

Life Group Notes

Sunday 30th October 2022

Speaker: Scott Taylor

Title: BLESS: Eat

Passage: Matthew 9:9-13

In week three of our BLESS series we were looking at eating with those who don't know Jesus yet.

When we think of the many different ways that Jesus blessed people in his ministry on this earth, I wonder if we would consider the times that he ate with people. We probably wouldn't think much of it.

But we have to remember that in eating with people he was saying so much. In Jesus' day, to eat with someone to say you are my friend, it was to identify with a social class; it showed love, dignity, value, worth.

When Jesus goes to the home of Matthew in our passage, he is calling a tax collector, a socially unacceptable person, a friend and he identifies with him. He shows him love and dignity and value and worth. Someone who no one else would have wanted to bless – Jesus goes out of his way to bless. He enters Matthew's world with Matthew's friends. What a blessing.

The religious rulers obviously do not like this, they are affronted that Jesus would do such a thing because "respectable rabbis didn't eat with those who weren't part of the 'good people' group." (*Dave Ferguson, pg80, BLESS*)

When they try to undermine him, he simply says that healthy people do not need a doctor – sick people do. He is not interested in the assessment of who he should or should have dinner with, he is more interested in hearts and motives. Of course, the religious rulers needed the mercy and grace of Jesus, they were just too righteous to see it!!!

To underline the emphasis of the meal table, Jesus also gives us a meal to remember him until he returns, communion. He doesn't just give us sound doctrine, but a meal.

So Jesus eats with people and he gives us a meal to remember what he has done. We too get to eat with people. Sounds simple right, but I wonder how many of us are actually doing that?

We looked at 4 reasons why we may not do this:

- #1 "I can't cook" or "my house isn't fit to have people in"
- #2 "I'm not an extrovert"
- #3 "What will I say?"
- #4 "I'm too busy"

I guess we could also chuck in, have you seen the rising price of food!!!

As much as these are all valid reasons, none of them are things that should keep us from gathering round a table with others, be that for a drink or something to eat; in your house or theirs or a burger bar or a coffee house/pub. Remember when we eat with others we convey dignity, love, value and worth. Just as Jesus has conveyed to us.

Suggested Questions:

1. What did you hear on Sunday that challenged or inspired you?
2. When was the last time you were around a table with people that you didn't know so well and weren't Christian? Where was it? How did it go?
3. Have you been in a situation where people could say to you – why are you eating with them? Share that experience.
4. Which of those four reasons are you inclined to use? What would you do different now?