

Summary

This sermon focuses on the story of Matthew, the tax collector who became one of Jesus' disciples. Pastor Jason explores why Matthew waited nine chapters in his gospel before telling his own conversion story, revealing that Matthew understood the power of timing and context. The sermon examines Matthew 9:9, where Jesus calls Matthew from his tax booth, and draws three key insights: no one is too far gone to be saved by Jesus, Jesus knows everything about us and still saves us, and when the world sees failure, Jesus sees our future. The message emphasizes that Matthew was one of the most despised people in his culture - a Jewish tax collector working for the Romans - yet Jesus saw his potential and called him by a new name that meant "gift of God."

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You with grateful hearts, knowing that You see us completely - our past, present, and future - and You love us still. As we gather to study Your Word and learn from Matthew's story, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us today. Help us to be receptive to Your Spirit's leading and to see ourselves and others through Your eyes of grace and love. May this time together draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could change your name to anything you wanted, what would you choose and why?

Key Verses

1. Matthew 9:9
2. Matthew 9:2
3. Psalm 139:16
4. 2 Corinthians 12:9
5. Proverbs 3:5-6

Questions

1. Why do you think Matthew waited until chapter 9 to tell his own conversion story? What does this teach us about humility and timing?
2. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus sees you completely - past, present, and future - and still chooses to love and save you?
3. Matthew was despised as a tax collector, yet Jesus saw his potential. Can you think of someone

in your life who others might write off, but God sees differently?

4. The sermon mentions that Matthew's original name was Levi, meaning 'attached' or 'striving,' but Jesus saw him as Matthew, meaning 'gift of God.' How has God changed your identity from who you were to who He's making you to be?
5. What does it mean to you that 'no one is too far gone to be saved by Jesus'? How might this truth change how we view ourselves and others?
6. Jesus called Matthew with just two words: 'Follow me.' What do you think it was about Jesus that made Matthew immediately leave everything behind?
7. How does Matthew's story challenge our assumptions about who God can use and transform?
8. The paralyzed man's story right before Matthew's shows Jesus forgiving sins freely, without sacrifice. How does this demonstrate God's grace, and how should it impact our daily lives?

Life Application

This week, identify someone in your life who might feel 'too far gone' or unworthy of God's love. Reach out to them with intentional kindness and look for an opportunity to share how God sees them through eyes of grace and potential, just as Jesus saw Matthew.

Key Takeaways

1. No one is too far gone to be saved by Jesus - even the most despised and morally compromised people can be transformed by His grace
2. Jesus knows everything about our past, present, and future, yet He still chooses to love us and call us to follow Him
3. When the world sees failure and sin, Jesus sees our future potential and who He is transforming us to become
4. God's grace steps onto the stage to offer forgiveness freely, not based on our works or worthiness but on faith alone
5. Our identity is not defined by our past mistakes or current struggles, but by who God says we are in Christ

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the powerful reminder through Matthew's story that Your grace reaches the unreachable and transforms the untransformable. Help us to see ourselves and others through Your eyes of love and potential. When we are tempted to believe we are too far gone or that others are beyond hope, remind us of Matthew sitting in that tax booth and how You saw not just who he was, but who he would become. Give us courage to follow You wholeheartedly, just as Matthew did, leaving behind our old lives to embrace the new identity You have given us. May we live as people who have been called by name and transformed by Your grace. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.