

Review

- We were made to Experience God in very real and tangible ways
- The truths we'll cover in this series are foundation to who we are as a church and as disciples of Jesus
- We hope you will continue on this journey with us as we're all changed to be more like Christ both personally and collectively
- Last week we talked about the first principle or Reality – That God is always at work

Preview

- Today – we're talking about the second Reality, that He wants a personal relationship with us
- Jesus modeled these principles in His earthly ministry
- He invites us to be in relationship with Him but if we're not careful, we can miss His activity

Matthew 9:9-13**1. Jesus models for us what it looks like to Experience God**

Matt 9: ^{9a} *As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth.* NLT

- Jesus was able to see people from God's perspective, not from a humanistic perspective
- Matthew, as a tax collector, was hated and despised by most

2. Jesus' invitation reveals His priority

Matt 9: ^{9b} *"Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him.* NLT

- Jesus invited Matthew to be with Him. To BE His disciple NOT to DO as a disciple.
- The definition of discipleship - Matthew 4:19 *"Come follow Me and I will make you fishers of men"*
 - Following Jesus, being Changed by Him and *then* on Mission with Him

3. Let's respond like Matthew

Matt 9: ^{9c} *So Matthew got up and followed him.* ¹⁰ *Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners.* NLT

- Matthew followed Jesus and invited Him into his life – he was not ashamed to let Jesus in
- Matthew not only invited Jesus BUT also His people

4. Missing God's activity is easier than we often think

Matt 9: ¹¹ *But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?"* ¹² *When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do."* NLT

- The Pharisees questioned Jesus' activity because they saw people from their own perspective, rather than from God's perspective
- When God doesn't do what we want, we often miss the good He is actually doing

5. God's priority is for us to KNOW Him – to be in a personal, loving relationship with Him.

Matt 9:¹³ *Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."* NLT

- God's priority is mercy and love not rules and restrictions

Hosea 6:⁶ *I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me more than I want burnt offerings.* NLT

John 17:³ *And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.* NLT

- Eternal life is a relationship NOT a destination

"Christianity is not a religion; it's not a system; it's not an ethical idea; it's not a psychological phenomenon. It's a person." ~ Josh McDowell, More Than A Carpenter

Next Steps

- If you have never made the decision to surrender your life to God, make today the day
- If you have, pray for eyes to see yourself and others the way He does
- Put aside any religious tendencies, grab on to His mercy and BE with Him