

# Bible Study 2022-2023

## Class #27

4/18/23

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- **Matthew 9:9** *“As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, ‘Follow me.’ And he rose and followed him”*
  - Matthew went from being a tax collector to a risen disciple of Jesus
  - As the author of this text, Matthew was not afraid, and wanted to highlight his iniquity by saying: “I was a tax collector and look at what happened to me”
  - His tax booth was located along the main street of *Capernaum*, paralleling the sea of Galilee

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- A traveler from Galilee would often go through *Capernaum* in order to travel to other parts of the region
- His tax booth was in close proximity to Peter's house (about the length of a football field)

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- **Matthew 9:10-13** *“And as he sat at table in the house,...For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners”*
  - Father said that those attending the dinner were local men with whom Jesus was making some inroads
  - As a matter of culture, one never shared a meal with an enemy
  - To sit at table in a Semitic culture meant that you were in agreement with them
  - Serving someone food meant that he was your friend

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- Matthew was pointing out that sinful tax collectors were converting and following Jesus
- The Pharisees saw this situation in a completely different way
- To them, Jesus was in league (agreement) with the tax collectors way of life
- This is why they asked Jesus' **disciples** if they were aware of what this action was saying about Jesus?

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- They were asking if they thought that Jesus believed that it was acceptable to be a tax collector?
- Father pointed out that this was not what was going on here (later the Pharisees will **ask Jesus** why his disciples were breaking the law by picking grain on the sabbath – **Matthew 12:1-2**)
- These men (including Matthew) were coming to Jesus, and He was asking them to follow Him, and they were doing so, and thus entering into the Kingdom of God before the Pharisees

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- Father pointed out that the “righteous” here were those sinful tax collectors who came to be healed by Jesus
- Jesus was not just hanging out with them, he was converting them
- The Pharisees were frustrated by this, because Jesus was doing what they were supposed to be about
- Jesus was basically asking them if they had ever tried to convert Matthew, his fellow tax collectors, or prostitutes?

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- Obviously not, as a Pharisee would not even talk to a tax collector, a harlot or any sinner
- In fact, they would not have even gone near one
- They certainly were not going to bring such people into their understanding of the “Kingdom of God”
- Father concluded that Jesus went out to these people where they were living, and called them to himself
- Many of them were converting and repenting



# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- **Matthew 9:14-16** *“Then the disciples of John came to him,...and a worse tear is made”*
  - The bride groom is Jesus
  - The nature of Jesus and his ministry was different from that of John the Baptist and his disciples, and the Pharisees and their disciples
  - This was not just another religious movement to prepare for the coming of the kingdom
  - Everything else reflected the various ways that the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes were advocating for the people to seek the coming of the kingdom

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- Many of these ways included weekly fasting
- The nature of what Jesus was doing was completely different
- In it, Jesus was the bridegroom and as He said: “When the bridegroom is taken away then the people will fast
- It also means that after Jesus ascended from the dead the disciples would begin fasting

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- We know, from the *Didache*\*, that the early Christians fasted every Wednesday and Friday (the Wednesday fast has fallen from practice over the last 100 years)
- Father explained that we need to fast, as this is a form of spiritual push-ups to strengthen our willpower in choosing the good over evil (not fish fillet vs cheeseburgers)

# Matthew 9 (Cont)

- **Matthew 9:17** *“Neither is new wine put into old wineskins,...and so both are preserved”*
  - Common sense tells us not to use a new piece of cloth to cover a hole in a already shrunken garment, or when washed the patch will shrink enlarging the original hole
  - The same applies to wine in wineskins
  - If you pore new wine into used wineskins, when it ferments, it will stretch the old wineskins beyond its capacity