



When Love Comes to Town

Close Encounters With Jesus

HomeGroups@West

Session 2:

Known and Called by Name

Mark 2:1-17

Motivation. We are as human beings primarily self-serving creatures!

Do you think this statement describes you; ancestors, colleagues, family, society, self? Our motivation will shape the direction of our lives.



As we consider encounters with Jesus- Mark records multiple encounters that demand the reader or listener to grapple with Jesus' identity and the implications of what this means for people. As we look at the passage in Mark 2 we see Jesus reveal a lot about his identity and mission and exposing and challenging human motivation.

So here is the scene; Jesus has just had this outrageous encounter as he preaches in a private home in Capernaum, the roof gets ripped off and in a mission impossible-type move a paralysed man gets lowered, his sins are forgiven and he is healed by Jesus. The men and women who are following and learning from Jesus would have been amazed and delighted! But then in the very next moment there is Jesus looking down the beach of the lake and he notices a tax collector.

1. How do you imagine the large crowd would have reacted to the presence of somebody doing Levi's job?
2. How would you rate the possibility of a traitor, a crook, a liar, a brazen extortionist like Levi becoming a friend and useful disciple of Jesus?
3. What are the implications of Jesus knowing Levi's name, his inner and outer life, and still calling him personally to follow him?

The significance of the Gospels are absolutely incalculable in human history as well as in lives of countless individuals. It is amazing that this man Levi would be renamed as Matthew by Jesus, and would write Jesus' biography.

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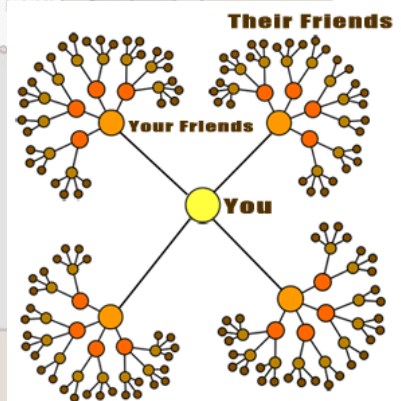
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4. What can you identify as the heart of Jesus' mission?
5. Look carefully at verses 15-17. What was Levi's immediate response to being called? He didn't abandon everybody in his old circle of friends, what do you think is going on here?
6. How do you rate your own possibility of being a friend, and useful disciple of Jesus? Do you recognise his call on your own life? Do you consider anybody too 'challenging' or 'difficult' for Jesus to call?

Consider the result of Jesus' love coming to Capernaum that day. When his love comes to town it changes people in a profound way. If you love Jesus you bring the light, the life, the fragrance of him with you, everywhere you go.

The impact of Levi's (Matthew's) close encounter with Jesus has shaped humanity ever since. The impact of our close encounter has a bigger influence than we often realise also.



Friends, colleagues, children, siblings, parents, neighbours, shop workers, service providers, employees, club members as well as Christian brothers and sisters, are all part of our sphere of influence



Praise God for Jesus' obedience and leaving glory to live and serve and love people. Praise God for Levi sharing the story of Jesus with us.

Pray that as you seek this week you will find Jesus and encounter his love as you read scripture and wait for his voice.

Pray for natural opportunities to tell your story of his love coming to town in your own life. Pray for your 'sphere of influence' and their response.

Pray that today, this week, this year, and beyond, you will keep following him.