



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

A Story of Change

Luke 5:27-39

Message #17 of 50 – S793

Sermon given on May 27, 2018



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Story of Change

Luke 5:27-39

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 5**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- This last weekend we took a bunch of guys up to Idyllwild for our annual Men's Retreat
- Over the course of the weekend we heard stories of how God had changed men's lives through the gospel of Jesus Christ
- There seemed to be a beautiful moving of the Holy Spirit as many men committed to allowing God to change them into the men they should have always been
- We were privileged to watch the truth of God's Word manifested
Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

- I have heard people say Christianity is irrelevant or that it doesn't work
- If that is what you think, my response to you is that is probably because you are doing it wrong, or haven't witnessed it being done right
- This weekend we witnessed the power of God at work – changing lives, which will change marriages, families, communities, and churches
- The gospel of Jesus Christ is a story of change
- Anyone who has truly been touched by the gospel is changed
- Not just once, but continually being changed into the image of Christ
- Today's text looks at the change in one man who is called by Jesus
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Story of Change**
- Our story begins with Jesus making a simple invitation
- It then looks at his response to the invitation

- Then looks to the response of those watching Jesus and this man
- And then finally to Christ's responses to them
- Our attention is drawn to the man – **The Obvious Sinner**
- **Luke 5:27a**
- A little background is important for understanding this text and the response of the people witnessing this account
- Tax collectors were despised by most people in Israel
- The Talmud – Jewish commentaries referred to them as robbers
- Israel had been conquered and occupied by the Romans
- To pay for the occupation and to enrich the Roman emperor, the people of Israel were taxed
- The Romans sold tax collecting franchises to people in Israel
- There was a certain amount that Rome expected from the franchise
- Anything extra they could get was profit
- It became a very corrupt system and attracted the most unscrupulous of people
- They were considered to be collaborators with the Romans
- Greed was their primary motivation – most became very rich from this business
- Jesus sees Levi sitting in his tax office and makes an invitation
- **Luke 5:27b-28**
- We are more familiar with Levi's other name – Matthew – gospel of
- Jesus gives a two-word invitation and Levi responds in a remarkable way
- When some people 'leave all' it is not very much
- For this tax collector, when he left all, he was leaving a lot
- Before he walked away from it all, he did something that irked the people who were watching Jesus
- **Luke 5:29**
- Levi through a huge party and invited everyone he knew
- Jesus had been in and around the area of Levi's tax office for some time
- Jesus reputation was spreading fast – probably in some of the crowds who watched and listened to Jesus

- When Jesus called Levi, it was because the Holy Spirit had already done the work of conversion in him
- And once he had crossed over the line of faith to follow Jesus, Levi wanted to celebrate and to honor Jesus
- The only people Levi knew were just like him
- Levi was a sinner and he knew it
- At the invitation of Christ, Levi found hope for his soul through the forgiveness of his many obvious sins
- Standing apart from this joyous celebration is are **The Oblivious Sinners**
- All people are sinners – some, like Levi, know they are sinners
- Some, like most of the people at Levi’s feast, lack the moral compass to know they are sinners
- Then, there are some, like these guys who possess a moral compass but don’t believe it points to their sins
- **Luke 5:30**
- ‘sinners’ they are, and we are not **1 John 1:8**
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- The scribes and the Pharisees believed that by adhering to the Law of Moses that they were no longer sinners
- They expected the Messiah to come for them because they were so faithful to practice their religion
- They were oblivious to the fact that their whole religion was designed to show them that they were sinners in need of a Savior
- Jesus responds to them – **The Overt Savior**
- **Luke 5:31-32**
- I am probably a typical male – I go to the doctor if there is something Advil or duct tape can’t fix – tough it out – maybe it will go away
- If there are no symptoms, why go to the doctor?
- Levi was sick with sin and he knew it – knew nothing in this world could make him well
- And then, Jesus walks by and says to him, ‘Follow Me!’
- The Pharisees are taking the pink, bubble-gum flavored medicine of religion and believe they don’t need to be healed

- All the while, their heart is being turned to stone by the sin they won't repent of
- Jesus didn't come to call the righteous, because there are no righteous people to call **Romans 3:9-10**

There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God.

- The Pharisees were oblivious to their need for an overt Savior **Bruce Larson**

He (Jesus) scandalized the Pharisees by indicating there are no good people or bad people – only those who know they're bad and those who don't. To sin is man's condition. To pretend that he is not a sinner is man's sin.

- You can pretend that you are not a sinner, and you might even fool some people, but you are not fooling God
- Either this goes totally over their heads or it makes them uncomfortable and they change the subject

- **Luke 5:33-35**

- The only mandatory day of fasting was on the Day of Atonement, once a year – when their sins were covered over by a sacrifice – no eating the day sins were covered by blood of the sacrifice
- By Jesus' time, good Jews were fasting twice a week, as an act of mourning, primarily that the Romans were oppressing them
- Had totally lost sight of the meaning of fasting
- He then gives them an illustration from everyday life
- As the bridegroom is preparing for the arrival of wedding day, he, nor his friends would fast
- Even the religious Jews of Jesus' day would be excused from fasting if they were friends of a man preparing for his wedding
- It may have been too subtle for the hard-hearted Pharisees, but Jesus telling them that He is the bridegroom
- He is preparing for His wedding day when He is united to His bride the church
- As Christians we are both the friends of the bridegroom and the bride
- While Jesus was on the earth, it was not a time for fasting, but for celebration
- A day was coming when He would be 'taken away' – then they could fast

- The scribes and Pharisees are trying to reconcile what Jesus is doing and saying with their religion, with their view of reality, with their own sense of how things should be
 - And so, Jesus takes this opportunity to let them know they can't add Him to their religion
 - He does it with two parables – examples out of life or nature which describe spiritual truths
 - First one
 - **Luke 5:36**
 - If you patch an old garment with new fabric, once you wash the garment, the new patch would shrink and tear the garment
 - The second parable has the same basic idea
 - **Luke 5:37-38**
 - Old wineskins are stiff and unyielding
 - New wine as it ferments, expands
 - You need to put new wine into wineskins that are flexible
 - Jesus came to bring something new to the world
 - The scribes and Pharisees were looking for a Messiah who fit in with their religion
 - Even today, people want a Jesus who fits their life, who lines up with their view of reality
 - **Luke 5:39**
 - Some people don't want to let go of their old life – like the old wineskin – rigid and unyielding
 - Jesus doesn't come into your life to add something to your life
 - He came to change your life – to give you a new life **2 Corinthians 5:17**
- Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**
- Levi was a good example of how we ought to respond to the call of Christ in our life
 - **Luke 5:28**
 - Levi did three things as a response to the call of Christ
 - First – **He left all**

- Before he did anything, he left all – he emotionally disengaged from those things that had previously been so important to him – he changed his priorities
- Everything that had been important to him wasn't any longer – his position, his wealth, his reputation
- What God wanted - became his highest priority
- If you are going to respond to Christ – make God's will your only desire
- Second – **He rose up**
- He took action that proved his change of priorities
- He didn't wait until it was convenient, until the end of his shift, or until retirement
- Jesus said, 'Follow Me' and He responded
- If you are going to respond to Jesus, do it – right now
- Third – **He followed Him**
- The scribes and the Pharisees wanted Jesus to follow their religion
- Jesus doesn't follow any religion – He is God!
- Following Jesus is not about religion – it is about imitating His life
- The apostle Paul said **1 Corinthians 11:1**
Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.
- If you study the lives of Christ and Paul, you will see that they are radically different
- What Paul is saying is – In my circumstances and situations, I am living as well as I am able in the same way Jesus would live my life
- Look at your life – if Jesus were living your life – how would He live it – then follow Him and do it that way
- I am not the same man I used to be – and I am eternally grateful that Jesus 'saw me' in my tax collectors office and called me to follow Him
- He changed me – and He can change you too
- Don't be the old wineskin, rigid and unyielding
- Jesus wants to change you into someone better than you are
- But you need to let Him do it
- **Pray!**