

# **FOLLOW: Pt 1**

The foundation of the Christian faith is a relationship with our Saviour, Jesus.

The tragedy is, when we pursue a list of things to do, the Christian life becomes performance focussed instead of relationally based.

It would be like pursuing the principles of marriage, rather than pursuing our spouse.

We could be doing everything right but have no real connection!

## **Jesus' Invitation to Matthew the Tax Collector**

*Matthew 9:9 (NIV) As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow Me," He told him, and Matthew got up and followed Him.*

Jewish tax collectors were despised by fellow Jews.

Matthew was a social outcast. Jesus says, "*Follow Me.*" Matthew simply did!

**Why did Matthew just get up and follow Jesus?**

Matthew knew what it was like to be rejected and now he felt accepted.

Jesus was not a part of the religious establishment, but He was considered a Rabbi.

When Jesus says to Matthew *Follow Me*, He got Matthews attention.

Matthew dropped everything at once without any hesitation, left the booth and followed Jesus. **Matthew finally felt accepted!**

Matthew's life changed dramatically because of his willingness to follow Jesus.

**The Christian life is a lifestyle of following Jesus!**

**It you have been a Jesus follower now for some time;** are you still passionately following Jesus?

**Or, do you feel like Matthew?** Rejected and not accepted by those around you?

Matthew found acceptance by following Jesus ... and so can you!

**The Pharisees Complaint against Jesus**

***Matthew 9:10-13 (NIV)*** While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Him and His disciples. <sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, ***“Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”***

The Pharisees had become so focused on people obeying to the law; they lost sight of leading people into a relationship following God.

Instead of doing the will of God, the Pharisee's found themselves in opposition to it!

***Matthew 9:12-13 (NIV)*** On hearing this, Jesus said, *“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. <sup>13</sup> But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

Being a sinner is not an automatic disqualification from following Jesus - it is a prerequisite!

Jesus invites people who know they are not all they should be!

**Jesus' invitation is to have a relationship with Him.**

Notice that Jesus went home with Matthew to spend time with him.

We change when we are exposed to Jesus' love and acceptance of us.

## **Jesus' invitation causes us to focus on our journey.**

When we are in ***follow*** mode, we are more conscious of the work Jesus has ***yet*** to do in us, and the less critical we are about what He has ***yet*** to do in others.

When I am focused on where Jesus is leading me, I have little time to judge others.

## **Challenge**

Jesus' initial invitation to Matthew and to us is a simple one, to Follow and to continue to follow! Not to watch, listen or to consider, but to ***“follow”***.

Following Jesus will cost us. Refusing to follow Him will cost us a lot more!

**Are you passionately following Jesus?**