

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 57

June 3, 2020

Welcome to our study on the mind of Christ this week. We are in section 47 this week according to A. T. Robertson's "Harmony of the Gospels". We are going to be looking at the calling of Matthew (Levi) who became an apostle, and wrote, of course, the Book of Matthew. I want to begin by reading the three accounts found in Scripture, and I decided today to just read to you what I wrote in my journal without much comment. The section is a little bit long but I think we'll cover all the essential points.

Matthew 9:9-13

As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.

¹⁰ Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining *at the table* in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Mark 2:13-17

As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.

¹⁵ And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him. ¹⁶ When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Luke 5:27-32

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁸ And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him.

²⁹ And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them. ³⁰ The Pharisees and their scribes *began* grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Those are the three accounts that call Matthew, or Levi, to become a disciple of Jesus.

I will begin with my journal at this point.

This event is the calling of Matthew or Levi, the tax collector, as a disciple. There are some differences in the accounts. *Mark* has Jesus leaving the house where the paralytic was healed and was going for a walk by the seashore ... the banks of the Sea of Galilee which is actually a lake. The crowds followed Him and He taught them. The other accounts do not mention this.

Jesus was constantly being pursued by the crowds or the multitudes. Thus far, He has offered healing, teaching and forgiveness. Mark and Luke called this new disciple Levi. Matthew uses the name Matthew; but says 'a man called Matthew'. Luke says it was a tax gatherer named Levi; Mark calls him Levi, the son of Alphaeus. In **Mark 3:18** James is also called the son of Alphaeus. Could Matthew and James have been brothers? This would be the third set of brothers. We have James and John; we have Peter and Andrew; and all three say he was sitting in the tax collectors office. Why is this significant? Perhaps it was because he was not in the crowd listening to Jesus' teaching or in the house where the paralytic was.

This is a very technical term, "telonion" (τελωνιον) is a tax gatherer's place or business. So he was sitting at his place of business. All the gospels say that Jesus said, "Follow Me" and this is typical of His call. This is our fundamental decision ... will we follow Him? Matthew and mark say *He rose and followed Him*; Luke adds "and he left everything behind". What does this mean ... he didn't take his briefcase home? Didn't he take his money? How long did he leave it? Did he ever go back? Luke also says that he began to follow. There are subtle differences but they are significant.

Was Matthew like Zacchaeus, another tax gatherer? Zacchaeus gave much of his wealth away and admitted cheating people. Did Matthew cheat people? Or did Jesus call him because he was an honest tax gatherer?

Luke indicates that it was Levi who gave a big reception for Jesus and this took place at Levi's house. Matthew and Mark are not clear as to whose house it was, but it does indicate that they were having a feast or some entertainment.

The word Doche (δοχη) is used in **Luke 14:13** where Jesus teaches at a reception and the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind are invited. A blessing will follow because they cannot repay you. Repayment will come at the resurrection. **Luke 5:29** tells us that this is a great feast. Luke makes the point that there were *many* tax collectors there reclining at the table. We know that Jesus' disciples and some Scribes and Pharisees were also there. These were likely the same ones who earlier in the day observed the healing of the paralytic and the giving of forgiveness of sins. They are having a very challenging day, to be honest. It almost seems that the Scribes, Pharisees and Jesus' disciples must have been outside the house watching. It's not likely that these religious leaders were reclining at the table with this brood of tax gatherers. Actually, Matthew does say that the disciples were dining with them. Matthew and Mark also say not only tax gatherers, but sinners were at the table and it's surely an accommodating term since *all* men are sinners.

So what was it about Jesus that would have drawn such a collection of people?

We might say that we had new disciples; there are five men with no credentials, little training, four fishermen and one tax gatherer. There were a lot of other tax gatherers there likely from surrounding villages all with varying degrees of ethics and understandings of what is happening, and perhaps, even of Who Jesus was. Then, there are the Scribes and Pharisees from far and wide who were taking notes to find additional reasons to accuse Jesus. Already, they had called Him a blasphemer because He forgave a man of his sins. We have farmers in training ... the fields, the enemies and the gainsayers. Matthew must have known that Jesus would have been “cool” if you will, with this feast. In fact, how did Matthew know that Jesus would be okay coming to a feast like this?

Can you imagine the invitation to attend:

Come to my house tonight for a reception.

For who?

For Jesus, this really cool Rabbi who heals people, casts out devils and even forgives sins! And He’s a friend of YOURS?

Yes, He called me to follow Him. It’s wild. I’m going to do it. I think He’s the real deal. And He will be okay eating with us?

Well, sure. He hangs out with our kind. You know, folks others don’t like too much.

I don’t know

Well, just come and meet Him. You’ll see. By the way, I’m rounding up some other sinners so you may see some other folks you know; if you know what I mean. And He has these four fishermen He hangs out with and they’re also going to be there. And, oh, there are going to be some Scribes and Pharisees in town checking Him out.

Oh well, this should be interesting. See you at 7:00.

I wonder what they were eating. This was some ‘small group’. I am wondering if these were the kinds of things that could have been said as Matthew was inviting his friends to come and join him for that evening.

The custom was to sit on mats and to recline or to lean into the center where there was food to share. This was the same arrangement that Jesus had at the last supper, when He instituted the supper and when He washed the disciple’s feet.

What did they talk about? Surely they didn’t ‘talk shop’ or, *did* they? Or, was Jesus the center of attention? What about the questions they must have had for Him...even the events for the past two or three days provided enough to keep the conversation going. Truly, there was enough buzz for all of them to at least have ‘heard’ all kinds of stories of healings or exorcisms to raise all kinds of questions on this occasion. I know that I would have been full of questions, and wanting explanations. Did they talk about forgiveness? Was this an evangelistic Bible study? Did Jesus drink wine at the party? He was accused of being a wine-bibber (*Matthew 11:19*), and a glutton and a friend of sinners. Surely if Jesus did drink, He knew the exact limit to avoid being a drunkard. Did He tell the others, “No more. You’ve had enough”? What happened around that table that night?

When the trays came around, the Pharisees and the Scribes would not eat. They were “separatists”. They would not associate with “sinners”, just as Peter, who was at this feast later would not go to the house of a Gentile (**Acts 10:9-20**). He wouldn’t eat with Gentiles even when they were brothers (**Galatians 1**).

It’s hard to put people together when they have *hard* prejudices. These *hard* prejudices are usually backed by biblical conviction, though they may be distorted convictions. Then, there are those with what I would call *soft* prejudices. These are based on simply not liking someone or not understanding someone. *Soft* prejudices are more common these days, I believe, than *hard* prejudices.

But Mark adds something about these tax gatherers and sinners and he says that they were ‘following Him’. It wasn’t just Matthew but all of these tax gatherers were in some way, or to some degree, following Him (**Mark 2:15b**). These men had made some sort of commitment, similar to Matthew, to follow Jesus. So how did they come to this decision? What was the depth of their understanding and commitment? Had they heard Him teach? Could we consider these men ‘new converts’? Let’s not make too much of this, but let’s not ignore it either.

The Scribes and the Pharisees approach the disciples, Peter, Andrew, James and John with their questions. Why? What motivated Jesus to do this “taboo” thing? But notice, they did not ask Jesus; they asked His disciples. Is this a trend in the Gospels ... either they murmur under their breath or in their hearts, or they ask someone else to explain what Jesus is doing? They sometimes would ask Jesus to explain a practice that involved His disciples, like washing hands before eating or plucking grains on the Sabbath day, and usually Jesus will know that they are addressing His disciples or He will step in and He’ll provide the answer.

But Luke uses the word “grumbling” on this occasion (**Luke 5:30**). The word murmuring or grumbling in Greek is (γογγυζον) means to speak privately in a low voice; they were muttering, to utter secret or sullen discontent. It expresses indignant complaint. This is what they were doing on this occasion. In **John 7:32** the complaint is against the Jewish leaders. In **Matthew 20:11** those who had worked all day grumbled or complained against the landowner. In **John 6:41, 43** the crowds murmured or complained at the words of Jesus.

The Scribes and the Pharisees, according to Matthew, called Jesus, “your teacher”. Mark only says, “He”, and Luke says, “why do you”. So, from a specific designation to an impersonal designation or a general designation, there is probably nothing to make of this.

When Jesus heard this, He responded thus: First of all, He used the physician statement which is recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Then He has another statement where He quotes from **Hosea 6:6** but this is only recorded in Matthew. So Matthew only gives the short version of the ‘physician statement’ but Mark and Luke give the longer version of that statement.

Here’s how this breaks down and this is *the heart*, I believe, of the story. He says, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician but those who are sick ... those who are healthy, meaning those who have or can exercise force or energy, are able, to avail. Healthy is a term of strength, of being *robust*. It’s having *lots of life* in you is the idea of healthy.

The contrast is “those who are ill or sick”. And this word, “kakos” (κακός) means to be grievously ill, wretchedly ill or miserably ill or wickedly ill, or irreproachably ill, wrongly or criminally ill. This is a **strong** connotation for the word illness. Just as “healthy” is a **robust** health ... this “illness” is a really **dire** illness.

The word is used in **Matthew 15:22** of the woman who said that her daughter was **cruelly** demon-possessed. This is not just *merely* demon-possessed, but **cruelly** demon-possessed. In **Matthew 21:41** Jesus calls the ones who killed the heirs of the vineyard “wretches”. It sounds like Jesus is saying these tax gatherers were **desperately** ill, they were wretches and He was spending time with people who were not just “a little” sick, they didn’t have a cold; these were men and women who had very dire illnesses. Jesus said that the need was for a physician; one who can cure them, heal them or make them whole, to restore them to bodily health.

So, Jesus is eating with these sinners. It is a continuation of His healing ministry. He’s about restoration or making people whole, not just physically, but more importantly, **spiritually**. He’s putting things back to where they should be; restoring homeostasis, normalcy in people’s lives. He is bringing what is “out of whack” as I would say, back into whack, whatever ‘whack’ that means.

Those who have lost their strength or their force ... to see it returned to them. This is the life force of the soul that infuses the body with health and life. But more importantly, it’s the force of the spirit. What a physician ... who can minister to the whole man, body, soul and spirit and that’s what Jesus is doing on this occasion. He is bringing **wholeness** to the person.

The problem is that many do not know that they are ill or that they are in need of a doctor. Even if they **do** know they are ill, they believe that they can handle it themselves ... home remedies. Jesus confronted this in the church in Laodicea in **Revelation 3:14** and following. He says, “**Because you say ‘I am rich and I have become wealthy and I have need of nothing’ and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.**” They were unaware of their condition. Some people understand that they are sick and need a physician and others do not.

Those sitting at the table with Him **knew** that they were sinners, while the Scribes and Pharisees did **not** know that they were sinners. This is a classic example of what Jesus came to confront in man! Mark adds, “**I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.**” Luke adds, “**I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**” So Luke is even more specific about what the cure is, or part of the cure is ... it’s repentance. The “righteous” are those who are righteous in their own eyes in this particular phrase.

Paul tells us in **Romans 3:10** and **23**. “**There is none who is righteous; not even one.**” And “**All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.**” It’s not just that they are called, but they are called “**to something**”. They are called to repentance. They are called out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light. Part of the healing process involves personal repentance. John the Baptist, in his first sermon was ‘repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Repentance demands that we look at ourselves with sober judgment and honesty as to our true nature. We can't get well until we admit we are sick and go into treatment. At this point, Jesus has healed hundreds, if not thousands of people with a wide assortment of diseases. Each one had this in common: First, they knew that they were sick. Second, they knew that they could not heal themselves. And thirdly, they knew that they had to humble themselves and ask for help. Fourthly, they knew that Jesus could heal them, and number five: they took action to get to Him. ***This is the stuff that repentance is made of.*** But one more ... spiritual sickness carries responsibility and accountability.

Matthew adds another significant statement. He says, "But go and learn what this means, 'I desire compassion; not sacrifice, for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'" Now this is found in **Hosea 6:6**, "For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." The chapter in Hosea tells of a wounded people; wounded by the Lord **because** of their disloyalty. He speaks of raising them up on the "third day" so they can press on 'to know the Lord'.

But the Lord wonders what to do with a people whose loyalty is like a morning cloud or like dew which evaporates. ***We have to get this context here. It is so important to understand exactly what Jesus is saying.*** His attack on them by the words of the prophets had cut them up. This is when He tells us His desire. To what Jesus says in Matthew, Hosea adds **these** words because Matthew didn't quote the entire passage. But Hosea says that we also should desire the **knowledge of God** rather than in **burnt offerings**.

So, what does Jesus, or God, desire? Well, He desires loyalty. The word in the Old Testament that is translated "compassion" here, "loyalty" in the New American Standard Bible, and "mercy" in a lot of other translations of Matthew is the word **Chesed** or **Hesed**. It's a **rich** word with many implications. It is a word that precedes all the other words that are significant in the ethics of Jewish society. It is the only one that is unconditional and unmotivated. Get that!

Chesed or **Hesed** in the Hebrew is something that is unconditioned and it is unmotivated. It is often translated "kindness"; an act that has no cause as opposed to 'working for wages'. In other words, if you work for wages and you receive a blessing ... you **earned** it. But 'kindness' is underserved; it's unmotivated; it is just simply 'offered'.

Psalm 89:2 says, "**Lovingkindness** will be built up forever; in the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness." The first act of creation was built with chesed. Why did God create the heavens and the earth? He did it out of His **own** kindness. He was not motivated or conditioned on something else in creation; He simply 'created'. No one deserves "**to be**" because that's what creation is. It brings something into existence. No one deserves "to be". We exist because of the **kindness** of God. This being true, then, how can man think that God owes Him something? **No person ever** merited his own position. As soon as there is a motivation for something, be it honor, or a future payoff, it has ceased being absolute **Chesed** or **Hesed**. Burying a dead person may be Hesed because he cannot repay the favor or reward the person. A dead person can't repay you. The honor that is given to parents in the 10 Commandments is called "**Hesed**" or "**Chesed**". We honor them because they gave us existence just as God does!

So, why should we honor our parents? It's because without them, we wouldn't be here. We have been given existence because of them.

Psalm 136 uses the word "Chesed" twenty-six times! It is translated "lovingkindness" in the NASB and "love" in the NIV. It is everlasting. The emphasis is on the one who creates and sustains His people out of His uncaused character of Hesed, and not because of our ability to do anything *for* Him.

Consider the word *Charis* (χαρις) or grace in the New Testament. It's an equivalent of the word *Hesed* in the Old Testament. In telling them to learn what **Hosea 6:6** means, *Jesus was challenging them to a paradigm shift in their thinking*. It is interesting that Jesus was also so focused on the tax gatherers in this statement.

In **Matthew 4:56** Jesus says, "For if you love those that love you, what reward do you have? Do not even tax gatherers do the same?" We will explore this more later, but could Hesed be the "perfection" He speaks about in Matthew 5:48; "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect"? This certainly corresponds to the teaching of love in 1 Corinthians ... especially 13 where it says, "When **perfection** comes". That's something for further thought, but perhaps the kind of **love** that we're supposed to have is an unconditioned love. It is a love that is not earned; it is a love that is freely given simply because of who we are.

I found a chart that is used to define "*Hesed*"; the seven words used are these in the chart: *faithfulness, covenant-keeping, tender mercies, loyalty, truth, kindness and long-suffering*. All of those are words that are associated with this concept of Hesed. God and learn what I mean. I desire Hesed, or mercy, or loyalty; and not sacrifice. Hosea seems to add, by parallelism, the knowledge of God, saying that *knowledge of God* is associated with this idea of Hesed. This "*knowledge of God*" occurs 40 of its 91 times in Proverbs and it is associated with wisdom.

Proverbs 24:3-4 "By wisdom a house is built; and by understanding it is established. And by knowledge, the rooms are filled with precious and pleasant riches." Hosea says the threefold formula for a strong house is wisdom, understanding and knowledge. **Hosea 4:6** says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because they have rejected the knowledge of God."

You cannot have a mature "*hesed*" or "mercy" or "loyalty" without knowledge or an intimate relationship with God who is the *source* of hesed. It can mean, "*Knowing by experience or relationship or encounter*".

Isaiah 53:11 includes "by His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities."

Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is 'understanding'."

In **Genesis 2:9** and **17** it is moral, experiential knowledge of 'evil and good' that were forbidden to Adam and Eve.

In **Isaiah 11:2** - However Jesus had the full measure of understanding or knowledge within Him.

In **Job 34:35** - 'Job spoke words without discernment or knowledge or experience'. In other words, Job spoke about things he didn't understand and that he had no experience with, but when we have an experience with God, we begin to have more knowledge, and out of that knowledge grows the *Hesed* or the ability to unconditionally love and be loyal to people.

The knowledge that God has of people is not attainable by us. **Psalm 139:6**
This knowledge is equivalent to "epignosis" (επιγνωσις) in the New Testament (meaning full discernment).

I'm switching now to my third Journal in the series.

Psalm 26:1-3 fits here. It says:

Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering. ² Examine me, O LORD, and try me; test my mind and my heart. ³ For Your lovingkindness (or Your Hesed) is before my eyes, I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.

Hesed is usually translated by "eleos" (ελεος) mercy, in the Septuagint translation which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

From **Exodus 34:6-7** the Jews found thirteen attributes of God and *Hesed* is one of them. God abounds in Hesed. Last night, brother Pat Hardeman reminded me that the rest of Jesus' and Hosea's phrase is important ... which is, "***I desire mercy and not sacrifice***". Obtaining favor with God through sacrifice, or at least, animal sacrifice that we offer is impossible though God commanded them to be made.

Those Scribes and Pharisees who criticized the work of God going on in the lives of people Jesus touched were having trouble accepting the fact that these people were not required to bring something to the table. In other words, Jesus forgave them *without* sacrifice! He healed them without a sacrifice! He did it, simply out of His love for them; unconditionally. At times, God hated their sacrifices **because they did not represent a broken heart**. God was looking for personal brokenness.

In an article by Jim Myers at the BiblicalHeritage.org, *Hesed* or mercy or loyalty is addressed and it's really based on another article found in "The Jewish Bible Quarterly" by Rabbi Harold Kanzler. He suggests that **loyalty** is the correct and best translation, not mercy looked at in the context of **Psalm 136**. He makes the case that there is mutuality in the word. In Brown, Driver and Briggs Lexicon *Hesed* is described of man **and** of God with some different meanings and applications since there are some things that only God can do. When it's used of men, the emphasis is on kindness, or favors or piety, but with God, it is **redemption** from trouble or enemies or preservation of life. It is quickening of spiritual life or redemption from sin, or keeping the Covenant as with Abraham, Moses and Israel. So it's a word that is used in a different context with God than it is for men. Men can be kind; men can be merciful, but only God has this ultimate ability to do everything He does without preconditioned or without ulterior motives. He is simply being *loyal* to **His** people.

Also, in **Psalm 136**, the word “endures” is not in the Hebrew or the Greek. Using **1 Samuel 20:8** Kanzler demonstrates the use of *Hesed* is more correctly translated ‘loyalty’; not ‘mercy’. David’s **Hesed** brought Jonathan into a covenant ... a mutual loyalty with one another. In **1 Samuel 20:14-15**, *lovingkindness* protected Jonathan and his family from death. This was what David was doing because of his *Hesed* with Jonathan. It brought them into covenant relationship; they had a loyalty to one another.

In Mary’s prayer song (**Luke 1:50**) she uses the Greek equivalent to *Hesed* or mercy. She says, “His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear Him.” Mary recognized that though she was a mere humble girl in an obscure place in Israel, still the Lord was able and willing to be *hesed* or loyal to her and to the world through her. In other words, God was loyal to Mary; not because of who Mary was, not because of her station in life, not because of what she could do for God, but simply because God is *loyal* to her.

Luke 1:58 says, “Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great **mercy** toward her; and they were rejoicing with her.”

Zacharias, John the Baptist’s father, also uses the term in his prophecy in **Luke 1:71-3**. He said, “Salvation from our enemies and all who hate us to show **mercy** toward our fathers and to remember His Holy Covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham our father...” In other words, God remembers His covenant because God is always **loyal**. It’s not that man is always loyal to God; but because God is always loyal to man.

As in **Psalm 136**, the word relates to God bringing us through because of His covenant. His acts transcend individual events and he fulfills His Divine purposes to save the world through the seed of Abraham. Not because the world deserves it; not because people always cooperate with Him; but because **God is** loving and kind loyal to His creation.

After the telling of the story of the Good Samaritan, and asking “Which of these three was the neighbor”, the man answered, “The one who showed **mercy** toward him”. And that’s true. Without any kind of sense of repayment, he just simply ‘loved the man’.

Paul refers to vessels of mercy from the Jews and Gentiles in **Romans 9:23**. “And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory...”

The Gentiles praised God for His mercy in **Romans 15:9**, “...and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, ‘Therefore I will give praise to You among the Gentiles, and I will sing to Your name.’”¹⁰ Again he says, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people.”

Paul says in **Ephesians 2:4** that God is *rich* in His **mercy** because of His *great love*.

Peter says the same in **1 Peter 1:3**. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to His **great mercy** has called us to be born again to a *living* hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

James says wisdom is full of mercy in **James 3:17**.

So, *eleos*, the word for *mercy* in the New Testament, is behind the work of God in Christ, and this word corresponds to the Old Testament word *Hesed*. Jesus is telling us to ‘go and learn what that word means’ in **Matthew 9:13** when He says, “**But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,’ for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.**”

Hesed is like the headwaters of a mighty river; the **source** of so many acts of God down through human history which all resulted and produced the *salvation* that we enjoy. “Go learn what it means” is key ★ to understanding the Mind of Christ.

So, what do we learn about the Mind of Christ in the story of the call of Matthew?

First, Jesus did not seek to be politically correct. He did not avoid situations or gatherings because religious leaders did not think He should be there.

Second, He kept His mind on His true purpose for coming to this earth ... to be a physician to the sick, so when He saw spiritually sick people, He knew *this* was where He was needed.

Third, He seized opportunities to teach those who thought they were *not* sick, to help them to possibly know that they, too, were sick.

Fourth, Jesus, at least on this occasion, used some sarcasm to get His point across. He says, “Those who are well do not need a physician”. He was being sarcastic.

Fifth, we learn that Jesus was able to recall Old Testament Scripture and to point us to **major concepts** pertaining to the nature of God. Jesus knew that *the truly spiritual person can find the path from God’s character to the application of this trait in our lives*. For example, we go from the concept of *Hesed* to Jesus now actually sitting down and *eating with tax collectors and sinners*. The concept of God in the mind of God, the trait of God and the character of God is being now lived out in the life of a person in practical ways.

Sixth, Jesus was very deliberate in choosing His disciples and apostles, seeing what He needed to see in order to bring them into the fold.

It seems, as I make this journey through the life of Christ, down into Challenger Deep, that Jesus packs so much teaching and example into *every* encounter that we have. The question I have regarding this story is ‘what was happening for most of the time around that table at Matthew’s house?’ What were they talking about? Did Jesus lead the conversation? Was He taking questions? Or was the talk ‘light’, a playful banter about weather, or recent experiences, or politics or family? Was Jesus mostly just hanging out, eating and drinking and swapping stories talking about people they knew from the region where Jesus grew up? Was this evening more casual than business? I guess I’ll just have to wait and ask.

One other thing that I didn’t write in my journal but I’ll throw it in here at the end, is that we must not ever make the assumption that when we read these stories like Jesus encountering Matthew, that it was the *first* encounter. We do not know if it was the first encounter. Jesus lived in this area for 30 years before He started His ministry. He had opportunity to come in

contact with these people that He called to be His disciples. It seems reasonable to me that He didn't just walk by and saying to a man, 'come follow me' and he just packs up and leaves. It seems reasonable to me that He had other associations and encounters with them before He calls them to be His disciples. So don't just make that assumption, because if you do, then you are going to have this picture in your mind that Jesus could just walk by somebody and say, "Follow me" and they just drop everything and do it, and we wonder why we can't do the same thing.

Well, it usually doesn't work that way. There usually has to be some kind of relationship built before people will make major changes in their lives. I wanted to throw that in at the end for your consideration.

Thank you for joining us for this section of the Mind of Christ ... Challenger Deep... plunging down deep into the Mind of Christ so that we can understand how He thinks.

So, go and learn what it means: 'I desire mercy or loyalty, and not sacrifice ... but the knowledge of God.'