



#3 “Mercy, Not Sacrifice”

Matthew 9:9-13

JESUS AT MATTHEW’S HOUSE

*Matthew 9:9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. ¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ **But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’** For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

**Jesus wants us to Follow Him into a Lifestyle
of ACTIVE MERCY-SHOWING,
not SELF-RIGHTEOUS SUPERIORITY.**

I want my followers to care for and hang out with sinful, social outcasts, like I do. I have no use for empty religious rituals they self-righteously offer God to try and cover their lack of compassion for people who are “beneath” them, people they deem inferior and unworthy of their concern. My Father loves such people; He loves the outcasts. He loves marginalized, sinful people, and so do I. My followers should embrace My heart of mercy for the people that society looks down on, and move towards them instead of away from them.

MOVE TOWARDS THEM IN MERCY
NOT AWAY FROM THEM IN PRIDE, APATHY, OR FEAR

“Rules of Engagement”

- Don’t expect lost people to behave like saved people
- Do be discerning regarding the potential for being influenced
- Don’t let proud Pharisaism take up residence in your heart
- Do take risks to cross boundaries and engage with people who are not like you
- Do resist the urge to insulate yourself by steering clear of everyone who doesn’t share your values
- Do be aware of the existence of “echo chambers” where you surround yourself only with those who think exactly like you do (which will leave your thinking unchallenged and can lead to self-deception).
- Don’t ever forget where God brought you from, or where you would be without His mercy in your own life
- Do keep an eye out for *Divine Appointments* and *Redemptive Encounters* which are intended to open a door for ministry

YOU REPRESENT JESUS WELL
WHEN YOU MOVE TOWARDS THEM IN MERCY
NOT AWAY FROM THEM IN PRIDE, APATHY, OR FEAR

Who is Jesus calling YOU to move towards these days?

**Steve Benninger, Lead Pastor
New Life Church/July 11, 2021**