

GREAT CHAPTERS FOR GREATER LIVING: LUKE 15
“THE FRIEND OF SINNERS”
LUKE 15: 1-2

NOT EVERYONE SAW JESUS THE SAME WAY. SURPRISINGLY IT WAS THOSE WERE CONSIDERED TO BE “OUTCASTS” THAT MOST GLADLY HEARD HIM. THE RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT WERE VERY CRITICAL OF JESUS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS THEM BECAUSE IT WAS IN DIRECT CONTRAST TO THEIRS. JESUS NEVER DENIED THIS CRITICISM; IN FACT, HE PLEADED GUILTY TO BEING “A FRIEND TO SINNERS.” IT IS TO OUR BENEFIT THAT HE WAS.

WHAT WAS IT ABOUT JESUS THAT CAUSED THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO SO QUICKLY LABEL HIM AS BEING A FRIEND TO THE WRONG PEOPLE?

I. HIS ACTIVITIES

A. THE BANQUET AT MATTHEW’S HOUSE.

AFTER JESUS HAD INVITED MATTHEW TO BECOME ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES, MATTHEW GAVE A

BANQUET FOR HIM AND INVITED ALL OF HIS FRIENDS. THERE WERE NO PHARISEES OR RELIGIOUS

LEADERS WHO WERE IN THE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS THAT MATTHEW HAD. THEY WERE ALL CLASSIFIED

AS “SINNERS.” JESUS WAS CRITIZED FOR ASSOCIATING HIMSELF WITH SUCH PEOPLE, BUT HE SAW

AS PART OF HIS MISSION. HE HAD COME FOR PEOPLE LIKE THIS.

B. THE DINNER AT SIMON’S HOUSE.

WHEN JESUS ATTENDED A DINNER AT SIMON’S HOUSE HE WAS ROUNDLY CRITICIZED FOR

ALLOWING A WOMAN WHOM EVERYONE KNEW TO HAVE LIVED A VERY SINFUL LIFE, TO WASH

HIS FEET AND WIPE THEM WITH HER HAIR. THIS WAS HER WAY OF REPENTING. JESUS WAS

THEREFORE LOOKED AT WITH DISDAIN BECAUSE HE DID NOT REJECT OR REBUKE THE WOMAN.

BY THESE TWO INCIDENTS JESUS WAS TELLING EVERYONE THAT HE WAS “THE FRIEND OF SINNERS.”

HE WAS GOING TO BEFRIEND THOSE WHOM THE RELIGIOUS WORLD CONSIDERED TO BE UNCLEAN

AND CONDEMNED.

II. HIS ATTITUDE

BEHIND HIS ACTIONS WAS AN ATTITUDE. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT JESUS DID NOT SEE PEOPLE THE SAME WAY THAT THE PHARISEES SAW THEM.

A. HE SAW THEM AS PERSONS OF WORTH.

AS FAR AS THE PHARISEES WERE CONCERNED, MATTHEW AND THIS WOMAN DESERVED NOTHING BUT JUDGMENT. THEY WERE CONSIDERED TO BE WORTHLESS. JESUS, ON THE OTHER HAND, TREATED THESE INDIVIDUALS AS PERSONS OF WORTH.

B. HE LOVED THEM UNCONDITIONALLY.

THE PHARISEES DESPISED AND DETESTED SUCH PEOPLE AS MATTHEW AND THIS WOMAN, AND THEY NEVER HESITATED TO MAKE IT CLEAR PUBLICLY THAT THAT IS THEY FELT. BUT IN CONTRAST, JESUS LOVED SUCH PEOPLE UNCONDITIONALLY. HE LOVED THEM LIKE THEY WERE.

III. HIS ACCEPTANCE

Presented by Dr. Jimmy Hilton

**SOUTH POINT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Finding God's Direction for Life



THIS GIVES EXPRESSION TO THE LOVE AND ATTITUDE THAT JESUS HAD TOWARD THEM. HIS ATTITUDE BECAME THE REASON FOR HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THEM. HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THEM WAS SYMBOLIZED IN THE FACT THAT HE WOULD ACTUALLY SIT DOWN AND EAT WITH THEM.

A. HE ACCEPTED THEM ON THE BASIS OF FULLY FORGIVING THEIR PAST.

WHEN THE PHARISEES LOOKED AT MATTHEW ALL THEY COULD SEE WAS HIS GUILTY PAST. WHEN SIMON SAW THE WOMAN WITH THE ALABASTER BOX BOWING AT THE FEET OF JESUS, ALL HE COULD SEE WAS HER PAST. THEY WERE SO FOCUSED ON THE SINS OF THE INDIVIDUAL THAT THEY COULD SEE NOTHING ELSE. JESUS SAW THEM WITH FORGIVING EYES.

B. HE ACCEPTED THEM FOR WHAT THEY WOULD BECOME.

JESUS INVITED MATTHEW TO BECOME A FOLLOWER OF HIM BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT HE COULD BE FORGIVEN AND ALSO ON THE BASIS OF WHAT HE COULD BECOME. JESUS SAW THAT MATTHEW THE TAX COLLECTOR COULD BECOME MATTHEW THE APOSTLE. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT BECAME OF THE WOMAN AT SIMON'S HOUSE, IT WOULD PROBABLY SAFE TO ASSUME THAT SHE BECAME A TRUE FOLLOWER OF JESUS AND AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE FIRST CHURCH.