

Lesson 10: Review of Matthew 9:9-17: "Intentional Salvation"

We have established that Matthew is gradually setting forth Jesus as the King of kings; a king reigning and ruling over all other kingdoms! His kingdom is unlike any other kingdom. It is a kingdom of light and truth and power and love! It is a kingdom wherein *The King of kings* is a Savior King! As a Savior King, He Himself seeks and saves the people of *His* kingdom. He *saves His people from* the dominion of darkness and transports them into His kingdom of light! (Colossians 1:13; Acts 26:18; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 21:22-27)

From the moment Jesus began His public ministry (Mt. 4:12) each step was deliberate and intentional. Every step and every work provided an ever expanding revelation of His purpose as God's Messiah. Each miracle revealed the great power and authority of Jesus as the Messiah: Authority to save whomever the Father chooses (John 6:37-40, 44). But every step and every act and every word demonstrated His intentional outpouring of grace and mercy (John 1:14) culminating at the cross wherein the full extent of the love of God was demonstrated in the death of the Savior King (Romans 5:8).

We should take note throughout the entire narrative of Matthew, Jesus never "stumbles" upon anyone. This is seen in Matthew 9:9-13. Here Matthew records his own experience of being *sought* and *caught* by Jesus. Matthew captures the intentional nature of Jesus' ministry to him in a most subtle way. In v.9 he states, "[Jesus] saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth." With people jostling all around Jesus He found the man He wanted to see! He saw Matthew and called to him, "Follow Me!" Jesus found then called to Himself one of the ones that the Father had "given" Him (John 6:37). O, what holy yearnings directed our dear Lord Jesus! Is it not with that same yearning that He seeks and saves His people today? Perhaps you are being sought right at this moment. Will you follow Him?

Jesus' choice of Matthew to follow Him defies logic, at least from human perspective. Wouldn't Jesus better call the most *religiously serious* to follow Him? However Jesus' choice of Matthew sure made Matthew happy. God graciously reached out to Matthew and God's grace was not without effect!

Notice first that God's grace produced a new found generosity in Matthew. He invited many of his fellow "sinners" and "tax collectors" to share a meal with Jesus and himself. Secondly, God's grace toward Matthew produced disgust in the hearts of those religious leaders (the *religiously serious*) who were shocked at God's hospitality toward sinners. Does God's grace and generosity to "sinners" shock you? Jesus made it clear that He came to call "sinners", not "righteous" people to Himself!

There are several helpful lessons to glean from this story. But, one important lesson we learn is that Matthew's initial encounter with Jesus as well as his subsequent following of Jesus was completely dependant upon Jesus. Jesus sought and caught and kept Matthew and He will seek, catch and keep you! Remember your salvation depends on the abilities the integrity the wisdom, power and righteousness of Jesus, the Savior King! It was Jesus who had a plan to transform Matthew from who he was into the person God wanted him to be! (see Philippians 1:6)

You may wonder about this *new* life. To think about it biblically look at 1 Corinthians 6. Paul explains the glory of the transforming power of God in Christ to not only save but sanctify those who follow Him. Paul writes, "Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers no male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders no thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanders nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And *that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*" (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

It is Jesus who makes all things new! He turns your past into a glorious future! But it all starts with the understanding that He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners." Have you such a Savior King who comes to save you out of your sins and into Himself? I hope you will call upon Him now if He is not yours!

Our second section provides two simple stories which illustrate the need for our *hearts* to be made new in order that we may truly live our lives as faithful and permanent followers of Jesus.

The first illustration teaches that the new relationship between Jesus and His true followers begins with God and ends with God. The guests of the Bridegroom are welcomed *only* if the father of the Bridegroom invites him. Those invited would come to celebrate the joy of the Bridegroom. Therefore, anyone who Jesus calls to follow Him are expressly called by the Father to enter into the new life with Christ!

The second illustration involves routine life: mending and wine making. Apparently to Jesus' audience it would be preposterous to sew a new, unshrunk piece of cloth to an old piece of fabric. And it would be equally preposterous to pour new wine into old wineskins. Jesus is making clear that those who truly believe and follow Him have to be made new vessels in order to receive the new life of Christ. Have you been made new? Would you entrust your life to Him that He may make you new inside? (2 Cor. 5:17)

Questions for Matthew 9:18-34: "The Faith That Saves"

1. From the notes on page 1, **A)** what impressed and/or helped you? **B)** Explain "A".

Introduction:

The faith that saves is a faith that responds to Jesus in trust, in confession and in commitment. This lesson illustrates these three ideas. You will find that in each story there is an overlap of each idea but we will primarily highlight the faith that saves in 9:18-26, Faith's Confession in 9:27-31, and Faith's commitment in 9:32-34.

2. Read Matthew 9:18-26. A faith that saves is illustrated the story of a man's daughter being raised. **A)** What was the name and social status of the man who came to Jesus? (see Mark 5:22) **B)** What impresses you about the man's actions and words in 9:18? **C)** On His way to the man's house a woman who had been very sick touched Jesus. What about the actions of the woman and what about Jesus' response encourages you to approach Jesus? **D)** In what way does the faith of the man and woman challenge you? **E)** What do you need to ask of Jesus? **F)** What do you think moved Jesus to help in these two situations?

3. Read Matthew 9:27-31. Faith's Confession: Two Blind Men **A)** Look at 9:27. What actions and words of the men indicate that they were certain that they trusted the right person? (Compare Matt. 1:1; 12:23) **B)** What question did Jesus ask them? Why do you think He asked? **C)** Their answer embodies their confession of faith. What exactly did they confess? **D)** How does their confession indicate faith in Jesus? **E)** Write down a simple confession of faith in Jesus. In other words, write down what you believe about Jesus.

4. Read Matthew 9:32-34. Faith's Commitment. **A)** Read Matthew 9:32 from the King James Version. According to the KJV who may have brought the man to Jesus for help? **B)** What two major problems did the man have? **C)** Was he able to help himself? Explain your answer. **D)** If it was the former blind men who brought this man to Jesus what does this teach you about *commitment* to Jesus? What does this teach you about how long a person needs to wait before acting on faith in Jesus to serve others? **E)** Who do you know that needs to be brought to Jesus? What are some different ways you can "bring" them to Jesus?