

## Divine Wisdom About Sin and Sinners

Harmony M.B.C., December 15, 2019

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**Luke 5:27** And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, **Follow me.**

**Luke 5:28** And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

**Luke 5:29** And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

**Luke 5:30** But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

**Luke 5:31** And Jesus answering said unto them, **They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.**

**Luke 5:32** **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

We need an example to follow for our own conduct as children of God's kingdom and as witnesses for our Savior. There is no model for us to look at that even comes close to the Lord Jesus Himself. In His short visit on earth He had many things to say to the disciples with Him, but regarding many of those things, spiritual growth had to occur in them before they were able to receive them. For those many things, in many instances, (Jesus knowing that the disciples were unable to receive them) I believe He practiced a teaching mechanism which is one of the most effective in the world. The method could be called visual demonstration; we often verify that we know how effective this method is by saying "a picture is worth a thousand words." "A picture" is what Jesus used to teach us many of the lessons that are so valuable to us. The picture was drawn by Him in the actions and words He acted out in His dealings with people. Then in order to make sure that those teachings would be around for His disciples when their spiritual growth reached a level that they could receive them, those events in our Lord's life were captured through the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the writers of the Word which we now have.

Within the portrait of our Lord's life some things are learned by looking at different areas of the canvas. One thing He left us that requires this is the lesson about variable treatment of sinners and their sin. A lot about how to be effective ambassadors for Christ can be gained by learning how to respond to sinners and sin in their lives. One thing we learn from our Lord is that responses need to vary. We cannot present Jesus to people effectively if we do not understand the distinctions He made in dealing with sin and sinners. May the Lord help us to see

through His example how we should deal with unsaved sinners.

**I. His General Rule is Declared in Our Text** (this is our example of how to think about unsaved sinners) - “They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

**A. We are Taught Here to Notice the Difference Between Types of Sinners**

❖ See vv. 29-30. There were “publicans and others” and there were “scribes and Pharisees.”

- There are folks who make no religious nor righteous claims and there are folks who make righteous claims for themselves based on their religion
- There are people whose spiritual sickness is not in dispute and there are people who argue that they are not spiritually sick, but really are
- Not even a sick man will use a doctor if he refuses to admit he is sick
- There is no effectual call that happens to unsaved people who believe that they are OK spiritually
- The focus of Christ’s healing work is toward people who do not deny that they are sinners

**II. Christ’s Different Treatment of the Two Groups in His Ministry** (this is our example on how to act toward unsaved sinners) - See v. 30 again “why do ye eat...”

❖ Unsaved sinners who do not make a pretense of being OK spiritually will benefit from our being among them and we will get an opportunity to minister to them at the same time

- For bible accounts of Jesus attitude and interaction with unsaved, unpretentious sinners see:
  - V. 29-30 text - “sat down with them....eat...”
    - Interaction with these sinners in a context that lets Him minister about the kingdom, about salvation, and about holiness. A separation that does not teach isolating ourselves from such sinners
- See also **Mat. 9:35-36** And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. **36** But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.
  - Doing the good that we can do among them; feeling, and showing compassion for them as sheep with no shepherd
  - See also **John 8:3-11**- The account of the woman caught in adultery

- teaches us that unpretentious sinners who are condemned by the self righteousness of others are candidates for mercy and forbearance
- ❖ Unsaved sinners who make a pretense of being OK based on their religion or philosophy will only be antagonized and offended from our being among them and we will not be likely to minister productively to them
    - For bible accounts of Jesus attitude and interaction with unsaved, pretentious sinners see: **Matthew 15:1-12**;
      - (Among the pretentious unsaved) we are taught by example to engage the self-righteous when they challenge our Christian principles (vv. 1-2 is the challenge; Jesus engaging them and countering is shown in vv. 3-11)
      - (Among the pretentious unsaved) we are taught by example to condemn using human tradition or precepts to defy the commandments and precepts of God (v.3)
        - Illustrate: In 2007, a big controversy started in government when General Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that homosexual acts were immoral. - responses by most politicians were against him (Sen. Brownback of KS agreed with him) and several politicians stated that homosexuality is not immoral - **they are breaking the commandments of God through supporting the precepts of men**
      - (Among the pretentious unsaved) we are taught by example to speak against hypocrisy (v.8)
      - (Among the pretentious unsaved) we are taught by example to sharply condemn perversion of biblical truth and corrupted worship (v.9)
    - See next: Matthew 23:23-29
      - (Among the pretentious unsaved) we are taught by example to condemn self-righteousness (vv.28-29)

### III. Some facts about Jesus' approach in **dealing with the pretentious unsaved**:

- ❖ He was not gentle
- ❖ He was not kind
- ❖ He was not diplomatic
- ❖ He was not vague about pointing out their error

### IV. Some facts about Jesus' approach in **dealing with the unpretentious unsaved**

- ❖ He had compassion on them
- ❖ He instructed them
- ❖ He stands ready to forgive their sin

❖ His mission of salvation was to them

V. Conclusion:

❖ Self-righteous hypocrisy will meet with condemnation from the Lord; it will result in eternal rejection by Christ and everlasting punishment

➤ **Mat. 23:33** *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*

❖ Coming to Christ as an unpretending sinner will meet with compassion and forgiveness of sin; it will result in salvation to eternal life

➤ When Christ was contrasting the publican with the Pharisee in Luke 18, he said of the publican who had presented himself without pretense before the Lord as a sinner: **Luke 18:14** *I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*