

Jesus, True Friend of Sinners

2024.06.09 Morning Sermon in Matthew 9:9–13

⁹As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.

¹⁰Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means: *‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’* For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

Main idea: Jesus came to be our righteousness and to give us a repentance that we could never give ourselves.

Introduction: v2–9 introduce v10–13 and are pulled forward chronologically for the sake of the connection in setting and theme. Loving sinners would mean not celebrating “pride month” but “humiliation month.” You need forgiveness and repentance. In calling you to repentance, Jesus, speaks love to you! And He loves even pharisaical sinners!

1. **Jesus, the Friend of Sinners** (v9–10)

1. Called a tax collector to be His follower, v9.
 1. They were accustomed to collecting more than appointed (cf. Lk 3:12–13), and they associated with other moral outcasts. Now Jesus calls Matthew to be associated with Him!
 2. Not just an invitation, but an effectual call. This call had the power in it to give repentance.
 1. No protestation like in 8:21.
 2. The difference between John and Jesus from 3:7–11.
 3. His call has power to give you repentance. Repent!
2. Welcomed other sinners to repent and follow Him (cf. Mk 2:15).
 1. Matthew confident of Jesus’s welcome to them (cf. Lk 5:29) because of his own welcome
 2. Jesus still welcomes sinners to repent and follow Him—He welcomes you! Are you confident of His welcome to you? Are you confident of His welcome to others whom you bring to Him to see them effectually called by Him?

2. **Jesus, the Hope of Sinners** (v11–12)

1. Pharisees’ subtle implication: they thought they were worthy of Jesus’s presence, v11.
 1. They’re genuinely curious because they’re truly blind. The answer to the question would have been obvious if they knew themselves to be sinners.

2. They're mistaken about themselves, thinking they are worthy of fellowship with Jesus
 3. They're mistaken about how disciples came to be disciples
 4. Worst of all, they're mistaken about Jesus Himself. No one is worthy. Only Jesus Himself can be their worthiness to be with Him.
2. Jesus's subtle implication: only sinners can be saved, v12.
 1. If you don't think you still need healing from Jesus, you're still condemned.
 2. Even after we have repented, come to Him, followed Him, we still need healing!
3. **Jesus, the Righteousness of Sinners** (v13)
 1. Jesus's lesson for them from Hosea 6:6—our repenting isn't good enough. We, too, know how fickle we are!
 2. Jesus's lesson for us from Hosea 6:6—Jesus is our kessed before God, as well as producing it in us.
 3. There is that initial, once for all, repentance unto life (that change of nature), just as there is that initial saving faith (that being united to Christ by believing upon Him). But there is also that ongoing turning from sin to Christ and that ongoing depending upon Christ.
 1. The whole Christian life is a life of repenting and believing.
 2. Those who are experiencing this do not look down upon repentant sinners for what they were in themselves, but hope and rejoice with them over what they are in Christ and will be in Christ.

Conclusion: Jesus welcomes you to hope in Him to be your righteousness, and to grow unto steadfast love to God.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew 9 verses 9 through 13. These are God's words. As Jesus passed on from there. He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And he said to him, follow me. So he arose And followed him. Now, it happened as Jesus. Sat at the table in the house.

That behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with him. And his disciples. Oh, and the Pharisees saw it. They said to his disciples. Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners? When Jesus heard that he said to them, Those who are well, have no need of a physician.

But those who are sick. But go and learn what this means. I desire mercy and not sacrifice. Fry did not come to call the righteous. But Sinners. To repentance. Amen, that sends this reading

of God's inspired and in Aaron twerked. We Rejoice as we look to him to bless the preaching of it as he has promised to do.

And as we have prayed that he would do, Please be seated.

In all three places where the Holy Spirit records, This incident for us, it is tied to the The forgiving of the paralytic. Which I hope after hearing that preached last week, we will always think of it first, and foremost, as the forgiving of the paralytic, and only secondarily is the hearing of the paralytic, but tied to the forgiving of the paralytic Upon.

Which leaving from there. Upon which the Lord Jesus had called Matthew or Levi. As Luke calls him. Uh, and Uh, Luke actually tells us That it is Matthew's house where verse 10. It makes it sound like it happens. Immediately upon his calling Matthew. If we take all of the Gospel accounts together, verses 2, through 9, actually have occurred much earlier in Jesus's Ministry.

Then verse 1 and verse 10. But it is particularly for introducing this incident. Uh, in which Jesus is at this great feast. At Matthew's house at Levi's house. Uh, that verses 2 through 9 are pulled forward. And we can see the connection between verse 9 and verse 10. If we look at the other gospel accounts, The Lord used.

Genuine men by genuine Grace and so we're not surprised for instance, when Mark doesn't. Identify himself in his gospel and We're not surprised that, whereas, Luke tells us that That Matthew gave a great Feast for Jesus. Matthew doesn't tell us that it was a great feast. Matthew doesn't tell us that he was the one who gave the Feast for Jesus.

There's some humility there but it does, therefore require a little extra work on our part. To put two and two together as it were. And verse 10. Happens much later. And so verse 10 is reminding us that the reception that Jesus had previously gotten by the Pharisees when he When he had forgiven the paralytic and they had blessed said this man blasphemes and so there was a rejection of him there and the rejection that he had gotten just recently.

Now, when he was on the other side of the lake by Garris and the land gargis and the land of the garrisones, And they would rather. That. People stay demon-possessed than have Jesus around. Has so disrupted things. And so the trip across the lake ends up being this short one and he has come back.

And now, Uh, Matthew takes the opportunity of their return. To give Jesus a great feast. But it's a great feast. In which? Uh, Matthew has invited especially the tax collectors and sinners who if you look at Mark's account it tells us we're with him. And following. Because Jesus is here to give forgiveness.

He's here to give forgiveness to paralytics who need forgiveness more than they need their legs to work again. He's here to give forgiveness to tax collectors and sinners. Because as everybody knows. They need forgiveness. He's here to forgive forgiveness to Pharisees. Because as they need to learn to know.

They need. Forgiveness. Jesus. Loves. Sinners. To call them to repentance. To call them to forgiveness. To give them a right view of themselves. As. Not just sick at first but dead. And then even after we follow him, still sick, And continuing to need healing and even after we have had repentance unto life, still needing to live a life of continually repenting.

And so, the Lord Jesus. Is displayed as this savior? The god-man. Who alone can give repentance because it requires The work of his Spirit to give it. The water that that John his

cousin baptized with couldn't give it when the Pharisees came. You remember how he had responded to them?

You brood of vipers not you people who are so good that you don't need to repent like the tax collectors and sinners do. You brood of vipers bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And don't say we are children of Abraham. Don't revert to Your external formalized theology that were children of Abraham and there were promises made to Abraham, and if they had had the faith of Abraham, they would have been properly laying hold of the promises.

But their promises that needed to be carried out by The Sovereign power and work of God. The, the God. Turns Stones into children of Abraham for that is indeed as Ezekiel says what our hearts are. Apart from the grace of God stones. And so Pharisees. Need to if they have not yet, discovered That they have hearts of stone apart from Grace.

They need to see themselves as Stony-hearted. Sinners. Who need to be given repentance. Who need the work of God's spirit, who need Jesus, to be God himself. So that he can both atone for them and be their righteousness and to be the one who gives them. Spirit. Loving Sinners means exposing their sin to them.

And calling them to Faith in Jesus Christ. Denouncing to them. That, because Every one of them, every one of you. Need this repentance and this forgiveness. God himself. Became a man. And came. And lift, righteously and die atoningly. So great is your sin. That you are not worthy. To have fellowship with him.

To sit at table with him. Although, you will spend unending ages in his presence. It would either be as objects of the fury of his glory. Or as objects of the favor. Of his glory. And Jesus Christ Alone. Makes all of that difference. Loving, Sinners does not mean. Celebrating pride month.

It does not mean affirming people. In their sinfulness. So that they look down upon others in their arrogance. And assume that Jesus. Uh, would eat with themselves. Because obviously, they are worth. But these others, he would not eat with. Because they are sinners and make no mistake. Those who hatefully.

Celebrate pride month. Heard in Christ. Hating the souls. Of the Sooners whom they affirm. They do arrogantly look down. Upon those with whom they disagree. And I think Jesus would not spend time with Pharisees like they are. They cannot even hear. The pharisaical tone. The parasitical character. And their perversion calling evil.

Good and good evil. So loving Sinners is not celebrating pride month. If we were really to make a month of loving, any type of sinner, well it would be humiliation month. It would be falling before God. And this is for all of our sins, not just that particular sin of perversion.

Given some help to you. Um, tomorrow's devotional since Elder Mangam and I are going to be at the Synod and we don't have a midweek sermon to prepare for. The Monday devotional this week. Is from Romans 1 for your help in that. But for all of our sins, We should be humiliated about our sins.

We should be intolerant of our sins. We should be grateful that God, the son is a friend of Sinners. Not a friend. Winks, at our sin and tolerates, our sin, and celebrates our sin. As if that is what Grace does. But one who calls us to repentance. And calls us not just externally with his words.

But effectually. With the effect of his words. In our hearts you need forgiveness and repentance. And Jesus loves you. By giving you now an external call the sound of the Gospel

being preached. Calling you to turn from your sins. And be changed and to trust in him. And to walk with him.

To love and Obey him. Jesus speaks love to you. And if you find that, you have been pharisaical, As we get further into the text, he speaks love to you too. Do you not see that? He is loving these Pharisees? As he addresses them as he urges them to go and study the book of Hosea.

In order to get that text in chapter 6 and verse 6 that he quotes in verse 13 of our passage, To get it in its context and see how small or repenting is. And that Christ himself is the one who gives the true repentance who alone can be our righteousness.

And not only justifies Us by becoming our righteousness, but who will not? Stop his work. His love to you of giving you repentance until he has made you holy with his own Holiness. Love God. With a full reciprocation of God's love to you. And he will not stop doing that.

So, Now, and prepare. Prepare to be wounded. And prepare to be healed. By the Lord Jesus Christ. Is. Text proclaims him to. Proclaims him. First, as the friend of Sinners. In verses 9 and 10. And then, we'll consider secondarily Jesus as the Of Sinners. Verses 11 and 12. And then finally, Jesus.

The righteousness. Of Sinners. In verse 13. First Jesus says the friend of Sinners in this flashback in verse 9. Uh, to Matthew's call to his discipleship. We discover why and how it would come to be. In the current time in verses 10 through 13, that there are so many Tax Collectors and sinners.

At Matthew's house. This is not just. A point of that, Matthew would be willing to have asked them to come and we find in Luke Sorry we find in Mark chapter 2 verse 15 that there's been introduction to Jesus before. These former tax collectors and former Uh, Sinners not that they don't sin anymore, but it's not their identity anymore.

They're considered Tax Collectors and sinners by their culture, by by those who recognize what they used to be. But, Mark, 2 verse 15. Says, they were with him and they followed him. They were following Christ and whether they are following him in a converted way, the way that the paralytic and his friends from last week's, passage believed and Jesus responded to their faith by saying your sins are forgiving forgiven you or whether they followed him in the in the way of the masses or those who had heard, what Jesus had said and uh, and agreed with it, theologically and got caught up in the movement, uh, and admired him and enjoyed being with his people but not not being transformed, not being recreated, not being saved, which one of those it is, we don't know, it was probably different and different tax collectors case and in different uh, Sinners.

But if they had been invited by a Pharisee, Humanly speaking, it's much less likely that they would come. Than if they had been invited by. Levi. This man with the perfect Hebrew name. But who had been a Roman compromiser? An a tax collector for. Well, Jesus calls a tax collector.

To be his followers. Jesus passed on from there. In the flashback in verse nine, he saw a man named Matthew Sitting at the tax office. And he said to him, follow me. So, he arose Followed him. Now, we don't know if Matthew was that unicorn the one honest tax collector in all of Israel?

Uh, we do know. That. Tax collectors. Uh, we're coming to. John Jesus's cousin to be baptized for repentance and they asked what the fruit in keeping with repentance that they were

supposed to do. Luke tells us in Luke chapter 3 and verses 12 and 13. That he said don't collect more than you're appointed to collect.

And that even in John's preaching, that was assumed to be a change in life for the tax collector. And so, Uh, the tax collectors were accustomed to collecting more. We've seen and considered already a little bit that there are moral outcasts. The compromisers with Rome, they make a good living by extorting a little extra Uh, when they come and And collect the taxes or when they receive the taxes.

They have the arm of the state behind them. And the tax collectors and the centers are lumped together here. Those who are so notorious for their sin. That they are identified with it. Now, Jesus calls one of these tax collectors. Not to be associated with the other tax collectors, not to be associated with the Sinners.

With with whom tax, collectors are ordinarily identified, but to be associated with him. To make Jesus Christ himself. His new identity, his new primary Association. So that every other task in his life, Becomes a subset of the task of following Jesus of belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ. That every other relationship in his life in Matthew's life, would now be a subset or under his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is what Jesus commands. When he says, follow me, we just had this not too long ago in chapter eight. You remember when the man said, well, please let me go bury my father first and then I will follow you. You bury your father as a follower of Christ.

You bring your sonship to your father, now, into under your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Following Jesus means. You are not a husband first or a wife first, or a father first or a son. First, you are Christ's first, you belong to the Living God, in Union with God, the son adopted by the father as applied to you and ministered to you by God, the Holy It is impossible that you become a follower of Jesus Christ.

A Believer in Jesus Christ are brought into relationship with the Triune God. And have something in your life. That is outside the scope. No longer under the purview. Of following the Lord Jesus Christ. And notice the difference. Matthew is sitting in the tax Booth, he's at work. Rome is going to be offended money is going to fail to be collected.

And he does not say first, let me wrap up business here. Was very abrupt. He said to him, follow me. So, he arose And followed him. Does that happen? We'll use how in the world. Does that happen? Well. It's precisely because it's not from this world. Is it? Jesus, did not.

Make a persuasive case about the existence of God. And all of the things that he has done and set. Jesus speaks with words that have power. When the Bible does come and make a persuasive case when the Bible does come and present Christ to you when the Lord, by the use of A profoundly weak and still sinful.

Partially Sanctified servant comes to you and announces. To you the teaching of the scripture about God and Christ and you and your sin, the hope in, that is not that the preacher is going to be accurate enough or persuasive. Enough, the hope in, that is not that you are going to hear thoughtfully enough and and putting things together well enough.

We do those things because we are instructed to and it is, right? And it honors, God, but we do those things, especially because these are the means that he has appointed by which he works and by which he saves So, I preach and you listen, because Jesus, when he calls a person When he addresses the Heart by his power, by his Spirit, using his word His word has in it, the power to give life the power to give That's how Matthew Hears, two words.

Follow me. And suddenly, Done. He gets up. And he follows him. Lord. Of course, in verse 9 adding the word arose. So that we wouldn't interpolate for ourselves some period of time. You know, Matthew went home and thought about it and you know, got another tax collector to take his place.

And You know, all of these things and then he And neither neither are must you. You follow Christ now. You're resolved now. Your whole life. Of your believing in Jesus Christ. And the repenting of all that is against him, all that is from your former life and you sort out the details as they come.

As a follower of Christ. It is nonsense to think. And don't deceive yourself with the idea. That you can get some things in order first that you can get yourself in order first. No, you are sick. You need a physician. You're actually dead. The. Uh, the first medical procedure.

Jesus spiritually works on any sinner is resurrection. And after that, Uh, it's all lesser and more, glorious things. And so Jesus calls with this effectual calling, that's, of course, the difference. Between his cousins. Uh, preaching repent for the Kingdom of Heaven as a hand. And then Jesus is preaching when he went into all Galilee it was the same sermon, wasn't it?

The same summary at least in chapter 3. Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven as a hand John isn't able to give the repentance. He baptizes with water. Jesus. Is able to give the repentance. He baptizes. With the Holy Spirit, many of you. All of you. Almost think maybe all of you.

Baptized with water. And we pray that all of you will come to be baptized with the Holy That you may have repentance and Faith. That you may have righteousness and forgiveness. That you may have God himself, his call has power to give it to you. Be transformed. Have your mind, transformed your nature changed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repent. Trust in him alone have him alone as your righteousness, have him alone, as the payment for your sin and for the rest of your life. And Eternity have him as your life and your strength and your goodness. Your, your ability to grow in Grace, your ability. To grow to be made.

Holy So that you may see the Lord. Jesus is a true friend. Of Sinners. And so, not only did he call this tax collector to be his follower? But, Matthew knew and Jesus. Worked had worked in him so that Jesus welcomed other Tax Collectors and sinners. To repent. And follow him.

Matthew is confident of Jesus's, welcome to them. He is the one who has given this feast, and they are We may properly infer that he is the one who has invited them. And so, Matthew is confident that Jesus will welcome them because Jesus has welcomed him. Jesus still welcomes Sinners to repent and follow him.

He welcomes you, whoever you are many of you know that you have been welcomed by Christ, you know that he has brought you into fellowship with himself. He has washed you from all your guilt. He will cleanse you from all remaining unrighteousness. You know, yourself to be a sinner.

Whom he called by the power of His word and gave you life and faith and salvation. So why is it that you don't think you'll do that with others? Now, maybe you don't. Uh, you don't consciously say that to yourself, you never would. You're too well, catechized you're too well, taught from the Bible.

Say, of course you can save anyone. But there are many people that, you know, That in your heart of hearts, you don't believe that they will come to the Lord Jesus Christ. There are those you have never told. About God, becoming man to be righteousness and atonement for Sinners.

There are Those whom you would never invite. To Hopewell. It's too long gets too, plain, it's way. Theological and too much viable. Well, do you think they're gonna be saved because they go somewhere? Where it's It's shorter and less serious, and less viable, and less Theology. Do you not know that Christ gives himself to us?

By his worship and by his word and the doctrine of his word. Applied to our minds and hearts by God, the Holy Spirit. You have been welcomed by Christ. You were not more savable. Than those people whom you have not brought and you have not invited and you have not urged to hear the words of God.

And just just come and listen. And see if God does not address your heart. See if Christ does not call you by his power and save you. He did it for me. I hope he will do it for you. Will you at least try it, the once. Not because you're hoping you can get them to try it but because you're hoping that the Christ who intends to save them when they come will also give them to desire to say yes.

It's Jesus, who is saving? And so we must shake off. Whether it's cowardice on the one hand, or and God have mercy on. Unbelief. On the other hand. And see the grace by which Jesus worked in Matthew. And know that it was Grace, which means We have the same Christ and The Same Spirit and the same Grace.

There's not something in Matthew. That made him able. To invite and That these other tax collectors and sinners would be welcome to Christ. No it was in Christ for Matthew. And it's in Christ for you, too. Jesus still welcomes Sinners to repent and follow him. He welcomes you. Maybe it's for you yourself that you need to hear this.

Maybe you come and you're on the outside. Spiritually, you blend in a little bit, you do just enough to Right to not stick out. Or maybe you. Participate very vigorously. But in either case you, you may still be someone who is not dealing with Christ. Yourself is not coming to him, you're you're not receiving his welcome to be his instead of your own To have his righteousness, be yours.

Maybe you're afraid that he'll welcome you. And you end up giving your whole life up. You'll become like one of these other fanatical people. Christ seems to be all that, they care about and all that they think about and and he shapes how they care or think about everything else.

Well, come and be one of those fanatical people And get saved. For, he is your creator. And he proclaims himself and offers himself to be your Redeemer. Do not think of the identity that you would have to give up, or the sin, that you would have to give up or the friends that you would have to give up.

Or the series that you are binge watching and, you know, if you come to Christ now, you'll never get to finish those last episodes. Some of you smile at that. These are real things in people's hearts and minds that keep them. From turning and trusting.

But you will spend eternity. In the presence. Of the Glorious. God. Either his glory expressing itself upon you in Fury. Because second Thessalonians, 1, 7 warns. Or you having been rid. Of all those things that were hindering, you Christ now not only having brought you in the last day to himself to not have only having brought you to Faith.

But in the last day, having cleansed you of all the the remains and inhibits so that you desire and Delight in God, like you should And you are given the fullness of the beholding of God forever. Whatever you must leave off. Come. But maybe it's not for you. That you need to hear this.

Maybe it is for others. Maybe it is for someone. That you should be confident. That Jesus is able effectually to call them. Jesus is able. To save them. Are you confident that he's still welcomes? Sinners, he's still a friend of Sinners. And Those whom you bring to him to his word, That he will save them.

That you will get to see them effectually called by him. Well, in the second place Jesus, the hope of Sinners. Verses 11 and 12. You see this primarily because there are sinners who are not hoping in him they're hoping in himself. And when the Pharisees saw it, Remember what the Apostle Paul said when he was talking about the the stuff that became refused to him.

Uh, that he counted as loss when he finally came to Christ. He says, as far as obedience to the law, a Pharisee, And you can hear the old Pharisee there, and you can hear He and you can hear that here. When the Pharisees saw it. Those who would say of themselves at this point, as far as obedience to the law Pharisee, not a tax collector, not a sinner.

But what do they have? What does the scripture tell us? They have What do you have? If you're, if you feel about your own moral righteousness, that you are better than others. Now, I'm not talking here about denying God's gracious work into you. I'm not talking here about. Failing to be grateful that he is, sanctifying you.

Which is ingratitude. You do not play the pseudo-reformed game of who can confess themselves to be worse today. Let us be grateful to God for his Mercy to us. And to share it and rejoice together over his merciful work in us and encourage one another. That he who has begun.

The work will continue and will complete the work. Not so that we become complacent and we still work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, but enabled to do so gladdened to do so, strengthened to do. So because it is he who works in us both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

So what he started, he will complete Philippians 2 and Philippians 1. But, If you or I look on other followers of Christ, That's what these Tax Collectors and sinners were at this point. According to Mark 2 verse 15. And we think that somehow, The place that we have come to in our growth or sanctification, Makes us more worthy.

Of The Fellowship of Christ. Than we have fallen into. A spiritual pride and a self-deception. That is extremely dangerous and may even indicate That we are not Christ's at all.

Notice the subtle implication. They don't say. To his disciples. Why is your teacher? Willing to have dinner with us. That's that's how the Christian feels. About the The Fellowship of God with him in Christ. How can it be that the almighty and ever blessed and Thrice? Holy God, who dwells in unapproachable light would have fellowship with me.

The answer because, He loves to and he wanted to that's that's the ultimate answer in the Bible, isn't it? It's the same as Deuteronomy 7 or God. Did not love you. Um, because you are greater than any other people, uh, and then there's an um, A phrase that intermits there, but it comes to the conclusion of the point.

He says he loves you because he loves you. And he swore to your fathers, He loves you. He decided to he promised to. That's why. And we should all be like that with him. Shouldn't we? Why does Jesus have fellowship with me? Because he was pleased to because he loved to because he gave himself in order to, he even humiliated himself to become a man in order to he, oh, he went to the cross and he suffered, not the not, just the, the shame and the mocking of men.

But even the fury of God, upon sin, that was my sin, but it was on him, uh, at that cross. He he did all of that. To have fellowship with me. And when we stop being amazed at his grace, we will stop being gracious to others. And we will ask questions, like, Why does your teacher eat?

With tax collectors and sinners. You know, it's Great Temptation in the question to the disciples. Jesus is merciful by answering instead of them. How you wish that the first Adam would have been. So, so merciful and wise and righteous and answered for his bride as well. The when the, when Satan came and said you can be like God knowing good and evil.

Of. But not even then at the beginning of the Temptation. As soon as Satan addressed his wife that Adam would have stepped in and said you stop right there. Mister You talk to the spiritual head. Instead of waiting there with her so that he could use the guinea pig to see the outcome, and she could not only eat, but give some to her husband who was with her.

Genesis 3 says but no the Lord Jesus hears this and there's a Temptation. Because when we talk to one another as if we are worthy, it invites, the Pharisees here are actually inviting the disciples. To think that they are worthy. Do you see that tension here? Why does your teacher?

You followers of the great teacher Jesus. You who he really should be spending time with you, who she really should break bread with and and have fellowship with Why is he eating with tax collectors and sinners when he should really just spend time? With the admirable worthy people like we are Oh, be careful of flattering.

Be careful of spiritual flattering. Those who want to speak to you. About how worthy and good you are. There's a very fine line between celebrating with you and thankfulness to God and amazement to Grace. And buttering you up.

Fattening you for Slaughter. With spiritual Pride. So the Pharisees gen subtle implication is, they're worthy of Jesus's presence. They're actually probably genuinely curious here. Their pride is so ingrained, they can't hear how wrong the question sounds. The answer to the question would have been obvious if they knew themselves?

Well, Or if they knew the disciples. Well, They're mistaken about themselves thinking that they're worthy of fellowship with Jesus. They're mistaken about how the disciples came to be disciples. You know, they perhaps are not privy to what we have in verse nine, knowing that it's by Christ's word by Christ's power, by Christ's effectual call and therefore this Grace that brings people into fellowship with Christ is open and offered to all All without exception.

Whatever it is that you think you have done? Which cannot disqualify you. If you would simply Turn and belief in the Lord, Jesus Christ. Worst of all, they're mistaken about Jesus himself. You know, the worst part of their thinking that they are worth. Is. That they have too high a view of their righteousness.

Is because they have too small of you. Of Jesus's, Holiness and glory. If someone, if a sinner of any kind could somehow have been worthy of him, he would not be God In the Flesh. He would not be one whose obedience is great enough to be counted. As our righteousness, he

would not be one whose sacrifice was Rich enough to absolve us of our guilt to take away our guilt.

And so it's the same mistake as when they said this man blasphemes. And as Mark adds to it, who can forgive sins, but God Alone That have failed to believe. That Jesus is God. And therefore, they are hoping. At least in some measure in themselves. Not in Christ. As their God.

Perhaps, you are here this afternoon now Perhaps you are here this afternoon. And, The glory of the fact that Jesus as God has gotten old to you. Oh, will you not consider him again? Who is the second person of the godhead? Who has brought you into a fellowship of which you are not worthy and could never be worthy.

The best thought you have ever had the warmest affection? The most difficult and correct Choice. The best righteousness that you have ever offered. Has been merely human, and not only that, but mixed with sin. It is not worthy of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet you have it, you have Fellowship with him.

If you are a believer in Christ, you have him himself, you have God.

The greatest mistake here is not about themselves or the disciples or the tax collectors and sinners. It's about Jesus. Now, Jesus answers in verse 12 and implies to them that Sinners are the only ones who can be saved when Jesus heard that he said to them. Those who are, well, have no need of a physician, but those who are sick, And as we prepare to come into verse 13, he's not just talking about that sickness, which is the spiritual death.

That state of being spiritually dead in which every one of us comes into the world. The reason you must be born again is because you are spiritually, still born. The first time. You are conceived spiritually dead because you sinned in Adam and you fell in at him and you died in Adam.

And all of your thoughts and all of your feelings and all of your actions your whole life long. Have expressed some of that death. Before you came to Faith in Jesus Christ, they all expressed that death. Entirely. There was no good in them at all, but after you have come to Jesus Christ, there is still that which remains from your former nature.

There is still that which remains from your old man. And so you still need healing, you're not dead anymore. You're alive in Christ. But you're still sinful and you need to be cleansed, you can hear that in first John chapter 1, can't you? We're, we have fellowship with him in whom, there is only light and no Darkness at all, and our new nature and our new way of life is light, and not Darkness.

And if we don't practice righteousness, if we're not walking in the life light, if we don't have a new nature, then, whatever other theology or moments of of decision or whatever else we have, if we don't have a new nature and walk in the light, we are not his But the same Apostle in the same book in the first chapter, then says, if we say that, we have no sin.

We lie. We call God a liar. We deceive ourselves. His truth is not in But if we confess our sins, he's says, we not, if you This is John, John. At least by appearances was definitely more mature in, in faith than many of the rest of the disciples and closer to Christ and more affectionate with More affectionate towards him and receiving of his affection and gentler and humbler and his character even as one of the younger disciples, and now he's an old man.

Has walked with the Lord. Been full of the Holy Spirit even anointed by the Holy Spirit for the work of an apostle for decades. And he's still saying if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just not only to forgive us our sins. But to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We're still sick. We still need healing. We still need cleansing. If you or I were in glory right now, we would shrink in horror at all the Holiness and how exposed we were. And all of the remaining sinful desires would appear to us and all their hideousness.

Why are those tax collectors, and sinners still with Jesus? Even after they had become followers. Even after they had repented or believed. Because they're still sick and they still need healing. And you and I are. And we love that. He's a good husband. And he patiently bathes his wife, his bride and every member of her.

Every part of her of which you are a part of. If you're a believer in Christ, He loved her, and he gave himself up for her. Not merely that she would be forgiven. But that by the washing of water with the word, Picture there in Ephesians 5 of Jesus.

The husband of the church, not just satisfied to have purchased her for marriage by his blood, but now preparing her for the wedding. Cleansing her with his word taking out every spot. Straightening her out, taking out every wrinkle making her so that she will be as she appears in.

In John's Vision, the revelation of Jesus Christ. We say the revelation of John, we've made a mistake. Read the first chapter, the revelation of Jesus Christ that John had and she comes down from Heaven appearing as a bride adorned for her husband. Adorned in a way. Exactly corresponding to him.

So that Adam in Genesis 2, says bone of my bone flesh, of My Flesh. Actually he says at first this at last or wow or something along that line born of my bone flesh of My Flesh. But when, when the bride appears at the last day at the wedding, supper of the Lamb, She will be born of his bone and Flesh of his flesh.

He calls her that even now, Ephesians 5 says, in an amazing, marital love the Lord. Jesus. Speaking about his church by the Spirit and the pen of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5, But when John sees her in the Revelation, She is a bride adorned for her husband corresponding to him.

Corresponding to the Lamb who sits on the throne how great will be her. Glory how perfect? How perfect? Will be her Holiness? You and I are not yet. The members of the body, the members of the bride that we will be on that day. And so, we still need healing and we still need cleansing.

And the only hope of those things is still the Lord Jesus Christ. And we come to him. And we get healing from him. Jesus, the hope of Sinners. And the hope of Sinners that he will be our righteousness. Not only the righteousness that has counted for us. So that the moment that you have believed in Christ, there is now no condemnation.

The moment you believe in Jesus. You are as just before God, you are as Justified, your standing is as righteous with God as it will be on that great day. In glory. But he also keeps working in us to make us righteous like himself. This is what we were predestined for.

We weren't predestined to be forgiven. I mean we were but that's not the aim that's not the end. The goal of it. What does Romans 8 say? Predestined. To be conformed to the image of his son. Or Ephesians 1, chose us in him that we might be holy and blameless in love.

And that's the Bible study that Jesus assigns these Pharisees. It says go and learn what this means. Very interesting phrasing, isn't it? It's not just. As it is written. I desire mercy and not sacrifice. It's not just. It has been set. Or you have heard it set, I desire Mercy and not sacrifice, go and learn what this means.

Is talking to Bible experts. The Pharisees and the scribes, there was a lot of overlap, they know their Bible. Well, They don't know. It's Isaiah 6 verse 6, because chapters and verses hadn't been added yet. But I know it's in Hosea and they know where it is in Jose, and they could probably some of them if they're scribes, see on the page, what, uh, you know, how far down in the scroll and what line and how far in What's Jesus saying?

He's saying you don't get the book of Hosea. Do you? You've copied it all these times. You've quoted it all these times. You still need to go and learn what it means.

Our time flies from us. But just a window into it. Wish that we had. Uh, been through the book of Hosea together so we could just make reference to it and appeal to you. Israel and Judah. Both are addressed in the book of Hosea, both called to repentance their idolatry and and they're living for themselves.

And for anything, that would give them the pleasure that they seek Including false religions and so forth. Described in the book of Hosea as adultery. As. As immorality against God as a husband. Uh and there's a lot that builds up to it, but you get to chapter six and finally Finally some of what the Lord has done seems to be taking effect.

Hosea 6 begins this way. Come let us return to Yahweh for he has torn but he will heal us. Has stricken but he will bind us up. You see it's it's very intentional. This, the first illustration. The, The Physician and and the sick, it's not the well who need the physician, but the sick, So, he's brought them.

In in Hosea at this point, he's brought them to the conclusion to the conviction that they need to be healed that they need to be bound up and After two days, he will revive us. On the third day, he will raise us up that we may live in his sight.

Let us know. Let us pursue the knowledge of Yahweh. His going forth is established. As the morning, he will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the Earth. Praise God for when Sinners are brought to a repentance like that. But notice what the Lord immediately does, how what his response is.

Oh Ephraim. What shall I do to you? Oh Judah. What shall I do to you for your faithfulness is like a morning cloud. And like the early, do it goes away. Therefore I have healed them by the prophets. I have slain them by the words of my mouth and your judgments are like light that goes forth for.

I desire Mercy and not sacrifice and the knowledge of God. More than burnt offerings. But like Adam. They have transgressed. The Covenant. There, they dealt treacherously with me. See what he's saying, conversion. Is not enough. Conversion makes you righteous with God but justification. Is not enough to enter Glory.

Without Holiness, you will not see the Lord, Jesus is no partial savior. And he does not give any partial salvation. You can't be unforgiven. You can't be unjustified. But neither can you remain as you are? You must be healed. You must be cleansed. You must be perfected and he will do it.

He came in order that he might do it. And so it's it's in response to their repenting. That he says, I desire. And the word is, Steadfast love, covenanted love a word that is sometimes used between men and men and sometimes used of men to God, but in the Old Testament is especially used of God's saving, redeeming Everlasting unthortable, love to men.

And he's saying, Don't stop. At a moment of repentance. At a moment of Which is like a vapor that burns off. Don't have. Have yourself. Momentary and light afflictions. Not momentary and light repentance. Because the Lord. Who has loved us. With his Covenant love. Is the one who will when he is done with us.

Have produced in us. Covenant. Love to him. Remember the sacrifices we've been through Leviticus together recently, sort of those sacrifices, these ascendings to God and drawings near to God, that really anticipated that in Christ, you would Ascend in Christ, you would draw near But the other thing, That he wants the thing that he wants, even more than the anticipations, the sacrifices were anticipations.

Is that you would come to love God. With all your heart. With all your soul. With all your mind. And with all your strength, And the whole Christian Life. The whole Christian Life is a repenting and believing. Yes. There is an initial once for all repentance unto life. The change of nature, That John preached and Jesus preached in chapter 3.

And there is that initial saving In which you are united to Jesus Christ forever and can never be severed from him. And there is no there now. No condemnation for you in Christ Jesus and there can never be any separation. Of you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

This wonderful bookends. Of Romans chapter 8. But the whole Christian life is a continued repenting and a continued believing. Until Those whom he had justified. He also glorified.

Those who are experiencing this. Do not think Jesus. Do not think they are worthy of Jesus's Fellowship. They do not look at other. Repentant, Sinners And look down upon them for what they had been in themselves. Why are? Why are there these people? In this church who used to be this way.

You know, some of them are irreparably scarred. Some of them are disfigured. And if the Lord saves them and brings them here, We must not look upon them. As less worthy of him. Why are these here? Shouldn't they have their own?

Wickedly polite way to put it. Those who are experiencing have experienced and are experiencing the grace of Christ Christ. Do not look up down upon other repentant, Sinners for what they used to be in themselves. But we hope and rejoice with them over what they are in Christ and what they will be in Christ just as we hope and rejoice for ourselves.

Over not just what Christ has made us. But, Of what we will be in him. When he is done in. When he has made us, not just righteous in himself. But to be righteous like himself. Jesus welcomes, you. To Hope in him. To be your righteousness. And he will work in, you both to Will and to work.

Until you having by that Grace, worked out your own salvation with fear and trembling Will have made been made to love him with steadfast love. Even as he has loved you. With steadfast love. And then, let's pray.

We thank you, whoever blessed God for proclaiming yourself to us. In your We praise You. Lord Jesus who welcome? Sinners. As our friend. Who are Our Hope because we do not have any

hope in ourselves. And who yourself are our righteousness? Not only counted for us but given to us.

And so keep we pray. Helping us by your spirit, making us more to be more like you. We pray, especially for those. Who have resolved various things in response to your word. That every right resolution before you, your spirit would come now and help us to keep And Grant that neither the effects upon our minds and things that we have been instructed or the effect effects upon our affections and how we have been warmed in love towards you or the effect upon our Wills.

In decisions and determinations and vows, we have made unto you. That none of these would fade quickly, but your spirit would continue. To bless to us. The sowing of your good seed. And make us to bear fruit, 30, and 60, and 100 fold grant that we ask in Christ's name, amen.