

Write down the six or seven key terms Jesus uses in his response to the Pharisees. (**Matthew 9 v. 12 – 13**) Why do you think he used these terms?

Was Jesus calling the Pharisees 'healthy' and 'righteous'? (Explain)

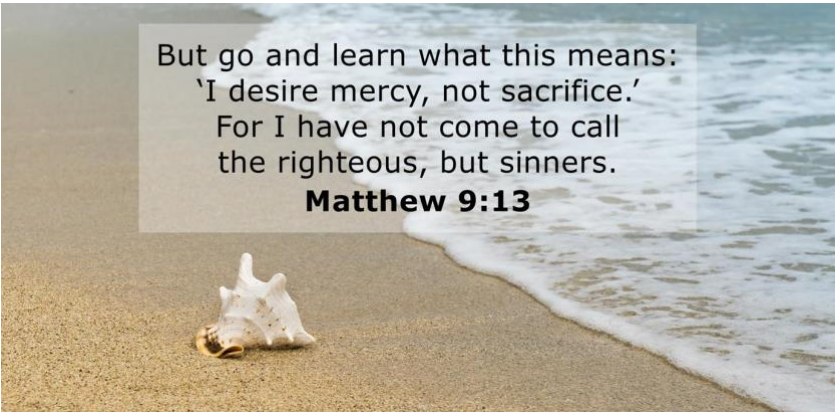
Do you think Matthew regretted his decision to leave his old life behind?

What might Jesus be asking you to leave behind in order to follow him more fully?

**Something to do
NOW OR LATER**

The church father Jerome called Matthew a man 'who changed from a tax – gatherer to an apostle'. He also says that Matthew was the first apostle in Judea to write a Gospel of Jesus Christ in Hebrew. Matthew's heart was for his own people, the Jews, and tradition says he preached Jesus to the Jews in Judea, Persia and perhaps Ethiopia. No reliable records survives of Matthew's death, but the earliest traditions say that he was burned at the stake for his faith.

Ask the Lord to help you see people around you not just as they are but as they can be when transformed by Christ's love.



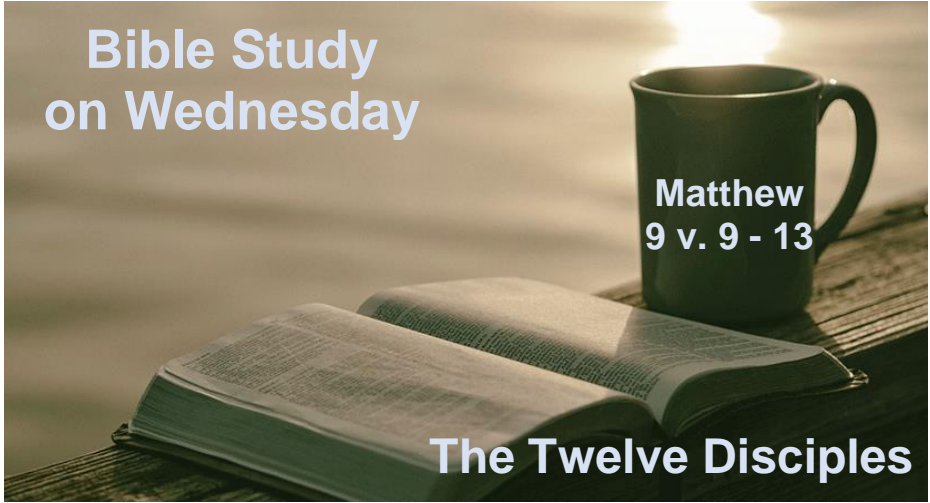
But go and learn what this means:
'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'
For I have not come to call
the righteous, but sinners.
Matthew 9:13

Salendine Nook Baptist Church

For the purposes of our Bible Studies we will be using Life Builder Study Series (Inter – Varsity Press). Our Theme for these studies is: **The Twelve Disciples** The studies were originally written by Douglas Connelly, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for home study as we seek to transitions between the church building and our homes during the next several weeks.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us. If you will be doing the studies from home, it is suggested that you do the study on a Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible, pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.
Hope that you enjoy it!

Pastor Ian



Bible Study on Wednesday

**Matthew
9 v. 9 - 13**

The Twelve Disciples

CONTEXT: Jesus had about three years to mould a dozen fearful and faithless men into the pillars of a worldwide movement. Despite this brief window, time spent with Jesus had a transforming effect on each of them; most would be inspired and emboldened to proclaim him as the Saviour against great opposition. Through these ten studies, we too can experience the deep change that only time in Jesus' presence can bring.

Some Thoughts To Help You While You Study

The purpose of the study is to see Jesus' concern for those on the edges of society and to make his concern part of our vision for reaching others.

It is highly unlikely that Jesus simply walked up out of the blue to Matthew and called him to follow. Most likely, Matthew had heard Jesus teach or had talked to some of Jesus' followers in Capernaum, like Peter or Andrew. However he heard, Matthew was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and he had already decided that when (and if) Jesus called him to follow him, he would go.

Including a tax collector might have brought criticism against Jesus from two directions: the religious people would certainly see this as a sign that Jesus was not a godly man, and even the general public would find it difficult to accept the inclusion of this hated tax collector.

Jesus would have been perfectly at ease in this setting, without participating in anything sinful. These were the people Jesus came to reach!

Jesus answers the Pharisees with a series of wise sayings that reveal the true nature of his mission. It is not healthy people who need a doctor's care, but those who are sick. The Pharisees may have taken this as a compliment until they thought about it more deeply. Jesus as a spiritual doctor had come to care for those who were willing to admit that they needed his help. Then Jesus quotes **Hosea 6 v. 6** and admonished these experts in the Scriptures to learn what that verse really meant. God does not simply want the outward motions of worship (sacrifice); God examines the heart for evidence of the Spirit's transformation (mercy). Finally, Jesus makes it personal: 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners'. Jesus came to call everyone to salvation and discipleship, but he will focus his efforts on the people who are open to his call, not on those who believe they have no need of him.

Jesus confronts these Pharisees very subtly through the use of irony.

In order to join Jesus and the other disciples, Matthew left the security of a well – paying job and the company of friends who accepted him. He also left his old damaged reputation behind and started new as a follower of Jesus. Matthew's passion was to reach his own people, the Jews, the very people who had regarded him with such hatred as a Tax Collector. Matthew's Gospel was written to grab the attention of a Jewish reader. Matthew quoted the Old Testament Scriptures more than the other three Gospel writers combined. The opening paragraph of his Gospel connects Jesus with the great names in Israel's past – Abraham and David. Matthew presents Jesus as Israel's true King, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

STUDY 3 – MATTHEW (Drawing In The Outcast)

Matthew was the most notorious sinner in Jesus' band! His occupation was collecting taxes for the hated Roman overlords. Tax collectors worked for Rome in oppressing and exploiting their own people. In Jesus' day, employees of the Roman Tax System were viewed as traitors, cheaters and thieves. They were the lowest of the low.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: *In your opinion, what are some less-than-respectable jobs for Christians to pursue? Have you ever thought that someone was so bad that they were beyond God's forgiveness? The apostle Paul called himself the 'worst of sinners' (1 Timothy 1 v. 6). Reflect on your own lost condition before Christ saved you.*

In **Mark 2 v. 14**, Matthew is called by his Jewish name, '**Levi son of Alphaeus**'. In **Luke 6 v. 15** and **Acts 1 v. 13** he is called Matthew. He is the author of the first Gospel in the New Testament, but he only mentions himself twice by name – in **Matthew 9** and in the list of the apostles in **Matthew 10 v. 3**. **Read Matthew 9 v. 9 - 13**

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

Which is most surprising to you about this encounter between Jesus and Matthew: that Jesus identifies with some unacceptable people, that Matthew throws a party, or that the religious leaders are upset?

Matthew undoubtedly had contact with Jesus before this day. He probably heard Jesus teach in Capernaum or had seen Jesus heal the sick. What does it tell you about Matthew's level of commitment to Jesus that he was prepared to leave his old life behind and follow Jesus when he called?

What criticism might Jesus have heard when he included a tax collector among his closest followers? What would Matthew's inclusion among Jesus' disciples communicate to those who thought they were too sinful to change?

What does it communicate to our culture when notorious sinners are transformed by Jesus and rise to places of leadership? What kind of accusations of our leaders should we be ready to address?

The first thing Matthew does as a follower of Jesus is throw a party. How would you describe Matthew's friends in today's setting?

Do you think Jesus was uncomfortable in that setting? (Explain) How would you feel and act as the guest of honour at this gathering?