

Intro: About a month ago at breakfast with a couple of Pastor friends: Drew, Severn Run: "In a moment we are going to pray for our food. Is there something we can pray about for you?"

Waitress was a little surprised...paused...said yes...My new granddaughter is in the hospital...doing ok, but stay a bit

A couple of days later I was meeting someone else for breakfast. Another Pastor planting a church, Spiritual Director I was a little irritated, took the waitress so long to bring me my coffee...when she did I looked up in irritation...Saw it She was completely overwhelmed..pasted on a fake smile...I looked w/o even thinking...I said..."In a moment..." She broke down and began to cry...wouldn't tell me what was going on...but I told her...I'm praying for you.

Sometimes we see people...but not really...as long as they don't bother us...serve us...we look right through them. Others times we SEE people...and we know...something is going on...and it is IMPORTANT

That's what happened with Jesus and Matthew in the encounter we are going to look at this morning. Jesus SAW him In fact...The NT greek uses a word that means not just looking...visually aware...but mental apprehension..."Getting them!"

Matthew 9:9-13 Page 687
Loving People That Are Open To The Gospel

1. See People, Don't Just Look At Them. Vs 1-5

- Jesus "saw" Matthew

"to know, be aware, consider, perceive, be sure, and understand." Its usage also includes "behold," "look on," and "see." The Bible frequently uses it in the sense of mental apprehension rather than visual sight, that is, as "I get it," "I understand," or "now I see it."

- We "Look at People...without Seeing!"
How many people do we walk past every day? We encounter sometimes hundreds of people...Never really see them
Go back and look at the gospels...watch Jesus...see just how many times in the course of his life...he SAW someone
Illus: I wonder just how many waiters and waitresses I have not truly SEEN in the last year? Broken, Hurting...Struggle

4 Signs that Someone is Spiritually Open

- *See needs:* Doesn't have to be "spiritual" Can I pray for you?" Only once in 30 years someone say on
Illus: Leaving neighborhood see a neighbor walking his dog. Darlene told me having surgery
- *See Spiritual Questions/Interests:* Ethiopian Eunuch Reading the OT: "Do you know what you are reading?"
- *See Willingness to Explore/Invest time:* Rich Young Ruler: "What must I do to be saved"
Visited a man I have known 29 years...one of the first if not THE first
No...I don't think I have any interest in that!
- *See Persist despite obstacles:* Woman with Issue of Blood: Woman with sick Daughter...

KEY: Jorge: How can you know? YOU HAVE TO ASK! In the fall I'm going to have a training Class: 35 people

2. See Where People Are Hurting. Vs 12-13

There is something very interesting in this passage of scripture that doesn't show up elsewhere

3 accounts: Two are almost identical

But here (When Matthew tells his OWN story) you see something that no one else records.

I think it is because THIS is what "rang Matthew's bell" This is what touched him, This is what motivated him

This is what Stood Out to Matthew

"Learn what this means: I desire mercy...not sacrifice!" Quote from OT Hosea 6:6

- I desire mercy:
When Jesus said this...He communicated to Matthews heart.
I'm convinced Matthew KNEW He needed God...(Jesus home town: Sermons, Miracles)
~His Profession ~His Friends ~His Standing in Community
He was probably an "outcast" from polite society:
Illus: Stereotype: Politician or Used Car Salesman!
- Not Sacrifice:
Jesus looks at Matthew and he says: YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE LIKE THEM! (Religious leaders)
As a matter of fact...Finding people like YOU....Struggling...Hurting...Doubting..THAT IS WHY I HAVE COME
- I am looking for the sick....not the healthy.
If you have problems you can't solve, Issues you can't overcome, Habits you can't break, Pain you can't bear
You are my kinda guy...

And Matthew BELIEVED HIM!

KEY: We walk past people every day that are hurting

~Either We don't see them

~Or we don't care...because we can't be bothered

~Or we aren't courageous enough to simply say something:

TRY WHAT I LEARNED FROM MY FRIEND: Is there something I can pray about for you? Once in 30 years

Pay attention: When you get up tomorrow morning...try this
Pray: God...will you open my eyes today?
If you want to be 1 of 35....pray that everyday Get Ready!

3. Don't Be Afraid Of Opposition, Complaints Or Offending. Vs 10-11

We are often afraid to open our mouth and speak about Jesus because of what someone will think!

- **Opposition:** Jesus ministry/Apostles ministry was full of opposition (Don't preach/teach anymore!)
- **Complaints:** The religious leaders were constantly complaining! (tax collectors and sinners)
- **Offences:** Jesus was nailed to a cross because He offended religious leaders...calling Himself God!
During His ministry He offended
1. Religious leaders 4. Disciples
2. Romans 5. Samaritans
3. Crowds 6. People he healed
7. People saw him heal

Paul Calls it the Offence of the Cross in Galatians

That is, When we say everyone needs Jesus, that the cross is the only way to God. There is NO other way to the Father!
You say that today...and if you don't know what the offence of the cross before you say it...you will soon find out!
But that's ok: If you let that slow you down...that fear will totally incapacitate you

4. Make A Clear Call To Follow Jesus. Vs 9

Jesus said: Follow Me: Lit = *Come journey with me, come walk with me, come be my disciple*

Matthew obviously clearly understood what Jesus was asking: Luke says: "He left everything!"

Both the Greeks and the Jews had a tradition of a Teacher/Master having a group of disciples

- *Greeks had this with their philosophers*, when you believed their teachings...walked with..followed...schooled by
- *Jews had this with their Rabbi's* (Teachers) To be a follower of an esteemed Rabbi highly competitive!

The problem for Matthew was...He was NEVER going to measure up!

~His Job...would totally disqualify him from Rabbi

~His heritage would disqualify him from the greeks or romans...Man without a county!

But then Jesus comes by...and He says: Follow Me! He INVITES Matthew to the party! Now he is going to the dance
And when everyone gets upset...Jesus looks at them and says...HE IS EXACTLY WHAT IM LOOKING FOR!
In fact, Matthew is so excited about following Jesus He throws a Party...To tell Others...You should follow Him too!

What Does it Mean To Follow Jesus

- **Understand Who Jesus Is:** Many people need help with that today:
Means to acknowledge Him as Lord! (Not big man upstairs, Good Teacher...)
Fastest growing religious group US? None's Atheist: (White, Educated, Successful)
- **Understand Your Sinfulness:** Matthew had that wrapped: Many today do not
They have mistakes, errors in judgment, Oversights, wrong turns, Opportunities
What they don't have...is SIN: Action, Omission, Thought: Offends a Holy God
- **Understand Faith:** Leave EVERYTHING...Totally dependent upon Jesus...His death for YOU
Absolute Surrender
Not a negotiated Settlement, Not a series of suggestions God makes, Nice add on

NT gives us a clear picture of the choice we have to make:

APPLIC: Rich Young Ruler Walked Away from Jesus
Matthew Walked Away from everything else!

CONCL:

There are people all around us that need God..and are looking for Him

See, I don't think the issue is no one is looking...I think...we don't see them.

We are so consumed by our own problems...plans...prejudices and priorities...we walk right by them...never see

In Fact, there are people everywhere that God is drawing to Himself!

Joh 5:17 Jesus said to them, "*My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.*"

CHALLENGE: This week: BE one of the 35!

Will you be one that says...God...Here I am...I'm available...I want to be used by you...

If you will open my eyes...help me see...I'm ready to say...is there some way I can pray for you?

Invite them to Jesus

I think God is at work: 10% 35 people come to Jesus and follow Him in believer's baptism: