

Responding When Stretched

“Case for Christ”, part 7, October 24th, 2021
Pastor Bob Johnson, Grace Point Church

Insights from Mark 2:13-14

(Luke 3:12-14; Luke 19:1-3, 7-8, Matthew 9:9)

- **Following involves ...**

- **Following involves ...**

Insights from Mark 2:15-17

- **Jesus was compassionate with “them” because ...**

- **Jesus was confrontive with “them” because ...**

(Matthew 23:27-28)

- **Jesus was communicating with “them” because ...**

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This Week's Discussion Guide (part 6):

Welcome to our seventh week of our 10 week study and discussion of the Gospel of Mark. Our last week meeting will be the week of Sunday, November 14th (the week before Thanksgiving :).

At GPC, we are big on small groups :). May our church family grow warmer together as we meet in small groups to develop friendships and encourage each other as we learn to walk with Jesus and apply God's truths to our everyday lives.

Getting Started:

Last Sunday morning at GPC we looked at Mark 2:13-17. We read and reflected on how Matthew the Tax Collector chose to leave his job and become a Christ follower. Speaking of earlier jobs that we have eventually left, what was one of your earlier jobs that you actually enjoyed? What was one that you were glad that it was finally over?

Speaking of collecting and paying taxes, what have you spent a tax refund on that you can remember? If not a tax refund, what have you spent some money on for just plain enjoyment?

One of the insights we reflected on last Sunday, was that following Jesus involves leaving some things behind.

Looking back to when you were considering accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, what did you already know would need to change in your life in becoming an initial Christ follower?

What were the immediate and longer term results of one or more of the changes God initially prompted you to make?

Over the weeks, months and years of following Jesus, what have been some other 'leave behind' decisions that God has prompted you to make?

Even though change is often challenging, what positive benefits have you experienced as you have trusted and followed God's promptings?

Looking back to last Sunday:

Looking back at your notes from last Sunday, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, encouraged you, challenged you or confused you?

Digging Deeper:

In order to leave behind some things and not return to old ways, God encourages us to 'put on' some new attitude and actions.

After the Apostle Paul lists some things for all of us to 'leave behind' or 'put off' in Colossians 3:3-10, he provides a list of things to put on to replace the old.

Read Colossians 3:12-17.

What are some new attitudes and actions listed in this passage or from other promptings of God that you have allowed God to build into your life?

Along with leaving some attitudes and actions behind, following Christ also involves being in community with other Christ followers. For Matthew, his first experience of fellowship was with Peter and the other fishermen.

What was your first experience of fellowship with other Christ followers like?

How was it helpful? How could your first experience of community with other brother and sisters in Christ been more helpful or beneficial?

Since then, what have you learned that has been helpful in building strong community with other brothers and sisters in Christ?

In Mark 2:15-17 we read that Matthew hosted a 'party with a purpose'. He wanted those he knew to meet this Jesus that he has begun to follow. Most of the people at his party did not feel welcome at the local synagogue or homes where Jesus taught.

Although Matthew left his tax booth behind, he didn't want to leave his friends behind. He knew they had a wrong view of this Jesus and wanted to do all he could to help them on their spiritual journey.

What are some ways we can follow Matthew's example in being salt and light to those we know?

In Mark 2:17, we read Jesus' response when he was criticized by the religious leaders for spending time with people that they worked hard to avoid.

Let's try and summarize or restate in our own words, Jesus' response to those questioning and criticizing him.

Sometimes it is hard to hear that we are sick or not as healthy as we thought we were (physically or spiritually).

What do the following verses say about our spiritual condition without Christ?
Romans 3:9-10, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23, Romans 7:18, 23

Read Romans 3:21-26 and 1 Timothy 1:12-17.

Paul's recognition of his desperation led to a powerful appreciation for Jesus and an ongoing dependence on Him for continued growth.

What can help us stay mindful of our condition apart from Christ and the need to stay humble and reliant on Him?

Looking Back and Ahead:

Looking back on this week's message and study, what is most important for you to remember and ask God for the strength to live in light of?

Praying Together:

One of the benefits of meeting together is praying for one another. Before we wrap up, let's each share one prayer request so that we can lift each other up in prayer.