls us to a new life in Him but also to help lead unbelievers in our lives to Him. There is a difference between Matthew's inner circle and his associates. We need an inner circle of believers to help us grow and mature as Christians. We also need to minister to those who are in our lives who need Jesus. This does not give us an excuse to behave as sinners but to be an example to those in our lives who need Jesus.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be more like Matthew. I want to follow You no matter how hard that might be. Search me Oh, Lord and reveal in me what you would have me to give up in order to fully follow You.

Re.Mark.Able Study  
Week 8, Day 3

Prayer: Lord, thank You for sending Your Son to die on the cross so that I may have eternal life and that we do not have such strict laws to follow today. Please be with me today as I learn more about Your word and how to apply it to my life.

**Mark 2:15 (NKJV)** *While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.*

For the Jews, this situation was troubling on several levels. Read the verses below to get an idea of the laws that were to be followed.

**Leviticus 15:7 (NIV)**

**7** *"Whoever touches the man who has a discharge must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be unclean till evening.*

**Numbers 19:22 (NIV)**

**22** *Anything that an unclean person touches becomes unclean, and anyone who touches it becomes unclean till evening."*

Now, let's apply the above to Matthew and his people! The tax collectors were not only known for dishonesty but for being ritually unclean. Their job was to collect the taxes and fees from ALL people. This meant daily contact with gentiles who were considered unclean. The law said that if anyone touched anything that an unclean person touched, they were unclean as well. That meant that if Matthew came into contact with an unclean person early in the day and then continued to take taxes throughout the day, many others became unclean as a result of simply following the Roman mandates. It was for this reason that Jews would not take change from the tax collectors. They would not take the chance of touching the tax collector who was likely unclean. To further complicate things, the Jew would not take change that was laid before him because if the tax collector touched the money that an unclean person gave him, the tax collector and now the money was unclean. AND, if the person became unclean, his or her garments were also unclean, so if a Jew's garment touch the garment of an unclean person, he was now unclean as well! No wonder the Jews despised the tax collectors! It would have been a feat just to get away from the encounter and remain clean!

Jesus actually had the audacity to attend a banquet not only given by an unclean person but attended by a large number of unclean people. Another thought, at a banquet you have food and wine. If the dishes and eating utensils were not clean, everyone who ate or drank anything at the banquet was unclean.

Jesus made it a habit to hang out with those who were outcasts of society. He was claiming to be the Son of God but was breaking many of the rules the Jews believed were mandated from God. How confusing this must have been for so many. Have you ever been told something was 'of God' or in the Word of God but just did not sit right with you? What did you do as a result? Hopefully each time that happens we seek the answers from the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for never giving up on me. Thank You for seeking me out when I was lost and in need of You in my life. Please help me to never stop seeking You and a true relationship with You.

Re.Mark.Able Study  
Week 8, Day 4

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank You for another opportunity to study Your word and to draw closer to You. Help me learn from this Re.Mark.Able story and to apply it to my life.

**Mark 2:16** *When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"*

Hopefully after yesterday's study you have realized that the Jewish laws were nearly impossible to carry out as written. However, that did not stop the Pharisees from trying.

Jesus disturbed the Pharisees for several reasons:

- 1) Their authority was being challenged. They were supposed to be the one enforcing the laws but here was Jesus breaking one at every turn and then proclaiming to be the Messiah.
- 2) Their religious training was being questioned.
- 3) Their interpretation of the law was being questioned.
- 4) Their preconceived idea of the coming Messiah was not matching the One they were encountering.

I find it interesting in this verse that the Pharisees did not ask Jesus why He was participating in this event but instead they ask the disciples.

Jesus was not concerned with the unclean dishes, utensils, and hands, He was there to minister to the unclean hearts that they may become clean through a relationship with Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for not giving up on me. Thank You for pursuing me daily and being the Light of the world. Help me to show Your light to others that they may know You.

Re.Mark.Able Study

Week 8, Day 5

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am a sinner in need of a Savior. I need you each day, all day. Thank You for never leaving my side even when I ignore you and stop listening for Your voice in my life.

**Mak 2:17** *On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

We are all sinners. The verse above does not say that Jesus came to call certain sinners. Jesus came to call all sinners unto him. Is there someone in your life who in the past you have thought of as too far gone to be saved? Do you feel like you are too damaged for God to save?

Please spend some time today reading the verses below and ask that the Holy Spirit speak to you and to show you His unending love and desire for a relationship with you. He wants you to follow Him and to walk in His ways as He has a plan for each and every one of us. Ask Him to show you His will for Your life.

**1 Timothy 1:12-17 (NIV)**

**12** *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. **13** Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. **14** The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

**15** *Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. **16** But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. **17** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

**1 John 1:8-10 (NIV)**

**8** *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all*

*unrighteousness. **10** If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.*

**Luke 19:9-10 (NIV)**

**9** *Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."*

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for creating me in Your image making me for a specific purpose.