

Jesus didn't die for everyone

Over last couple of weeks we have been looking at a series of events that are recorded in both the book of Matthew and the book of Luke

These are accounts that are of the same events, recorded through the eyes and filters of different men, as lead by the Spirit of God.

Let me read the scriptures that we are going to use as the basis of our discussion this morning and then I would like to make some general observations and look at things that I believe we can apply to our lives today

Luke 5:27-32

"27 After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me."

28 So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

29 Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.

30 And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31 Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

32 "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.""

Matthew 9:10-13

“10 Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

12 When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

*13 “But go and learn what this means: ‘**I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.””*

So before we go any further I need to outline to you the **four groups of people who are present here in this story**

1) The Pharisee

Who were these Pharisees?

The term Pharisee means “detached one’

It implies that one has separated themselves for a life of purity.

They were not priests, but teachers.

The Pharisees were the moral and ethical teachers of the day

They were the imparters and custodians of moral truth

2) Scribes

Rather than being a sect of the Jewish faith as Pharisees and Sadducees were, scribes were men who perpetually copied the scriptures as a profession.

This was done because the scriptures were written on materials that were not well preserved and thus decayed more rapidly than the paper we have today.

Their profession naturally gave them a good knowledge of the scriptures since they were dealing with them for their entire workday

But, they lacked a sense of personal righteousness – there's was a professional faith, not a personal faith

3) The sinners

What the bible is recording here is the tendency we have as human beings to judge people based on external behavior

We divide people up in our mind into two groups...into *good* and *bad*.

That is what is being depicted here

Here, this group of people we are discussing are exceptionally blatant sinners.

Matthew and Luke are both saying that Jesus was sitting with what could rightly be described as a group of BAD people

We are talking about those that are obviously sinners.

So all of these types of people were present at this dinner party along with the tax collectors

The drunkard

The woman having a public affair

The drug pusher

The drug user

The term "sinner" was also used to designate individuals who didn't keep rules of purity as strictly as what was considered the standard.

The Pharisees probably looked at a great portion of Jewish society as "sinners," since they didn't share Pharisee requirements of keeping every aspect of the oral tradition surrounding the Law.

Apostate Jews or excommunicated members of a synagogue would be considered "sinners" as well as those who sinned willfully and heinously and did not repent.

These "others" mentioned might have included Gentiles – that is non Jewish people - who lived in the community.

They would not be welcomed in strict Jewish homes. The tax collectors, already rejects themselves, readily accepted them.

4) Tax collectors

Then there is the fourth group we spent a great deal of time looking at last week – and please get the teachings

The tax collectors- these were the friends and business associates of Matthew

Tax collectors weren't numbered among the poor.

Their profession made many of them wealthy.

Tax collectors were hated men and seen as traitors. Allies that propped up and funded the occupation of the nation of Israel

Rome's method of collecting taxes was to employ those who knew a particular region. People who professionally or politically were connected with individuals, in that particular region, who knew what persons had money and who didn't.

A province was divided into tax districts.

Local tax collectors were responsible for handing out the tax contracts and responsible for ensuring the monies were collected and delivered to Rome. He got a percentage of everything on the way through

He would have been a very wealthy man; with a small free standing army of thugs, who would enforce the taxes and collect the money owed or exorted. Even money paid for protection.

To eat with a gentile or a sinner or worst of all, a tax collector, was considered by the strict Pharisees to render one spiritually or ceremonially unclean.

You soiled yourself

You were unfit to worship God

These people were never allowed to join the temple society

Never allowed in the inner ranks of the religious elite

The Pharisee put tax collectors alongside robbers, evildoers, and adulterers

These were the types of people who Matthew had invited to his house to meet with Jesus.

These people were the friends of Matthew

When the Pharisee saw Jesus, this great young teacher, not only willing to meet with the occasional sinner, but was prepared to meet with a whole group of them, they totally and utterly freaked out

This brings me to my first thought for this morning....

The challenge faced by the Pharisee then, is the same challenge many people sitting in church today face....basically, Jesus didn't come to die for them.....

Jesus spent so much of His time dealing with this group of people called the Pharisees.

They seemed to track Him down, arguing with Him, but never understanding Him or what He was about.

Because they misunderstood Him, they never followed Him
Because they never followed, they could never worship.

Now they didn't worship Him because they did not understand what His message was

So much of the issue we have today lies along the same line, people do not understand who Jesus really is and they have no idea what true Christianity is about

We are taught as we grow up in church that Christ died for everyone and wants to call everyone to Himself, but here we have Jesus Himself telling us, that this is just not the case.

Here we have Jesus clearly telling us that He did not die for everyone

Jesus, telling us, that He came only for a particular group of people.

' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.

Think about this.

There are some people who Jesus Christ, the savior of the World, has got NOTHING to do with, nothing to say to this group of people who see themselves as righteous
He is not interested in them, they are closed to Him and He is closed to them.

Why is He like this?

Is He being callous or hard?

Not at all, in fact, it has nothing to do with what He thinks about people or about these Pharisees; but rather what these people think about themselves.

The Pharisees did not qualify for the attention of Christ because of three reasons:

- a) They had the wrong view of themselves.
- b) They had the wrong view of the teachings of Christ
- c) They had the wrong view of others.

Now there are many people in the world today in exactly the same position as the Pharisees

And Jesus responded to them then as He still does today:

*31 Jesus answered and said to them, “**Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.**”*

Lets have a look at these three groups and see if we find ourselves among them

A) They had the wrong view of themselves.

The Pharisees saw themselves as healthy and whole.

Jesus is talking about the type of person who looks at their life, assess it, and comes to the collusion that all is well with them That they need and lack nothing.

The sort of person that says:
I don't need anyone, I don't need anything.
Sickness is for weak people. I am not weak.
Failure and struggle is for weak people. I am not weak, I am a self made man or a self made woman

The Pharisees were like this in a spiritual sense.

They say...
I can't really call myself a sinner.
I try and live a good life.
I do all the right things by everyone,
I try and help other people etc, etc...

Before you misjudge the Pharisees remember:

We would all judge them as good men

They were ethical
They where moral
They financially supported the temple
They obeyed the law
They lived according to the statutes of the land
They prayed
They studied the bible.
They were sexually pure

So many similarities to people that we would look at today and say....wow, there is a good person. They are probably a godly Christian person because of the way they act

They've lived a good life

They deserve to go to heaven

Yet Jesus quiet clearly said:

They were outside of His kingdom
They did not belong to Him
They would not partake in His kingdom.

Christ said –

These men had no need of a physician, they don't need a savior, they can not even acknowledge their sickness; let alone cry out for a doctor

People...The Pharisees did not die out in the first century.

The Pharisees are symbolic of a type of person.

These people are walking among us today

They are the type of people that when they hear this Christian faith, talking about people as being sinners, they just don't understand it. They don't think it applies to them

These people who are whole, self contained, self satisfied and very pleased with the life they lead.

They are very happy with their life, satisfied and pleased with themselves.

Now the truth is that out of all the people in the world, this group, are the furthest away from the kingdom of God.

B) They had the wrong view of the teachings of Christ and of the Christian faith

You see we not only have Pharisee outside the church, but inside the church.

The Pharisee inside the church regards themselves as righteous
They look at their spiritual life and compare it to others and then decide that they are doing better than average.

Luke 18:11, 12

“11 “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men-- extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

12 ‘I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’”

The church is full of them.

They look at the six o'clock news and say to themselves...*I didn't do any of that...therefore, I am not a sinner*

They regard themselves as righteous by living a “so called” good life.
By attending church
By reading the Bible
By fasting and praying.
By conforming to certain rules and regulations.

They firmly believe that if they are refraining from certain activities this makes them the sort of person that God would be pleased and happy with.

The Pharisee has made of himself a righteous man, an honorable man, a good man.

He obeys and loves the letter of the law, but is missing the spirit of it all together.

When the Pharisee says: I have never committed adultery; Jesus answered: Have you ever lusted?

The Pharisee says I have never killed anyone,
Jesus would say: Have you ever called a man a fool.

I am clear says the Pharisee, I have not broken the letter of the law

But Jesus would say: I am not talking about the letter of the law, but
the spirit of it.

No wonder these religious bigots hated Him

Pharisee says: *I didn't do it, I don't need a Savior, I am not a bad
man, I am not like these others...*

Jesus simply states..... *I have not come for these.*

These Pharisees say I make all these sacrifices and offerings to God:

I came to church.

I read my bible.

I sacrifice the football game – you should be pleased.

I gave of my tithe – what more do you want?

For these Pharisees, religion is external observances.

They pray at church, not at home.

They come to church, not to Christ.

They give their money, not themselves.

For the Pharisee it is all an external, mechanical religion, of rite and
ritual

The Pharisee is shallow in their existence and shallow in their faith

They justify things to themselves: if I do the externals, I am right with God and nothing more is required of me.

Jesus says they are utterly hopeless.

Utterly without hope, unless they receive a total change of heart.

He says:

I did not come for you

I can not work with that.

I want your heart, not your head

I want your being, not just your body.

I want mercy, not sacrifice.

C) They had the wrong view of others.

These Pharisees were so upset when Jesus went and met with tax collectors and sinners.

As far as they were concerned these people were godless, they were vile, they were beyond redemption, and no one of Jesus' standing should be associating with them.

You see they look at this group and they say that religion is for good people;

Religion is for moral people, for religious people.

Religion is for people who want to try and get their lives together.

Sinners have no place listening to this sort of teaching

They will never change

They can't change

God can't possibly want to help them

Heal them
Touch them

Religion

Christianity is for those that are worthy of it, who can live up to it, who can prove that they are worthy of being called Christians...

Christianity is only for them

What was Jesus' Response to all of this?

And to these people, to these Pharisees, Jesus very clearly said then as He does today:

I have not come to call the righteous.

The Son of God has nothing to say to you
If you sit here today with this attitude, then you are the furthest away from Christ out of all the people in the world.

Jesus said that He has come, *NOT* to call the righteous, but the sinner to repentance.

So:

Who are these that He calls?

Who are the people that got the attention and the heart of the creator?

- a) Those that are prepared to listen to Him.
- b) Those that hunger after Him.

You see this group, these tax collectors, they crowded into the house of Matthew.

They thought:

If He is willing and ready to talk to Mathew, He is willing and ready to talk to me.

Then the sinners saw Jesus was willing to talk to the Tax collectors they said...

If He is prepared to talk to the tax collector, He is prepared to talk to me, a sinner!!!

They all crowded in.

They all wanted to get close to the man who would not shun them
The man who talked of hope and the kingdom of God like it was for everyone, regardless of their failure and their past

These people knew that they were sick

Jesus is interested in talking to people who know they are morally and spiritually ill.

People who know they can't do it without Christ

People who know they are weak, perverted and twisted.

People who know they are in need of a Savior

Like David in Ps 51, those who cry out... *Oh God I was born a sinner and my sin is always before me – help me oh God*

They know that no matter how hard they try they can not do it on their own.

They can not over come their own weakness.

I want to do the right thing, but I do the wrong.

Is there no one who can help me? Who can heal me?

The sinner knows he needs a doctor, a great physician.

Friend

- Have you ever felt sick about yourself and your state?
- Alarmed about the inner condition of your soul?

- Your judgments, your lack of strength, your lack of fortitude
- Are you concerned that you give in so easily to sin and debauched behavior
- Do you ever lie there awake and think about how selfish you are
- How mean
- How cruel
- How unkind
-

Do you ever find yourself thinking...There is filth in me – why should I be like this? I don't want to be like this?

You friend, are a sinner in need of a Savior!
 You sick man, are in need of a doctor
 You are the people that Christ came for.

The people who feel they are the failures in life.
 Every time they get up, they fall down.
 Every time they try and go ahead, they fall behind.
 Every time they determine to change, they cannot.

These people knew they were sinners.

These people didn't just see there human frailties, their sickness, but they saw their spiritual need and their sin.

They saw beyond there sickness and recognized it as sin.

The recognition of your sickness just makes you aware you are broken

The recognition of sin makes you aware of your need for Christ.

David recognized that he had not just murdered a man
 David recognized that he was not just driven by lust

David realized that he had broken the heart of God with His actions, that he was a sinful man, and He was in desperate need of a savior.

Jesus answer to them

So what does Christ say to these people?

To these people who see their own brokenness?

I have not come to call the righteous but the sinner to what?

- To a better life?
- To more money?
- To a great purpose?
- To a church program?
- To a mothers group?
- To a concert?
- To my education?

No!!!

To repentance:

The starting place for a revolution in your soul and spirit is always repentance.

You cannot get forgiveness unless you are prepared to say you are sorry

All those other things are fine, but they can have no effect unless a person sees themselves as a sinner and in need of a Savior.

So what is this repentance?

What is this thing that dower faced old spinners used to talk about as we grew up in church?

Simply this – sorrow for sin.

It is a realization that you are an evil person and cannot solve your situation without a loving God.

The sinner is one that realizes that he can do nothing at all about his salvation.

He no longer relies upon his skill, his discipline or his intellectual arguments; he throws himself at the feet of Christ.

He casts himself on the mercy of God unreservedly as his only hope.

So how does this apply to us as a church today?

Matthew 9:

13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

And here is the test for all of us

Maybe up to this point you've sat there and thought – *Well this doesn't apply to me. I am not like the Pharisee. I have acknowledged my need of Jesus. Therefore I am OK*

My question to you is simply this:

Have you any hope to give to the failures in life?
To the desperados who continue, but never succeed?
Do you have the answer for the hopeless and broken?
To the businessman who has traded his family for money?
To the young women who traded her virtue for a broken heart?

Is there a member of your family who has fallen into terrible sin?

Drinking, drugs, or pornography?

How do you view them?

Are they a loser to you?

Do you condemn them because they just don't try hard enough?

Because they just don't get there stuff together?

What is your attitude?

What is your attitude to the moral failures that surround you?

Is it one of sympathy?
Is it one of understanding?
Do you have any hope to offer them?

Or is your attitude one of sheer intolerance and impatience?
Is your attitude one of righteous indication?

Do you feel that they have let you down, let the family down, or even let God down?

Are you annoyed with them?
Do you tell them to pull themselves together....To get to church and grow up?

The great failure of the Pharisee, whether inside the church or outside the church- is that they fail completely when you confront the failures of their own life.

They have no doctrine of suffering, no teaching on personal collapse

The Pharisee cannot help this broken person.

The Pharisee will say, *"I have lived a good life, I have kept myself together, I have disciplined myself, and kept my body clean"*.

The Pharisee will just say:

"I have used my will power and I got educated. You need to make better choices".

"If you want to get ahead you need to make the right decision.

If I can do it, you can do it. It's all in your power".

But because these Pharisees have done it themselves, they have nothing to give any body else.

You might have a very high and strong will power, but you cannot give that to another.

You might be well. You might not, in a sense, be sick, but you cannot implant that into the soul or body of another person.

Here we have a person, who many a time, made the decision to be free. To stop a certain sort of behavior, but every time they are confronted by it, they fall.

They can't stop the drinking. They can't stop the drugs.
They are sick, they are ill with this disease called sin.

And you, oh no, not you. In your righteousness, you have no need of a physician.

You have all the answers, you have it all together

This person, this Pharisee has nothing what so ever to give to the failures in life.

Christ came to Mathew
Mathew brought Zacheuss to Christ

Who are you leading to Christ friend?
Is your religious self righteousness driving them to hell?

May I say, I believe we are responsible for the presentation of the gospel to those that surround us.

May I also say, that if your life is not leading people to Christ, then it is stopping them from seeing him

Let us pray