

THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

WEEK THREE – THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AND START OF CHRIST’S MINISTRY

THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST John 1:19 – 37

1) John’s testimony to the Jewish Leaders John 1:19-28

As the news of John’s ministry reaches the leaders in Jerusalem they react with curiosity and concern. They are concerned about his message challenging the religious temperature of the nation and his growing popularity and following. The Sanhedrin sends a delegation of both Pharisees and Sadducees to question him. Their main concern is not John’s message but the issue of authority. Where does John’s come from and how will theirs be impacted? This ‘interview’ with John may have happened over the period of a few days.

- a) Undoubtedly their questions reflect what the people are saying about John.
 - Who are you? John’s answer indicates they want to know if he claims to be the Christ.
 - Are you Elijah? The Jews understood that Elijah would return to announce the Messiah’s coming. John answers no, for while John came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Lk. 1:17) he was not Elijah himself.
 - Are you the Prophet? This comes from a prophecy Moses gave in Deut. 18:15-18 about one who would come who would be like Moses, speaking the Word of God. There were two interpretations as to who this would be. Some said this would be Elijah while the more common view was this would be the Messiah. This later interpretation was correct.
- b) The delegation is out of options, so frustrated by John’s short answers, they ask, “Who are you?” John answers:
 - ‘A voice of one crying out in the wilderness’ – A very humble response that deflects attention away from himself.
 - ‘Make straight the way of the Lord’, as the prophet Isaiah said.” – Prepare your hearts to meet the Messiah. This echo’s Proverbs 3:5-6 where ‘make straight’ means to remove obstacles.
- c) The delegation now moves their attention to John’s baptizing people.
 - “I baptize with water” – John’s baptism did not save anyone, but pictured a repentant heart.
 - “The strap of whose sandal I am unworthy to untie” - Again shows John’s humility. The job of removing a master or guest’s sandals and washing their feet was the lowest servant in the household. John is saying his position as the forerunner was even lower than the low.

NOTE: The Apostle John now records events that take place over the next few days.

2) John’s testimony to the people – Jn. 1:29-34

The day after the delegation from the Sanhedrin left, John is by the Jordan with a group of people. As Jesus approaches, John points their attention towards Him. This is a turning point in his ministry. Having spent approximately six months telling people to prepare for the Messiah, he now points people towards the Messiah.

- a) “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”
 - The Jews would have been very familiar with the image John is painting. Sacrifices given for the forgiveness of sin was central to the Jewish faith. There were daily sacrifices at the Temple of the nation as well as thousands of lambs offered as a sin offering by individuals. The ultimate Lamb was the Passover Lamb offered once a year for the nation as well as by individuals.
 - John says ‘sin’, not ‘sins’. Jesus was going to pay the penalty for all sin for all time.
 - Some Jews would see the connection with Isaiah 53:7.
 - Most Jews were looking for a Messiah who was a prophet and a victorious king who would deliver Israel from her enemies and rule forever from the Throne of David. Instead, God was sending a Messiah whose primary ministry was going to be paying the price for their sin.
- b) “I saw the Spirit descending...”
 - John had received a pre-arranged sign from God at the beginning of his ministry. This sign, the coming of the Spirit upon Jesus had been fulfilled at Christ’s baptism.

- John summarizes his testimony in verse 34.

3) John's testimony to two of his disciples. Jn. 1:35-37

The day after John's testimony to the group of people, he is standing with two of his disciples, Andrew and John as Jesus begins to walk by them. John now continues his ministry of pointing people to Christ.

- a) John repeats the same phrase he had used the day before, "Behold, the Lamb of God".
 - John's humility is on display yet again, as he gently pushes these two disciples away from himself and towards Jesus.
 - To a large extent, John's ministry is fulfilled. He will now 'decrease' as Jesus moves front and center (Jn. 3:25-30).
- b) John and Andrew have been disciples of John the Baptist and have prepared their hearts to respond to the Messiah through confession, repentance and 'fruits of repentance'. So as John says, 'There is the Messiah', they are ready to respond. God has prepared their hearts through the ministry of John the Baptist.

JESUS' FIRST DISCIPLES John 1:38-51

4) John and Andrew follow Jesus. John 1:38-39

- a) Jesus turns around and sees that the two are following him. He asks, "What are you seeking?" – What do you desire; what are your motives; what is in your heart?
- b) They reply with a question of their own: "Where are you staying?" It would have been considered too direct to ask, "Can we come to your house and spend time with you?" That is what they are asking, but in a more tactful and acceptable way. Their response demonstrates a seeking heart.
- c) Replying in the same polite and tactful way, Jesus says "Come and you will see." He invites them to come spend time with Him.
 - "It was about the 10th hour" or 4pm. Day time began at 6am. It would soon be dark, so undoubtedly the two men stayed with Jesus overnight.
 - Jesus is inviting them not only to spend time with Him but to get to know Him.
 - While the details are not given, Jesus must explain that He is the 'Lamb of God', the Messiah. Andrew and John believe Jesus, though they have much to learn about Christ and His ministry of 'taking away the sin of the world', the seeds of faith are planted and begin to take root.

5) Simon (Peter) is introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew. John 1:40-42

Probably the following morning Andrew goes to tell Peter about Jesus. He then takes the step of bringing Peter to meet Jesus.

- a) Andrew tells Peter that he and John had found the Messiah John the Baptist had been talking about.
 - "Messiah" (Christ) – 'Anointed One'. The One anointed by God to deliver and then lead the people of Israel from the Throne of David. This would be pictured by the anointing of David by Samuel. While God had sent Samuel to anoint David King, God Himself would anoint Messiah.
- b) As Jesus meets Peter, He immediately gives him the name Cephas (Peter) – 'Rock'. Christ looks at the rough and outspoken fisherman and sees who he will become in time – the leader of the 12 and the early church. Over time, Jesus will transform Peter from where He meets him to what he will become. However, as Jesus meets Peter for the first time, he has a very long ways to go!

6) Philip and Nathanael are called by Jesus. John 1:43-51

The day after Andrew brings Peter to meet Jesus, returns to Galilee.

- a) While John and Andrew had sought Jesus and Peter was introduced to Jesus by his brother Jesus Himself reaches out to Philip and invites him to follow Him.

- b) Philip then goes looking for his friend Nathanael to tell him about Jesus.
- c) Nathanael is less than impressed!
 - “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Nazareth was considered an insignificant village whose reputation was tainted because of the Roman garrison stationed nearby.
 - Philip’s response is to invite Nathanael to come meet Jesus for himself.
- d) Jesus reveals a supernatural knowledge of both Nathanael’s heart, response and location when Philip found him.
 - Nathanael responds with faith.
 - In verse 51 Jesus is referring to the story of Jacob dreaming of a ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven. Jesus is declaring that He Himself is the One who connects people with God.

JESUS’ FIRST MIRACLE AND PASSOVER John 2:1-23

7) Jesus’ first miracle at the wedding at Cana. John 2:1-12

Three days after meeting Philip and Nathanael he invites them to join he and his family at a wedding in the nearby village of Cana.

- a) A wedding was a very significant event, often last several days.
 - The wedding was planned and paid for by the Groom’s family
 - The wedding culminated the betrothal period as the couple consummated their marriage and started their life together.
 - It appears that Mary has an official role at the wedding while Jesus and his 5 friends go as guests.
- b) A major crisis arises as they begin to run out of wine. This would be humiliating to the family and bring festivities to pretty much a halt.
 - Since the water was not reliable, wine was a staple beverage, though much lower in its alcohol content than wine today.
- c) Mary informs her son of the situation. She may have had several reasons for doing this:
 - She is approaching her oldest son, who would have had some level of responsibility to help out his mom. The absence of any mention of Joseph indicates he has died sometime between Jesus 12th year and now. As the oldest, he is responsible to take care of His mom.
 - She may have heard about the testimony of John the Baptist concerning Jesus. That, coupled with her memories of the events surrounding His birth leads her to encourage Him to declare Himself as Messiah right there, right now.
- d) Jesus replies and then responds
 - “Woman” – Ma’am. A polite but impersonal name.
 - “What does this have to do with me?” – Jesus is telling Mary that their relationship is transitioning. He is no longer primarily her son but is in fact her Messiah. That means He is not going to respond to her time table but the Father’s. This makes even more sense if Mary has a responsibility for the feast. This is not my issue anymore.
 - “My time has not yet come” – This phrase is used several times in the Gospel of John and refers to Christ’s death and resurrection. Time will reveal that as Jesus does manifest His power and His teaching He will attract the attention and the opposition of the Jewish leaders that will ultimately lead to His arrest and crucifixion. It is not yet time to declare Himself.
 - The stone pots each held 20-30 gallons of water that was used to purify people (primarily their feet) and kitchenware. It was poured out.
 - Jesus does quietly meet the need by turning some 120-180 gallons of water into wine. However, only His 5 friends and the servants know what He has done.
- e) As a result of the miracle:
 - The needs of the people, especially the groom and family, are met.

- The faith of the 5 men is affirmed and deepened.

8) Jesus' first Passover of His ministry. John 2:13-25

- a) Soon after the wedding at Cana Jesus and his 5 disciples join the caravan of people traveling from the area to Jerusalem for the Passover.
 - Passover was the most significant of the Jewish festivals, and commemorated their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. Between 3-6pm each family slaughtered a lamb and prepared it to be eaten at the Passover meal that evening.
 - Jerusalem had a population of 75,000 to 1,000,000 people. At Passover, estimates run from 500,000 to 3,000,000 people came to Jerusalem during the week of Passover.

- b) As Jesus entered the out court of the Temple, the Court of the Gentiles, he discovered a scene more like a Bazaar than a place of worship.
 - While in Jerusalem, each adult male needed to pay their annual Temple Tax. This had to be paid using Temple coins, which necessitated having currency exchanges. However, the Jewish leaders saw an opportunity to make extra money and by the time of Christ were charging 15% to 20% exchange fees.
 - Lambs and other sacrificial animals were needed, and since most people were traveling long distances to get to Jerusalem animals were offered for sale. However, the people were being gouged by above market prices.
 - The Court of the Gentiles was intended to be a place where Gentiles were exposed to the Jewish faith and Yahweh as the Jews prayerfully prepared themselves to enter the inner courts for worship. The presence of the Money Changers and livestock made both impossible. Making money had taken priority over the spiritual lives of people.

- c) The response of Jesus is righteous anger, as He drives both vendors and animals out of the court.

- d) Jesus is confronted by the Jewish leaders who are responsible for this part of the Temple. Their authority has been challenged and their treasury had been short-changed by the actions of Jesus. It is interesting to note that they do not defend the market atmosphere nor the need of the people for sacrifices and proper currency. Their concern is their authority. It is also interesting to note they do not have Jesus arrested. Instead, they ask for a sign that Jesus is acting on God's behalf and authority.

NOTE: This is the first interaction between Jesus and the religious leaders. This interaction sets the tone for what will be a very tense and growingly adversarial relationship.

- e) Jesus does give them a sign, which will be fulfilled in three years. He tells them to, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up."
 - They think He is referring to the physical Temple they are in. They respond with disbelief.
 - Jesus is talking about His death and resurrection, which will take place in three years.
 - It is worth noting that when Jesus is buried, the Jews remember this moment and ask that His tomb be guarded. His disciples do not remember these words until after His resurrection!

- f) While in Jerusalem Jesus performs miracles that are not recorded in the Gospel. As a result of this, many people made a superficial or emotional decision to 'believe in his name'. As time will show, people who start to follow Jesus only because of the miracles He performs soon fall away from Him. When Jesus saw Nathanael, He saw a sincere heart seeking after God. When Jesus sees these people in Jerusalem, sincerity is missing.

9) Jesus meets with Nicodemus. John 3: 1-15

This story takes place while Jesus is in Jerusalem, and is an example of the type of people John refers to in 2:23-25. Nicodemus comes to talk with Jesus primarily because of the miracles He has done. Jesus refuses to affirm this shallow version of 'faith' and instead explains true saving faith.

- a) Nicodemus was a Pharisee, member of the Sanhedrin and a knowledgeable teacher.
- He comes at night. Possible reasons: This was the only way to get one on one time with Jesus; he did not want to be seen as representing the Sanhedrin; members of the Sanhedrin might have already been questioning Jesus because of the Temple clearing and Nicodemus does not want to be seen.
 - As a Pharisee, Nicodemus believed his entrance into God's Kingdom was secure because of:
 - Being a descendant of Abraham
 - Observing the Law and Traditions associated with daily living
 - Performing external religious rituals, especially circumcision
 - Bottom line – Being religiously active and righteous
- b) Nicodemus' greeting shows a deep respect for Jesus and an appreciation for the things Jesus is doing. **vs.2**
- "Rabbi" – a respectful term for an acknowledged teacher. Nicodemus himself is a Rabbi, so he is addressing Jesus as an equal. This is an unusually humble attitude for a Pharisee!
 - "We know that you are a teacher come from God..." – Based on the things Jesus is doing.
- c) However, respect and appreciation do not produce Saving Faith. The reply of Jesus shows Nicodemus is one of the people described in John 2:23-25. While he is definitely a sincere seeker, Nicodemus is not yet an actual follower of Jesus. So Christ gives him a summary of the Gospel.
- "Unless one is born again" – 'Born from above'. The act of God whereby he imparts eternal life. Being born again is an act of God, not of the person. (Eph. 2:8-10)
 - "Cannot see the Kingdom of God" – The Kingdom where those who have experienced Saving Faith live under the rulership of God. This starts in this life and will continue into eternity.
- d) The response of Nicodemus in verse 4 is revealing. He understands that Jesus is saying all of his efforts to be righteous before God is not enough to get him into God's Kingdom. His words could be paraphrased, 'You can't be telling me that after all of these years of carefully following the Law and Traditions and being a good Jew I need to start all over!'
- e) Jesus makes several clarifying statements about Saving Faith; being Born Again. **vs.5-18**
- Being Born Again includes being spiritually cleansed by the Spirit. **vs. 5** (Ezekiel 36:24-27)
 - Salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit, not people. While He cannot be seen, His work is clearly visible. **vs. 6-8**
 - Since Jesus is God and Messiah (Son of Man), His Word is true and authoritative. His Word far surpasses the words and teaching of men like Nicodemus. **vs. 9-13**
 - Jesus will provide forgiveness of sin by going to the Cross. This was illustrated in the OT in Numbers 21:5-9 by the bronze serpent. **vs.14-15**
 - This death for sin comes out of God's love for people. Receiving this gift of eternal life comes through faith. The reason Jesus came was not to judge and condemn the world but to provide a way of salvation. **vs. 16-17**
 - There are two possible responses to this; Belief/faith which leads to life and Unbelief which will lead to condemnation and judgement. **vs. 18**
- f) While we are not told what Nicodemus' response was during this conversation, we know that sometime between John 3 and the crucifixion of Jesus, he placed Saving Faith in Christ. **John 19:38-39**

JESUS' EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY John 3:22-36

After the Passover was finished, Jesus and his disciples leave Jerusalem but stay in Judea. Christ will spend a period of several months preaching and gathering a growing number of followers. Like John the Baptist, this phase of ministry includes baptism, though his disciples do that part of the ministry. This first phase of Jesus' ministry over-laps the final months of John the Baptist (John 3:22-36).

JESUS SETS OUT FROM JUDEA TO GALILEE

10) Jesus and the Woman at the Well. John 4:1-43

- a) After a few months of ministry, Jesus is gathering a larger following than John the Baptist, which begins to get the attention of the Pharisees. As time will tell, this attention is not a good thing! So Jesus makes the decision to move His ministry base back to Galilee.
- b) It is important to understand that Judea, including Jerusalem, was governed by a Roman Governor. Rome had determined that local affairs would be overseen by the Sanhedrin, which would ultimately answer to Rome. Galilee on the other hand was ruled by Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. While the Sanhedrin had a great influence in Galilee, it had no actual power or authority. So when Jesus was in Galilee, he was outside of the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin.
- c) “And he had to pass through Samaria” – Most Jews refused to travel through Samaria, even though it was located between Galilee and Judea. Instead, they would travel east of the Jordan through an area called The Decapolis, even though it was inhabited mostly by Gentiles. Jesus has a divine appointment with a woman in Samaria. That is the reason ‘He had to pass through Samaria’
- d) Note that verse 6 tells us that Jesus was wearied from the journey. This indicates His very real humanity. They are outside of the village of Sychar, and Jesus sits down near a well while the disciples go buy something to eat.
- e) Jesus is joined by a Samaritan woman who is coming to the well for water. Here are some things we will learn about her:
 - She is coming during the heat of the day because she is considered an outcast by the other women, who would have come for water hours earlier in the cool of the morning. This position as outcast was the result of her serial marriages (verses 17-18).
 - When Jesus speaks to her she would have been shocked. Jewish men did not initiate conversation with a strange woman and no Jew of either gender would talk to a Samaritan. This was because Samaritans were the descendants of the Jews left in the land by the Assyrians in 700BC and Gentiles brought into the land by the Assyrians at that time. They were therefore a mixed race, and considered compromisers worse than a Gentile. They were despised and rejected by any self-respecting Jew.
- f) As Jesus asks for a drink of water, He has more in mind than satisfying His thirst. He is opening a door of conversation that will lead to an opportunity to share the Gospel with her. He draws this woman deeper and deeper into the truth of His identity, using the illustration of life giving water.
 - If you understood who I am, you would stop thinking about physical water and ask for living, spiritual water. vs. 10
 - The one who receives the living water I can give to will never be spiritually thirsty again, and will have eternal life. vs. 13-14
 - I can give you what you are seeking after, love. You have gone through five marriages looking for it, but have not found it. vs. 16-18
 - The time is coming when you will not need a specific location or building to worship God. When the Messiah comes, He will enable people to worship God in spirit and in truth, with a new heart. vs. 21-24
 - I am the long awaited Messiah. vs. 25-26
- g) The woman responds to the words of Jesus by leaving her valuable water pot at the well and going back into town to tell people she had met the Christ. As a result of her faith and testimony:
 - Note that her words in verse 29, ‘Can this be the Christ’ implies a yes answer. As a result the people of Sychar go out to meet Jesus, who is still at the well, having been rejoined by his disciples.
 - Jesus uses the opportunity to teach His disciples about seeing people as a field ready to be harvested, having been prepared by God through the ministry of John the Baptist.
 - Many of the Samaritans believe in Jesus as the Messiah. He spends two more days with them and then continues the journey to Galilee.

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS IN GALILEE

After leaving Sychar, Jesus and his disciples continue to Galilee, arriving in Cana, where Jesus had turned water into wine. This begins an extended ministry in and around Galilee. The Gospels introduce this period:

17 *From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Matt 4:17 (ESV)

14 *Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

Mark 1:14-15 (ESV)

14 *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. **15** And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.*

Luke 4:14-15 (ESV)

43 *After the two days he departed for Galilee. **44** (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) **45** So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.*

John 4:43-45 (ESV)

11) Jesus heals the official's son. John 4:46-54

- a) As Jesus enters Cana, he is met by a royal official, probably from the court of Herod Antipas. This man's son is seriously ill, so when he hears Jesus has returned to Galilee he travel the 12-15 miles from Capernaum to ask Jesus to come heal him.
- b) Jesus' reply in verse 48 is directed at all of the people standing there, not just the official, for 'you' is plural. This continues the thought from John 2:23-25 that most people were interested in watching Jesus perform miracles, not seeking to know Jesus as Messiah. Once the signs stop, so does their faith.
- c) The dad pushes through and again asks Jesus to come. Responding to this man's seeds of faith, Jesus complies with the request. However, He stretches the man's faith by telling him the son will be healed, and sends the man home. The Official believes enough to respond, and as he walks home is met by servants who inform him that his son is healed. When he discovers the exact time of the son's turn around the miracle is confirmed.

12) Jesus is rejected at Nazareth. Luke 4:16-30

As Jesus traveled from town to town, He would often start His ministry at the local Synagogue. The usual service was structured this way:

- Thanksgivings and Blessings are recited, starting with the Shema from Deut. 6:4-5.
 - Prayer, concluded with the congregation saying 'Amen'
 - Reading from a passage from the Pentateuch
 - Reading from a passage from the Prophets
 - Sermon or word of explanation on the passages read
 - The Benediction
- a) As Jesus arrives in Nazareth, he entered the Synagogue on the Sabbath, and as a recognized Rabbi, was invited to read from the Prophets. The passage he reads in from Isaiah 61:1-2 and 58:6. He sits down, which was the teaching position of a Rabbi, and the people quietly wait for Him to comment on the passage.
 - b) Isaiah 61 is a Messianic passage, prophesying about his coming. It reveals that Messiah:
 - Be anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
 - Would preach the Gospel to the poor (those who recognize their need)
 - Proclaim liberty to the captives (from spiritual bondage through forgiveness)
 - Provide recovery of sight to the blind (spiritual blindness is replaced with spiritual understanding)
 - Proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (God's loving provision of redemption)

Jesus stops in mid-verse, for Isaiah 61:2b refers to God's judgement which will take place when Jesus returns.

- c) With the words, "Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing", Jesus declares that He is indeed Messiah, the Anointed One of God. The people's initial response is positive, as they marvel at His ability to teach. Quickly however, they begin to reject His words and claim.
- Some cannot get past the fact they know Jesus is simply a poor carpenter's son. Perhaps there is an undercurrent of judgmentalism stemming from the circumstances of Mary's pregnancy, though this is not stated in the text.
 - Some would have found it hard being labeled as poor, captive, and blind spiritually.
 - Many gave His words some thought and arrived at the conclusion He was proclaiming blasphemy.
- d) Jesus rebukes them by reminding them that in the OT God often turned His grace to Gentiles when the Jews were in rebellion against Him. Enraged, the people try to throw Jesus off the cliff Nazareth was located on. However, Jesus passed through the crowd and walked away. The text seems to indicate there was a miraculous element to this.

13) Jesus Calls His First Four Disciples to Follow Him Luke 5:1-11

As we arrive in Luke 5, it has been several months since the week Jesus had met Peter, Andrew, James and John. They have split their time between being with Jesus and their fishing business. Much has been said and many miracles have been performed. After letting them soak in His life and teachings, Jesus now calls them to make a commitment.

- a) Jesus is approaching the peak of His popularity with the people and is drawing large crowds. Today He is being push back against the water's edge, so He asks Peter, who is done fishing for the day, to let Him use his boat as a floating pulpit.
- b) After speaking Jesus makes a preposterous suggestion in verse 4. You do not fish in deep water and you do not fish during the heat of the day. Peter's response in verse 5 shows He sees Jesus as His leader and teacher (master) so after trying to dissuade Christ, agrees to do as he was asked.
- c) The result is a huge catch of fish. Peter's understanding of Jesus take a big step forward in verse 8, as he recognizes his sinfulness before the Messiah. Peter's reaction to Jesus' request had shown a lack of faith and maybe a little disrespectful. Peter is humbled, repentant and aware of his failings.
- d) Jesus' response is gracious and loving.
- "Do not be afraid" – Jesus assures Peter of His love and acceptance. Peter will not be rejected for his lack of faith.
 - "From now on you will be catching men" – Jesus officially calls these men to become His fulltime disciples.
- e) In response, the four men drop their fishing equipment and now commit themselves to being with Jesus as His followers.

14) Jesus calls Levi (Matthew) to follow Him Luke 5:27-32

- a) As a tax collector Levi was despised by the Jews because he works for the Romans. In addition, tax collectors were notorious for charging extra taxes and pocketing some for themselves. Levi's primary responsibility was to tax the local fishermen which would include Peter, Andrew, James and John. Undoubtedly he had heard Jesus teach many times. Like the first four men, Levi responds to Jesus after months of being exposed to His life, miracles and teachings. His arrival must have been less than welcomed by the four fishermen!
- b) Levi gets His friends together and had a great feast in Jesus' honor. Undoubtedly this was the last time Levi used his wealth for such a purpose. Jesus, rebukes the Pharisees who criticize his attending by declaring He had come to call the sinner – the one humble enough to acknowledge their need for forgiveness... for a Savior.

