

THE FORGOTTEN JESUS PODCAST

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Season 6, Episode 13

Tax Collectors, Lepers and Sinners! Oh My!

Mark 2:13-17

Passage: Mark 2:13-17 (also Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32)

Main Idea:

Jesus doesn't just tolerate the outcasts—He *pursues* them. He calls the hopeless, the broken, and even the ones who've willingly walked away, back into community, grace, and purpose.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What stood out to you most about this episode?** Why do you think that resonated with you?
2. **How were tax collectors viewed in 1st-century Jewish culture?** What made them so despised?
3. **Why is it significant that Matthew's original name was Levi?** What does this tell us about his past?
4. **Compare Matthew's situation with that of a leper.** How were both seen as "unclean"?
5. **What does Jesus' choice to eat with "tax collectors and sinners" communicate about His mission?**
6. **Why were the Pharisees so scandalized by Jesus' actions in Mark 2:15-16?**

7. **Why might Jesus have specifically called someone like Matthew to follow Him?**
 8. **Robby said tax collectors were “cut off from the temple, community, and hope.” How does Jesus restore those things?**
 9. **Have you ever felt like an outsider in your spiritual life?** What brought you back?
 10. **What does the phrase, “On our worst day, we’re never too far from the grace of God...” mean to you personally?**
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APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Who are the “tax collectors” and “lepers” in today’s culture? How do you think Jesus would interact with them?
 2. Do you have biases or people you avoid because of their lifestyle or choices? Why?
 3. What would it look like for you to invite someone from the margins into your life this week?
 4. Is there someone you need to forgive who may have “betrayed” you like Matthew betrayed his people?
 5. In what areas of your life do you feel cut off from community or spiritual renewal?
 6. What tables do you recline at that Jesus might want to use for ministry, like Levi’s house?
 7. How does knowing Matthew may have been a Levite impact the way you see his story?
 8. What “label” have you carried that Jesus might be trying to redeem?
 9. Jesus often met people where they were (boats, booths, banquets). Where might He be trying to meet *you* this week?
 10. What steps can your group take to make your small group more open to outsiders and the spiritually curious?
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PRAYER PROMPT

“Jesus, thank You for pursuing the outcasts, the hopeless, and even the rebels like me. Give us eyes to see people like You do—not as broken beyond repair, but as beloved and redeemable. Help us to extend Your invitation of grace to others, just as You’ve extended it to us. Amen.”



Additional Resources for Deeper Study

1. Scripture Cross-References:

- Luke 5:27-32
- Matthew 9:9-13
- Hosea 6:6 (quoted by Jesus: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice")
- Leviticus 13-14 (regarding leprosy and being unclean)

2. Book:

The Forgotten Jesus by Robby Gallaty
<https://replicate.org/forgottenjesus>

3. BEMA Podcast:

Episodes on clean/unclean and societal outcasts — <https://www.bemadiscipleship.com>

4. Replicate Ministries Group Leader Podcast:

Explore group dynamics and how to disciple "mamzers" today —
<https://replicate.org/podcast>

5. Sermon:

If Robby preached on Matthew’s calling at Long Hollow, you can find it on the [Long Hollow YouTube Channel](#)

Let us know if you’d like a kids, student, or D-Group version of this guide! Email [Vivian Penuel](#)

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