

## ***Jesus, The Sinner's Friend***

***Matthew 9:9-13***

“You know, as soon as I can clean up my life and overcome most of my bad habits, I’m going to become a Christian.” How many times have you heard those words? Perhaps, at one time, you said those very words. It’s the wrong notion that Christianity is only for good people. Jesus said, that doctors are not for those who are well but for the sick (Matt. 9:12). God came for bad people, not good people (1Tim.1:15).

Matthew relates his own calling with the intention of presenting Jesus as the King, the Messiah of God who has power over the physical body, over the natural elements, over the demonic hosts, and over sin. By doing this, He is showing that His (spiritual) kingdom has come.

### **1. *Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the repentant sinner***

Matthew was a publican (tax collector). Tax collectors were greatly hated because they served Rome and the Jews considered them as traitors. They often charged more than the required tax from their fellow Jews, took bribes from the rich and they extorted from the middle class and the poor. Tax collectors were banned from synagogues. In the sight of society, they were politically, religiously and socially unacceptable; but not in the sight of Jesus. When Jesus called Matthew to follow Him, Matthew was converted (Luke 5:27). Jesus’ calling was an effectual calling to salvation (John 7:27-28). Scripture clearly says that there are none who seek after God until God first seeks after them (Rom. 3:10-11; John 6:44,65; 15:16). But Jesus came to call sinners to repentance (1 Thess. 1:9). True repentance is not just a change of mind with no resulting change of behavior.

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### **2. *Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the self-righteous***

Matthew threw a party and invited Jesus as his guest of honor. But the scribes and the Pharisees disdained it and rebuked the disciples for it (v. 11). In response Jesus said (v. 12) “*Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.*” This was a rebuke to the self-righteous, hypocritical attitude and lifestyle of the Pharisees (Matt. 6:2,55,16; 15:7; 16:3; 23:13-15,23-29). They believe that they don’t need to be saved because God is pleased with their own righteous performance in keeping the law. Though they know that no one is righteous (Gen. 6:5; 1 Kings 8:46; Psalm 14:2, 3; 143:2; Isa. 64:6). It is so often very easy to impress other people and to put on a pretty good show because people can’t see our corrupt hearts. But God does (Heb. 4:13).

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### **3. *Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ from Scripture***

Pharisees claimed to be Israel’s spiritual physicians, but instead of showing mercy, care and concern for the sinners, they condemned them. So Jesus says to them, “*go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice’*”(Hosea 6:6). God is not concerned with religious rituals, but with a merciful heart (Amos 5:21-24). In quoting the Scripture, the Lord Jesus is exposing the sin and the hypocrisy of these self-righteous Pharisees.

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Jesus brings the whole theme together when He says at the end of verse 13, “*For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*” This is the theme of the gospel - that Jesus came to save sinners. He saves repentant sinners. I’m one of them and I hope you know you’re one of them too.