

“As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector’s booth. “Follow me and be my disciple,” Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him. Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners.” Matthew 9:9-10 NLT

lectio // Matthew 9:1-13

Ok, most of the seeds that Jesus planted in the lives of others, quickly took root and grew into fruit producing trees, right? Maybe a lot of that was Jesus tending and “keeping” them, like John quoted in John 17:12 (“During my time here, I protected them by the power of the name you gave me. I guarded them so that not one was lost, except the one headed for destruction, as the Scriptures foretold.”) However, Matthew is a great example of how human it is to share stuff that happens in our life - especially BIG stuff. This wasn’t just a career killer for Matt, it was 100% a new calling, a paradigm shift from his past or current life. Do you think his buddies would notice? Of course they would. Matt does what people do, he invites his friends over to meet the cause of total change in his life. This way, no one had to ask, “What happened to Matt?” They didn’t have to guess that he ran off and lost his mind, probably thinking he joined a cult or had an early life crisis in his career. Here’s the point, if we don’t purposefully plant seeds into Matt’s we’ll never get the invite to come over for dinner to meet his friends. And Matt had some great friends, much of whom were like him. And, he seemed to even have some extra shady friends he describes as “disreputable” sinners. I don’t know very many reputable sinners, but these guys were somehow worse. What a party to be invited to! Would you feel comfortable being invited to a group of slippery politicians and sleazy rich back-channel dealing friends? Jesus did. Sure, the religious leaders thought it was below them to associate with such scum, but Jesus was thrilled at the opportunity to be God in the midst of all those folks.

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Dad,

What a hilarious picture of your grace in operation. The boldness of Jesus to invite a guy like Matthew, seeing in him something NO ONE else saw. As in The Chosen, even Matt’s parents were shamed because of his choices. And, even more impressive is the invite to dinner! It makes me cry a little when I see Jesus being so comfortable around people. I believe you are honestly happy when we are at ease around the folks with the worst reputations. I mean, I’d be afraid to walk into a Hell’s Angel bar and just start chatting up the leather clad dudes and dudess’s, but if one of them invited me? Hmmm, maybe I’d do it. Maybe I can start with something less threatening?

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root