

THE CHOSEN: Matthew (4)

* Jesus left that place, and as he walked along, he saw a tax collector named Matthew, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, “Follow me”. Matthew got up and followed him (*Matt. 9:9*).

* While Jesus was having a meal in Matthew’s house, many tax-collectors and other outcasts (*Lit. “sinners”*) came and joined Jesus and his disciples at the table. Some Pharisees saw this and asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with such people?” (*Lit. “...with tax-collectors and sinners”*).

Jesus heard them and answered, “People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. Go and find out what is meant by the scripture that says: ‘It is kindness that I want, not animal sacrifices’. I have not come to call ‘respectable’ people but outcasts” (*Lit. “the righteous, but sinners”, Matt. 9:10-13*).

*“Go, then to all people everywhere, and make them my disciples (*Lit. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations*): baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age” (*Matt. 28:19-20*).

Video Spot: From Episodes 7 & 8 of THE CHOSEN
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fldru4OUAo>

Episodes 7 & 8

*In Church 46:22-49:50

*For Home group 1:06:51-1:11:47

Discussion Questions:

1) Have you watched some of Series One of *The Chosen*? Are you enjoying it? What have you learnt?

2) Who was Matthew? What do the Gospels, *and the New Testament as a whole* tell us about him?

Read Matthew 9:1-8, 9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Matthew 10:1-4; Luke 19:1-10; Acts 1:12-14

3) What do we learn from our Bible reading in Matthew, chapter nine? About Jesus? About Matthew's readiness to follow Jesus? About the first thing that Matthew does?

What answers in the Gospels does Jesus give directly and indirectly to the question of the Pharisees, "Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?"

Read Hosea 6:5,6; Luke 15:1-2, 3-7, 8-10, 11-32

4) What extra insights have you gained about Matthew from watching *The Chosen*? Has it "driven you back to Scripture", *as the writers hope*?

5) What has our study of Matthew 9:9-13, and the version of this in *The Chosen*, reminded you of? That no matter what you've done, *even if it is the worst of sins*, God is willing to forgive you, and wants you in His Kingdom? Of how our faith is not a "blind faith"? Of how our faith in Jesus leads us into a community of others who are following Jesus? That this community is an outreaching community? *Read Matt. 28:16-20; 1 Peter 2:8-10; 3:15b-16a; Col. 3:2-6*

Quotes:

The following are quotes from Sunday's message on the theme, "Matthew, his story, and what it means for us":

***We are not told a lot about him in our Bible reading.... So in one sense, we don't know a whole lot about him. About all we know about him, other than his profession, is his name, *or rather his two names*. In Mark's and Luke's gospels, he is called "Levi", but in Matthew's gospel, he is called "Matthew".**

But in another sense, we know a lot about Matthew, because we know his profession: that he was a tax-collector. The tax-collectors were local men who were in the employ of the Roman invaders, either directly or indirectly....

***That's who Matthew was: a tax-collector, who knew himself to be hated and despised by virtually every person around him, and who would have believed what the religious leaders said about him, *that God despised him, and that he had no hope of a relationship with God*. But then he met Jesus....**

***I guess that prior to Jesus calling Matthew to follow him and to be his disciple, Matthew had many opportunities to see Jesus and to listen to him....**

***So when Jesus said to Matthew, as he sat in his tax office, "Follow me", Matthew got up and followed Jesus. If Jesus could be trusted, *and God had surely shown through Jesus' miracles that he could be trusted*, then he wasn't a 'no-hoper' in God's sight. Rather, God loved him, forgave him as he cried out to God for forgiveness, and wanted him to live his life for Him. So Matthew "got up and followed" Jesus (*Matt. 9:9*).**

"Matthew's first action when he had found Jesus, *or rather when Jesus had found him*, was to seek to give others the opportunity to meet Jesus" (*William Barclay*).

Why? Because he wanted them to meet Jesus and to hear Jesus.... Because he wanted them to know the same peace and joy that he now knew, *the peace and joy of being loved by God, and being forgiven by God.* He invites them to come and to meet Jesus, out of love and compassion for his only friends, *his fellow tax-collectors and others who were looked down on and despised as “sinners”.

***What are we reminded of in the story of Matthew in the Bible, and in this *The Chosen series*?**

Three things *again* I think:

Firstly we are each reminded that no matter what you’ve done, *even if it is the worst of sins*, God is willing to forgive you, and wants you in His Kingdom.

Secondly, we are reminded that our faith is not a “blind faith” *as Richard Dawkins and some of the New Atheists would claim.*

No, our faith *like Matthew’s*, is based on concrete realities: realities like Jesus’ teaching and who Jesus was, the miracles of Jesus, and the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

***Thirdly, we are reminded that faith in Jesus leads us into a community made up of others who are following Jesus. Matthew followed Jesus and this led him into a community of followers of Jesus. It is a reminder that we need the support of others as we follow Jesus....**

But more importantly, this community is an outreaching community, a community that reaches out to other “sinners” and outcasts like you and me. Matthew invited his friends to eat in his house, and to meet Jesus. In the same way, God wants us to reach out and invite others to our table, so that they can meet Jesus through us.