

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S2E5

Title - A Mamzer Named Matthew

Description - Jesus is always looking to minister to the overlooked and outcast of society, the Mamzer. In this episode, we'll look at who the "chief mamzer" is in the gospel of Matthew.

A mamzer was anyone outside of the normal. The outcasts of the day, the illegitimate children.

Remember, Jesus gives his Kingdom ethic in the sermon on the mount, and then right after that the first thing that happens is a leper, a mamzer, appears and Jesus heals him, completing one of the Messianic Miracles that the people and the religious were looking for.

When Jesus tells the man to go immediately to the priests to show himself to them, Jesus is showing that he both knows the messianic miracles and that the priests & religious leaders are looking for that.

Matthew 8:4

⁴ Then Jesus told him, "See that you don't tell anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Instead of them celebrating the arrival of the Messiah, they begin to investigate and are threatened.

For them to recognize Jesus as the Messiah they would have to give up their power, their control, their money source would be cut off by losing control of the temple.

So Jesus heals the leper, then he moves on to heal for another Mamzer, the centurion, a roman, a greek, a gentile, and heals his servant by just saying the words. Then he goes across the Sea of Galilee to the Decapolis, an area filled with Mamzers, and heals a demon possessed man.

Then he gets to Matthew 9, and heals a mamzer, a paralytic. Then he gets to the "Chief Mamzer" in ***Matthew 9:9-13***

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him.

¹⁰ While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² Now when he heard this, he said, "It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Matthew, the “Chief Mamzer” is now brought back into the family of God. But why is Matthew the Chief Mamzer? Because he chose that life. A leper didn’t choose to have leprosy, a blind man didn’t choose to be born blind. But Matthew chose to work for Rome. He was a turncoat, a traitor to his own people by his own doing. That’s why they were so hated, and you often see the phrase “tax collectors and sinners...” used by the religious people of the day.

When you became a Tax Collector, you were a turncoat, you were a traitor, you were cut off from the people of God and considered dead to your family. You couldn’t participate in the religious festivals or ceremonies, you couldn’t go to the synagogue to pray or be part of the weekly worship.

Who were your friends? Who could you talk to or hang out with? Other tax collectors, or other sinners. Other Mamzers.

They hated Matthew, because not only was he a tax collector, he was one of them, and he turned on them.

One decision cut him off from the temple, the weekly synagogue. He could never participate in the festivals or the feasts. All the money in the world couldn’t fill the hole in his heart.

Robby believes that Matthew missed the presence of God.

So when Jesus comes by and says, “Come, follow me” to Matthew, it was a decision that didn’t even take much thought on Matthew’s part, because Matthew had been wrestling with this decision for a long time now.

Even to the other disciples, Matthew was different, he was not really one of them.

Matthew’s name was originally “Levi” which means “joined or connected together.” But Jesus changes it to “Matthew,” which means, “Gift of God.”