

Session I - Follow Me

I. Call of Levi

- A. Why was it so significant to the Gospel writers?

- B. Two possible explanations.
 - 1. Possibly - The shocking nature of Jesus' choice of Levi.

 - 2. Possibly - The decisive nature of Levi's response.

- C. The shocking nature of Jesus' choice of Levi.
 - 1. Tax collectors were generally despised by "good" Jews of Jesus' day.
 - a. Worked for the Romans.

 - b. Often less than honest.

 - c. Contact with Gentiles made them "unclean."

 - d. Grouped with prostitutes - but worse.

As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him (Mark 2:14).

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him (Luke 5:27-28).

As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him (Matthew 9:9).

2. Levi was a tax collector they probably knew.
 - a. Levi was from the same city as Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
 - b. Since Jesus was based in Capernaum, there would be no way the other disciples could run from the fact that Levi, a former tax collector, was on the team.
3. Matthew's account of the events hints at how he viewed the situation.
 - a. Cleansing of the leper.
 - b. Faith in a Roman centurion.
 - c. Paralytic forgiven and healed.
4. Matthew's account of the actual call is revealing.
 - a. Mark (Peter)- "He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth."
 - b. Luke- "He went out and noticed a **tax collector named Levi.**"
 - c. Matthew- "He saw a **man called Matthew.**"
 - (1) He saw a man- a person.
 - (2) Called Matthew- The gift of God.

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him (Luke 5:27-28).

D. Decisive nature of Levi's response.

1. Brevity of Jesus' message - **"Follow Me."**

a. Two words that sum up the needed response of a man.

(1) This is not the entire message, rather the entire message needed to respond.

(2) The Lord asks for intelligent response. Levi must have had an adequate knowledge of Jesus.

(a) Heard teaching in Capernaum?

(b) Heard the Sermon on the Mount?

(c) Knew of the works of healing Jesus had done?

(d) Watched Peter and Andrew and James and John?

2. Decisiveness of the response- Levi got up and followed.

a. Wordless- Actions revealed faith.

b. Decisive- When he left, there would be no return.

“The word *follow* is *akoloutheo*; to take the same road as another does. It is used with the associative instrumental case. It is “Let him follow with Me.” The idea is not that of following behind another, but that of accompanying the other person, taking the same road that he takes and fellowshiping with him along that road.”

Wuest's Word Studies Vol. 1, Kenneth S. Wuest. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p.170

II. What does it mean to follow?

A. Phrase “Follow with me.”

B. Join me on my path.

1. Accompanying a person.

2. Taking the same road a person takes.

3. Fellowshiping with them along that road.