



NOTES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Supplemental Texts

Lev. Ex. 15:22-27; 16:7-11; 17:1-7; Num. 11:1-3; 14:1-4, 26-27; Pss. 25; Prov. 22:4; Ezek. 34:1-6, 11-16; Hosea 6:6; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 4:18-22; 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; 9:35; Luke 5:11; 6:15; 7:34; 14:15-24; 18:9-14; 19:1-10; Acts 5:31; 11:18; 23:9; John 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 10:10; 2 Tim. 2:25; 1 Pet. 5:5-7

Study Summary

In this passage we see Jesus continuing to establish His new community as He calls the tax collector Levi to be His disciple. After Levi accepts, he throws a banquet, inviting his friends, family, and business partners to meet Jesus. The Pharisees take offense, wondering how Jesus, who claims to be a religious authority, could keep such company. Jesus' response to their complaints reveals that Jesus came to heal and restore those who know they are broken rather than those who think they are whole.

Historical & Theological Background

"At the time of Jesus" a tax collector "was a well-to-do Jew who had paid for the privilege to collect individual fees (market duties, tolls) or taxes (on businesses, houses, and consumers)." "The Romans taxed people by farming out the taxing rights to the highest bidder. The successful man would pay Rome the amount he bid, but he would collect more than that to pay expenses and to give him his legitimate profit. But it was a strong temptation to levy more tax than was strictly necessary and to pocket the extra. This provoked resentment, especially among the patriotic, who in any case did not like to see Jews helping the Romans by collecting their taxes for them. A vicious circle developed: the more they overtaxed the more they were hated and the more they were hated the more they overtaxed." "The taxes that Levi collected are likely to have been" "customs dues on goods arriving in the kingdom of Herod Antipas, and Levi was probably a subordinate official engaged in the actual collection of the tolls for a tax-farmer." "The tax collectors were heartily disliked both as collaborators and as extortioners. As a class they were regarded as dishonest and the Talmud classes them as robbers." By calling Levi to be His disciple and eating with tax collectors, Jesus was disregarding "Pharisaic standards" that these people were sinners "and ritually unclean because of their contact with Gentiles."

DISCUSSION PRIMER

The postures and habits of self-righteousness can be easy to slip into. In the most subtle ways they can creep into our lives and erode a trust that should rest in Christ alone. From Luke 5:27-32 we see that one habit of self-righteousness is complaining. Spend some time this week to write down a list of things you are thankful for. Pray over this list before you come to group.

TEXTUAL INVESTIGATION

LUKE 5:27-32

Big Idea: Jesus Came Not to Call the (Self)-Righteous, But Sinners to Repentance

Fallen Condition Focus: Self-Righteousness

- What is the "After this" that Luke references (v. 27)? How does this previous story connect to Jesus' calling of Levi and the story that unfolds?
- Who is Levi and what does he become? (See Luke 6:15 and HTB)
- How is Levi's calling similar to the calling of Peter (v. 27-28)? How is it different? (See Luke 5:1-11)
- What does Levi do after he becomes Jesus' disciple and who is invited to the party (v. 29)?
- Why do the Pharisees complain to Jesus' disciples (v. 30)?
- Luke uses the same Greek word for "complaining" as is used for the complaints of the Israelites "in the wilderness". Read Numbers 14:1-4 and 26-27. How might these passages connect to Luke 5?
- Who does Jesus call to repentance and why (v. 31-32)? What does it mean to repent?

Gospel Connection: Read 1 Cor. 1:26-31. How is this passage humbling? What comfort does it bring to sinners and suffers like us?

TEXTUAL INTERSECTION: How does the text intersect with our lives?

- What is self-righteousness? How is it expressed in our society? Our city? The church?
- Why is it difficult for people to come to repentance? Are there any prerequisites? What brings people to repentance? (Consider Luke 5 and see 2 Tim. 2:25)
- What does Jesus see when He looks at you (v. 27)? How has/should this bring comfort and courage?
- In what ways has Jesus invited you to take up the mission of the Kingdom? What excuses might you be making to focus your time and energy on other things?
- Why is it important that we spend time with people who do not know Jesus?
- How are you utilizing your relationships and influence to introduce people to Jesus? Where and with whom do you spend your time/resources? (See Luke 5:29)
- In what ways might you be slipping into self-righteousness? As followers of

REPLICABLE QUESTIONS

Read **Luke 5:27-32** and explore together what the passage reveals about:

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| 1) The character and purposes of God? | 4) Our identity in Christ? |
| 2) The fallen human condition? | 5) Our obedience to Christ? |
| 3) The gospel of Jesus Christ? | 6) Our relationship to others |

TEXTUAL APPLICATION: "So, what now?"

Have each participant identify a personal take-away in light of this study. Is there . . .

- a command to obey? • a beauty to behold? • a mission to fulfill?
- a promise to claim? • a truth to believe? • an example to follow?
- a sin to repent of? • a service to render? • a person to tell?