

Luke 5:27-32 After this, Jesus went out [beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them.] He saw a tax collector by the name of Levi [son of Alphaeus] sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi [Matthew] got up, left everything and followed him. Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house. [While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house] , a large crowd of tax collectors and others [sinners] were eating with them, [for there were many who followed him.] But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

[But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'] I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

What's in a Name?

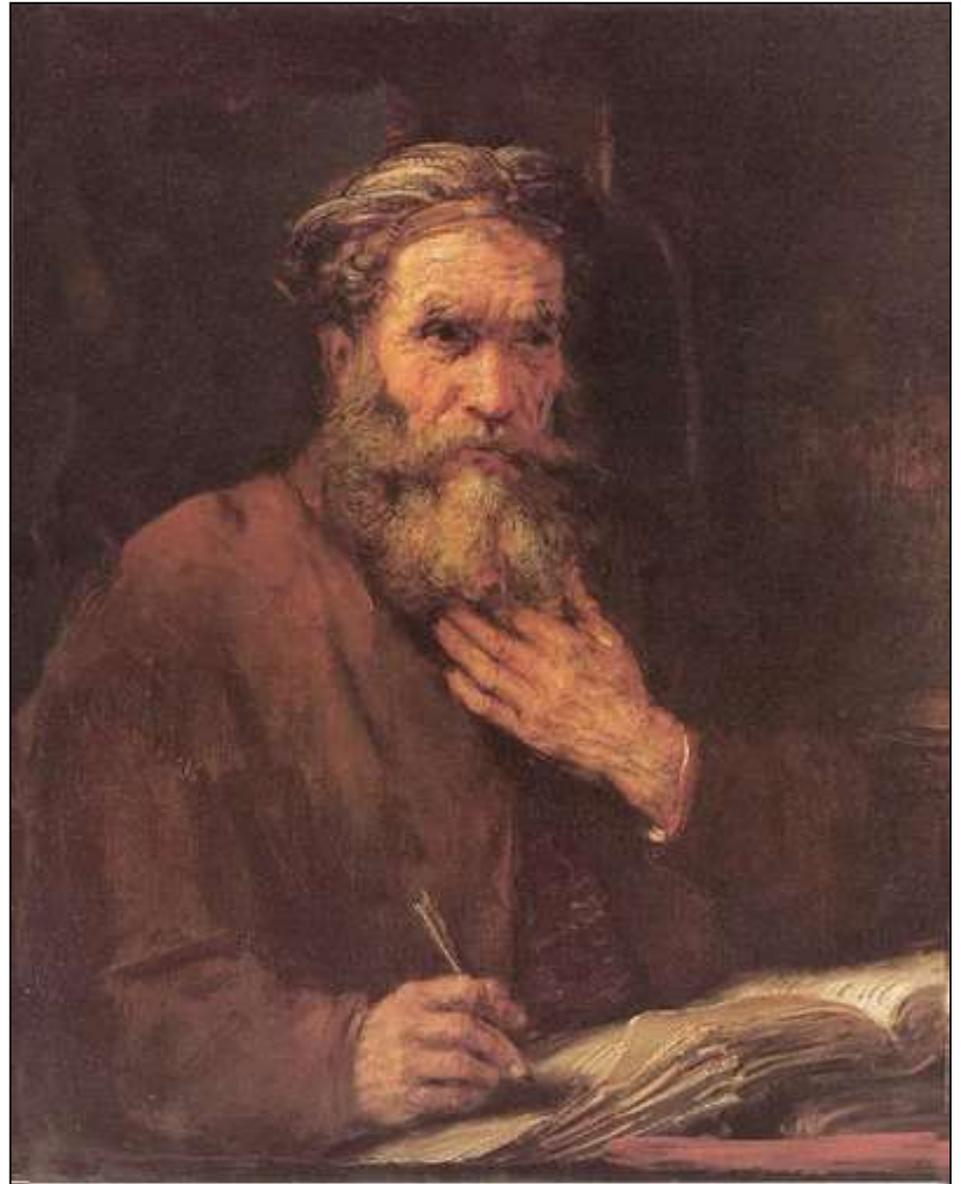
Levi [son of Alphaeus]
(in Luke and Mark)
Matthew (in Matthew)

Luke also calls him Matthew,
one of 12 apostles (6:15)

Hebrew versions

Levi (attached) Gen.29:34

Mathi (my man, remnant) ?



Levi sitting at his tax booth.



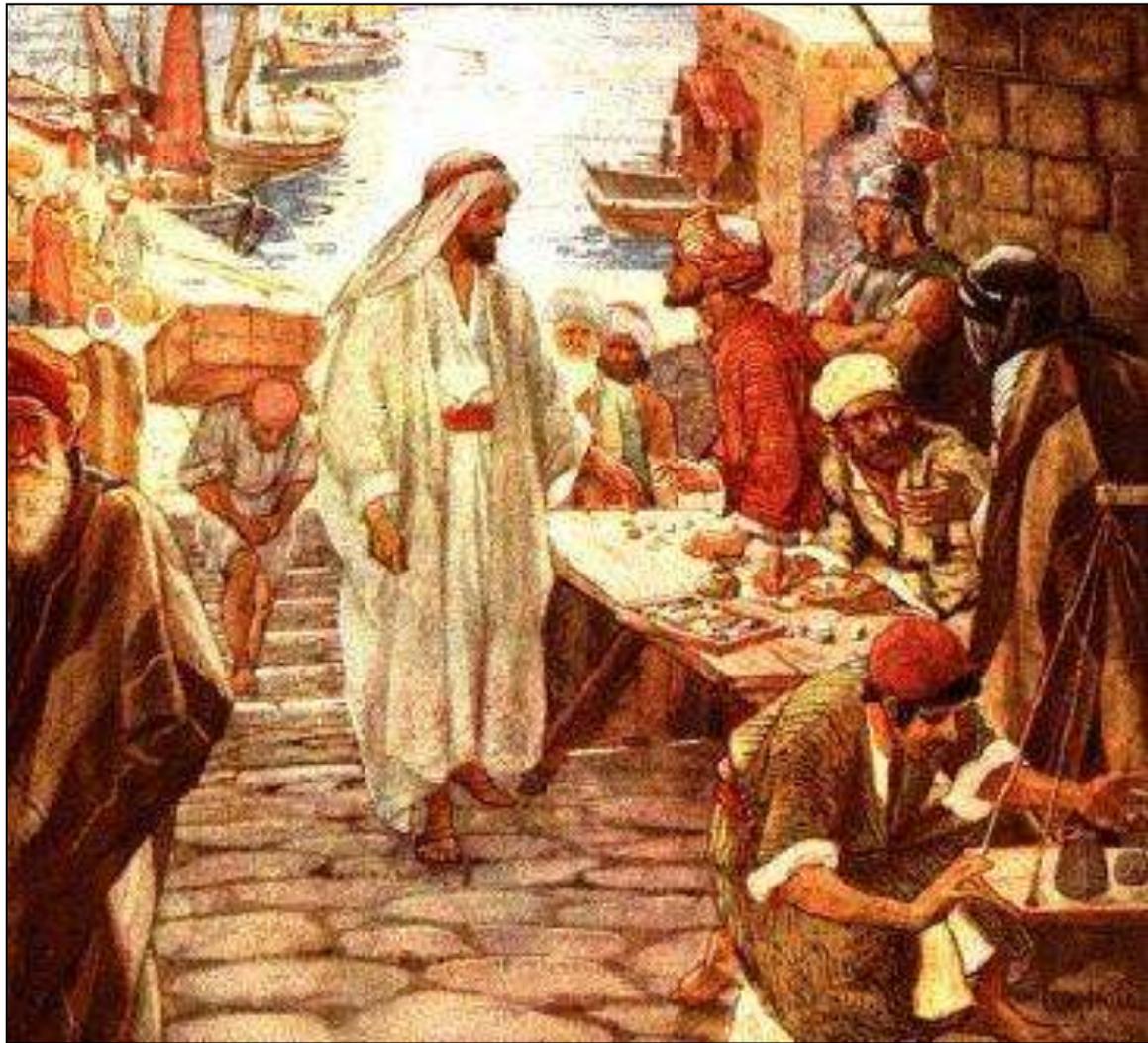
A tax collector! What people thought of them ...

- 1, A rich man – envy?
- 2, A traitor working for the Romans (taxing fishermen at shore)
- 3, A cheat robbing the people – (after paying an annual sum to the Romans he could keep the rest)
- 4, A parasite – living off others' efforts
- 5, Any more ???

Jesus saw Levi
sitting at his tax booth.
"Follow me,"
Jesus said to him

What Jesus thought ...

- 1, He saw Levi
– a person
- 2, He took the initiative
– Jesus crosses
the barriers



The Call --- Follow Me

Jesus saw Levi sitting at his tax booth.
"Follow me," Jesus said to him

A powerful meeting together of

an **external** call



an **internal** call

and



Into fellowship – on a journey together

Responding to Jesus

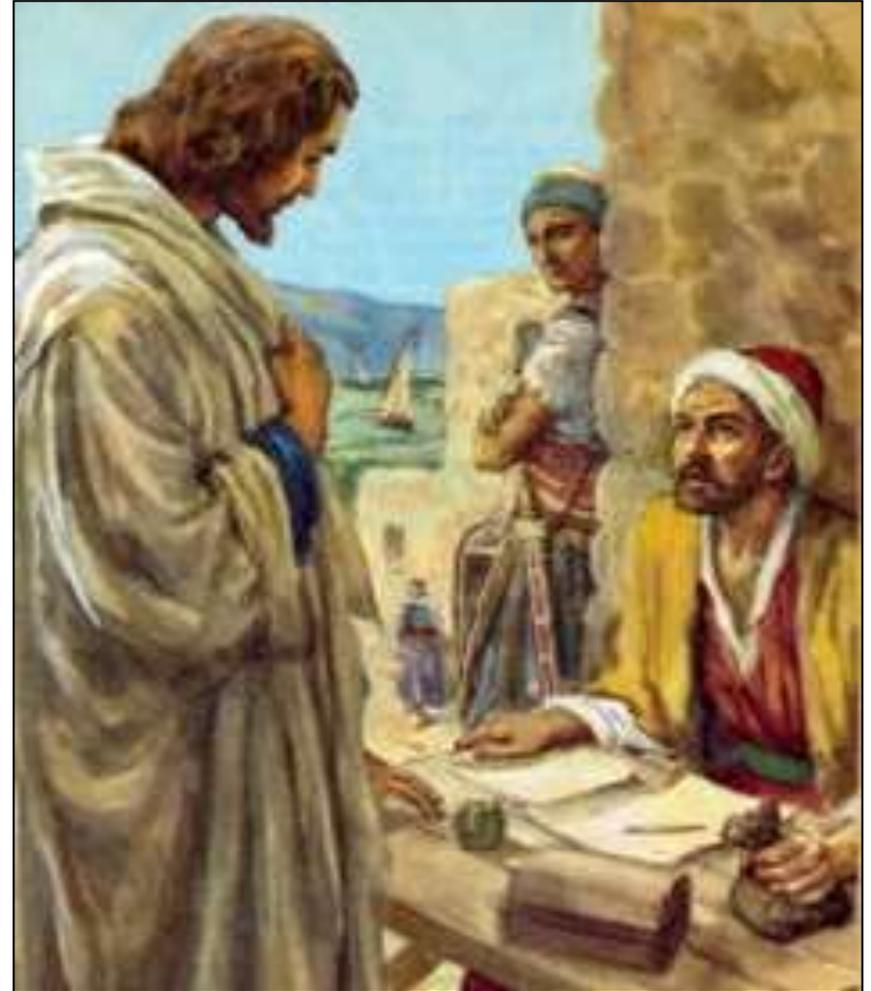
Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

EVERYTHING !!!!

A complete, immediate, radical break with all his old life.

He followed him for the rest of his life.

(His talent as a record keeper would come in handy – Jesus' sayings were incorporated into the gospels)



I have decided to follow Jesus

An Evangelistic Farewell Party!

Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them.



You can reach your friends better than anybody else.

Levi's Alpha Course

Good food

Great fun

Brilliant speaker

You're Invited



(What happened to his home after he left his job?)

The “No-Fun” complainers



But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

After the party as they leave – the dampeners are there!

Be warned they are still about!

The “No-Fun” complainers



Associating with
Tax collectors AND
sinners
(Who is worse?)
Eating and drinking
with them is serious
ritual defilement in
their eyes – being
pally with the riff-raff

A valid criticism ? They may have a point. See Psalm 1

Guilt by association

(Be careful of the company you keep!)

Jesus wasn't “joining” them
but He had to meet them to reach them
– **in** the world – not on another planet!

Jesus answered them,
"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

Pharisees are 'healthy'

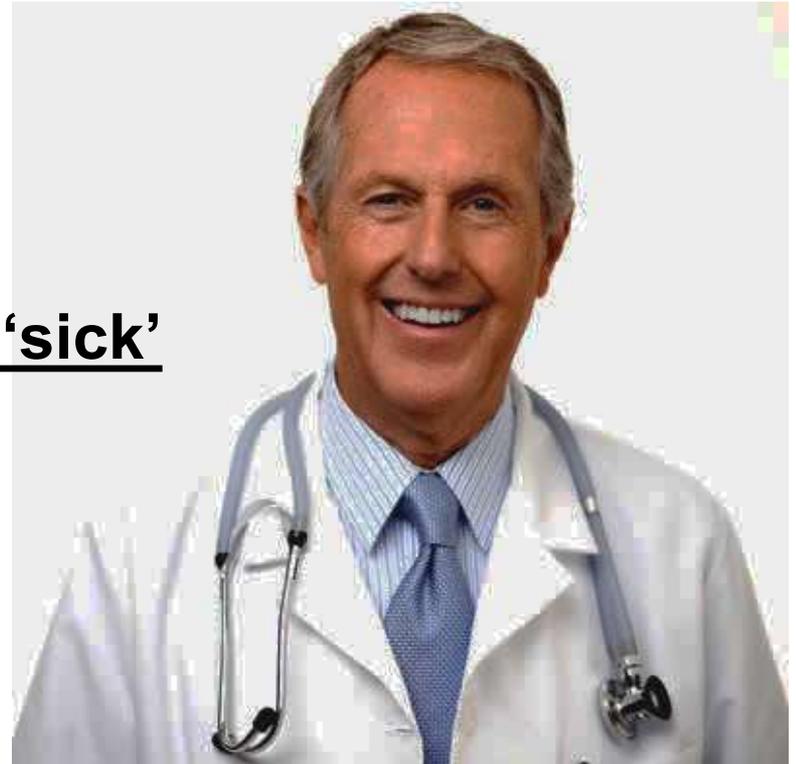
They are **sick** but don't know it?
They couldn't see their symptoms.

Tax collectors and "sinners" are 'sick'

Yes they are sick. Sin is a serious
condition that needs major surgery!

A new heart!

And Jesus is the Doctor!



**Can't you see these are needy people who need help
rather than scum to be avoided ?**

But go and learn what this means (*think about this, get it right and DO it*) : 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'

Hosea 6:4 – 5

"What can I do with you, Ephraim?
What can I do with you, Judah?
Your love is like the morning mist,
like the early dew that disappears."

God is speaking !

**I would rather have you show
real kindness, love and
compassion than religious
performance and mechanical
harsh observance of rules.**



The difficult balance

'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'

To maintain integrity and
purity of life

without

becoming hard with no
feelings for others

and to help

without

getting sucked in to their
world





I have not come to call the righteous,
but sinners to repentance."

Righteous – People who they think they are (No one!)
Cf. Saul of Tarsus – ‘faultless’ Philippians 3:6
A terrible condition!

Sinners – Face up to reality of our lives (internal call)
-- Hear the call to **repentance** (external call)
Change (repentance) has to come!

Motives for Change

- 1, See the evil of our sin
- 2, See his grace in calling us
- 3, See his power to change us for the better



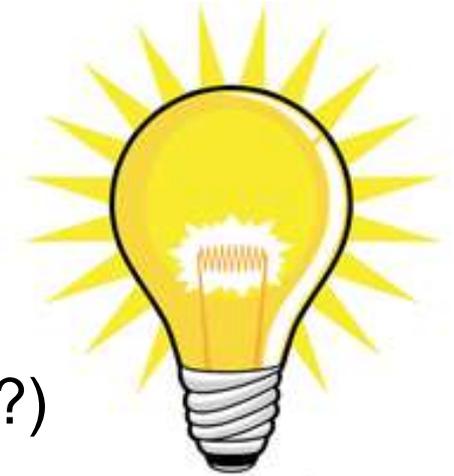
The Call --- Follow Me

Jesus saw xxxxxxx sitting in his/her place.
"Follow me," Jesus said.



The **external** call
PLUS
an **internal** call

(Have you *heard* the call?)



Into fellowship – on a journey together