

April 14/15, 2007

Study Questions
No Perfect People
Jesus and Sinners
Matthew 9:9-17
Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. Defining religion as a manmade system of rules and rituals to get to God, what affect does religion have on people?
2. How do religious people tend to view themselves, and who would they define as “sinners?”
3. If the Church is to be the body of Christ on earth, list the distinctives of a church that looks like Jesus.

Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 9:9-13. Based on the attitude of the Pharisees toward sinners and tax collectors, how do you suppose people like Matthew viewed God before they met Jesus?

Do you think there are people around you who, like Matthew, have a false view of God because of their religious experience?

2. What was the attitude of the religious leaders toward people like Matthew? Why?

What is it about religion that divides people into “us” and “them” with the attitude that one must avoid the other?

3. Discuss Jesus’ answer to the Pharisees’ question. What is the application of Jesus’ words to us as His Church today?

What does Jesus want from us?

4. Read Matthew 9:14-17. While the Pharisees were fasting as a way of hungering for God they were missing the fact that God was among them and they were rejecting Him. In what way can we be guilty of the same mistake?
5. The illustration of the patch on the garment was meant to picture the ineffectiveness of trying to just add Jesus to religion. Why won’t this work?

6. The third illustration of the wineskins was Jesus' way of explaining why He called those He called to be His leadership team. Because religious people carry so much religious baggage it's hard for them to really grasp the message of grace. Therefore, this radical new message needs radical new messengers. What is the message for us as His Church today?

Who might be our most effective soldiers on the front lines?

Application

1. It's easy to paint a picture of the Pharisees in such a way they are someone else but not us. Day in and day out, at work, in your neighborhood, at school, etc., does your attitude look more like Jesus' in this story or the Pharisees'? In what way?
2. In practical ways, what does it mean to eat with sinners and tax collectors today?
3. What will be necessary going into the *Each One Reach One* vision for our church to look more like Jesus than the Pharisees?

What is your role in accomplishing this vision?