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# Jesus Is Calling You

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

## Jesus Is Calling You

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“After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at the tax booth. ‘Follow me,’ Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, followed him, leaving everything behind.” —Luke 5:27-28

Jesus’ encounter with Levi occurs soon after Jesus healed a paralytic. Everyone was in awe. Overwhelmed by what they had just witnessed, the crowds were at a fevered pitch. Jesus, on the other hand, looks forward and sets His sights on His next miracle. This miracle will culminate in the confirmation of His authority to cleanse and forgive sins as He selects an unlikely candidate to be His disciple. Jesus was always about His Father’s business—never leaning on His own reputation or his past encounters and interactions.

“We must perform the deeds of the one who sent me as long as it is daytime. Night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” —John 9:4-5

“So he told them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I too am working.’” —John 5:17

Scripture tells us that Jesus “saw” a tax collector. This is an interesting word in the Greek—*theaomai*—meaning “to wonder; to behold, view attentively; to contemplate.” It is regard for something marked by a sense of wonderment; a contemplative and ponderous gaze which carefully and deliberately observes an object in order to perceive it correctly and in detail. It involves more than merely seeing, it is noticing, recognizing, and taking note of something with reflection and acute interest.

Tax collectors were not held in very high regard within the Jewish community, to say the least. Often times they were alienated from the religious community. They gathered money from their brothers, the Jews, to give to the Romans, who were, of course, Gentiles. They were seen as those who betrayed their nation for material gain, often collecting more than necessary to go into their own pockets. In the book of Luke we are told:

“Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ He told them, ‘Collect no more than you are required to.’” —Luke 3:12-13

Seeing Matthew (Levi), Jesus beckons him to come, “Follow me,” he says. This call was different from the occasional and temporary following of Jesus by the crowds. The individual calling to follow Jesus involves abiding fellowship with Him, not only for the sake of learning as a student from his teacher, but also for the sake of the salvation known or looked for, which presented itself in this fellowship.

The first step involved in following Jesus is a trusting in Him. This trust results in following His leading, and living life according to His example. Jesus stressed self-denial and fellowship with himself in the cross. Following Jesus denotes a fellowship of faith as well as a fellowship of life, sharing in His sufferings not only inwardly, but outwardly if necessary (*The Hebrew Greek Key Word Study Bible-Lexical Aids*).

Responding to Jesus’ call, Levi gets up, leaves everything, and follows Him. This sounds so short and sweet, but it was no small matter. This was repentance lived out. Levi does a complete 180, leaving behind his old ways and trusting in the One who makes all things new.

### **Become More**

“He is made supreme when we are so satisfied in Him that we can ‘let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also’ and suffer for the sake of love. His beauty shines most brightly when treasured above health and wealth and life itself.” —John Piper

### **Further Reflections**

“So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away—look, what is new has come!” —2 Corinthians 5:17

“Follow me.” —Jesus (Luke 5:27)