

Mercy Without Limits **Mark 2:13-17**

Calling of Matthew—a shocking choice, 13,14

- ❖ Matthew had likely been influenced by John the Baptist, Mt. 21:31,32, Lk. 3:10, 7:28-34, and he would have known all about Jesus, 1:28,45.
- ❖ Tax collectors (1st cent. IRS) were outcasts viewed as unclean traitors. Jesus knew it, thus His negative references in Matt. 5:46, 18:17.

Celebration with Matthew's friends—a scandalous dinner, 15,16

- ❖ Matthew reciprocates with an invitation to a big celebration, Lk. 5:29.
- ❖ Jesus was slammed for often socializing with tax collectors and other undesirables, Matt. 11:18,19, Lk. 15:1,2, 19:7. This defined His ministry, as He aimed for outcasts—not the self-confident or theologians. Many, like Zaccheus, were responding, Lk. 19:2-10, Matt. 21:31,32.
- ❖ Though some may use Jesus' socializing to excuse their circle of friends, consider His goal and remember I Cor. 15:33, II Cor. 6:14-18.

Conflict with scribes—a sinner's best news ever, 16,17

- ❖ Jesus responds with a proverb, using a medical metaphor to show His purpose for socializing with outcasts was to change them.
- ❖ Only Matthew (9:13) records Jesus quoting Hos. 6:6, which no doubt meant much to Matthew—and should have impacted the Pharisees.
- ❖ Jesus' and Matthew's motives here were no doubt very similar.
- ❖ Who should we be very interested in reaching with the gospel?

