

## THIS MAN RECEIVES SINNERS

Text: Luke 15:1-2

INTRO: One accusation the religious elite repeatedly lodged against Jesus concerned his frequent association with "publicans and sinners." Publicans were Jews who worked as customs agents for the despised Roman government. They were viewed by almost all other Jews as traitors--scum of the earth. Their lowly estate is reflected by Jesus in His sermon on the mount, Matt. 5:47-48.

There is a sense in which the word "sinner" could describe any human being for all have sinned, Rom. 3:23. But the scribes & Phari-sees had come to use the word as a euphemism, primarily for (1) publicans, (2) women of ill repute, and (3) customers or companions of such women. Thus they complained that Jesus socialized and inter-acted with the immoral dregs of society.

### I. THIS MAN **RECEIVES** SINNERS, Luke 15:2.

He welcomes them, looks for them, waits for them. Receives them favorably. If such a person had sought counsel from one of the scribes, the scribe would have made himself unavailable. "Tell him I'm not in" or "I'm too busy to see him." Or maybe simply, "He's chosen a life style that will lead him to hell, & as far as I'm concerned, the sooner the better."

### II. THIS MAN RECEIVES SINNERS AND **EATS** WITH THEM.

He socializes with them, is willing to be seen with them. "It gags me to think about sitting across the table from such low-lives. How can He eat with them?"

### III. HE HAS GONE TO BE A **GUEST** OF A SINNER, Luke 19:7.

READ LUKE 19:1-10. It's bad enough to allow them to come to Him, but can you imagine, going into their filthy homes and haunts!

### IV. HE EVEN **TOUCHES** THEM--OR LETS THEM TOUCH HIM,

Luke 7:39. READ LUKE 7:36-50.

### V. HE COUNTS THEM AS HIS **FRIENDS**; BEFRIENDS THEM.

Matthew 11:19. READ MATTHEW 11:16-19

A. They complained of John B. because he didn't party.

- B. They complained of Jesus because He did.
- C. Jesus' proverb, vs. 19. The wisdom of John's action, & that of Jesus, was in the produce, the offspring of their deeds
  - 1. John's preaching had produced a renewal & revival among the Jews such as had not been seen for centuries.
  - 2. Jesus' preaching had also produced interest in the hearts of many who had never shown a spiritual interest before. The proof was in the pudding. Wisdom was justified by the results, the children she produced.
- D. The scribes & Pharisees thought Jesus was too loose & too tolerant. In fact, He was, in most ways as strict as they were. In some ways, stricter, Matt. 5:20.
  - 1. He told the woman taken in adultery, "Go & sin no more." JN 8:11. He told the same thing to a man He had healed of lameness, JN 5:14.
  - 2. He was not overly lax with the much married woman of John 4. READ JOHN 4:16-22.
  - 3. Zacchaeus was led by His influence to repent and restore what he had stolen, above & beyond the restoration required by Jewish law.
- E. The Pharisees hated the sins of the publicans & sinners--& they hated the sinners who committed those sins. They knew such sinners were doomed to hell, & the sooner they got there, the better the scribes & Pharisees would like it.
- F. Jesus hated the sins of the publicans & sinners as well as those of respectable sinners like the scribes & Pharisees. But he loved the souls of the sinners. He knew such sinners were on the road to hell, but that knowledge broke His heart. He came to seek & save them, LK 19:10. He came to call them to repentance,

MT 9:3. He came to snatch them from death & give them life more abundantly, JN 10:10. He even came to pay the price for them. If He can call us to repentance, He can lead us to forgiveness, Acts 2:38.

CONCLUSION: Christ receiveth sinful men; even me with all my sin. Purged from every spot and stain, heaven with Him, I'll enter in.

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, December 17, 1995

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