



Week 3 - The Friend of Sinners

LifeGroup Discussion Guide

How to use This Guide:

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the discussion questions, add any optional scriptures and questions if needed, and then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Discussion Questions:

Read Mark 2:13-17

- What kinds of “sinners” are you reluctant to befriend? What kind of weakness or fear keeps you from showing the love of Jesus to them?
- In what ways do you identify with Levi, the outcast tax collector? What do you appreciate about God’s grace?
- Do you know someone like Levi, who most people would think is not worthy of a call to follow Christ? Why might they in fact quickly and eagerly respond to an invitation?
- Have you ever been offended when you saw a fellow Christian reaching out to a certain class of people?
- Which people do you think Jesus would hang out with today?
- What is commendable about the Pharisees’ teaching and practice?
- What aspects of the Pharisees’ teaching and practice did Jesus condemn?
- In what ways do some Christians act like Pharisees, whether the good aspects or the bad? Have you ever found yourself doing these things?
- Do you know someone who does not realize he or she is spiritually terminally sick? What might you say that could convince them of their condition?
- Negatively, the unsaved are spiritually terminally sick. Positively, the gospel offers salvation from sin and death. Which motivates you more for evangelism and missions?
- **What was your biggest take-away from the weekend message?**
- **What did God say to you today through His Word? And what are you going to do about it!**

Next Steps

- For the last two weeks, we have talked about the importance of taking the Gospel outside of the church walls. Who can you share the Gospel with? Write down three names of people who need Jesus. Pray for these people and look for opportunities to share Christ with them.

Go to www.mycornerstone.org/next to learn more about your next step

More Thoughts

Unthinkable, absolutely unthinkable that He would come close to a sinner or allow a sinner to come close to Him. In the fifteenth chapter of Luke, "All the tax collectors and sinners were coming near Him, to listen to Him. Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'"

This was the issue that led to the rejection of Jesus. The outrage was that He was the one who claimed to be the most holy and the most righteous, Son of God. The one who claimed to be the Lord of heaven and the Messiah was comfortable with sinners. Separation defined the Pharisees. Never were they willing to be in the company of sinners. In fact, the rabbis used to say, "You don't even go near a sinner, even so much as to teach that sinner the Law." ...There was nothing but disdain for sinners, the category of sinners. Jesus was so comfortable with sinners.

In a word, my friends, this was the scandal of Jesus' life. This was the scandal of His ministry, He was the friend of sinners. You can call it the scandal of the friendship of sinners, or you can call it just the scandal of grace. Jesus welcomed penitent sinners and Jesus rejected impenitent self-righteous Pharisees.