

1. Jesus has also called us to come and follow him

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit--fruit that will last - John 15:16

no room for arrogance; plenty of room for getting dusty

2. What matters to Christ is merciful hearts, not religious pedigree

Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" - Mt 9:13

context is the party at Levi's (Matthew's) house

quote from Hosea 6:6 is a stunning revelation of God's will
their whole religion was based on a system of sacrifices

God wanted tender hearts instead of empty rituals

God calls us to be tender-hearted to those who are far from him

3. We must check our attitudes

Luke 18:9-14

Jesus had no use for those confident of their own righteousness

Pharisee was thankful--but for himself!

tax collector was fully aware of his own sinfulness

God uses those who know they don't deserve to make the cut

God humbles those who think they are worthy of God's team

4. When experienced, this grace leads to changed hearts and lives

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus reached out to an opportunist of the worst kind

this was scandalous on the part of Jesus

a remarkable dinner conversation led to a radical change
gratitude, confession, generosity, discipleship

CONCLUSION: You have made the cut, but not to stay the same

WHAT JESUS BELIEVES ABOUT US

MARK 1:16-20; 2:14-17

If Jesus were gathering a team of disciples today, would you make the cut?

Simon & Andrew, James & John were fishermen; Levi collected taxes
Jesus' call to become "fishers of men" has an ominous tone

a Jewish tax collector was an outcast from society & synagogue

To better understand how radical Jesus' call was, we need more background
all Jewish boys went to school from age 6-10

best went on to study from 10-14; the rest learned a family trade

at 14-15 the very best would apply to a rabbi to become a disciple
interview had 1 purpose: can this student become like me?

many were sent back home to learn the family business

"Come follow me" meant they left everything to do so

"Cover yourself with the dust of your rabbi"

rabbis generally began their public teaching & training at age 30

What's the significance of Jesus inviting these guys to follow him?
they weren't qualified; they weren't good enough

James & John were still with their father, so probably age 15-18?

Levi had been kicked out of the synagogue (church)

the party thrown by Levi shows the type of friends he had

yet they heard Jesus say, "I believe *you* can be like *me*!"

is it any wonder they dropped everything to follow him?

families would have celebrated rather than resented this

What Does This Say About Us?