

Jesus' Attitude Toward Sinners

Romans 5:6-8

In the Gospels, Jesus was accused of being "a friend of tax collectors and sinners", and I believe Jesus would not deny this accusation. Jesus said that He came to call sinners to repentance. He did not call the righteous, but sinners. He also said that healthy people do not need a doctor, only the sick do.

Do you think you are a good person? A righteous man? The self-satisfied and complacent do not seek Jesus. Jesus said that it is harder for rich people to enter the kingdom of heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. It is not because Jesus does not love them, but because they will not come to Jesus. Even if they come, they are not willing to deny themselves and follow the Lord.

Jesus was especially patient with sinners. He is especially attracted to sinners. Jesus was particularly willing to spend time with those who were excluded and rejected by society. Let's look at who Jesus would be friends with.

1. Tax Collector

In that era, tax collectors were one of the most hated people. They were often compared with sinners and even regarded as the sinners among sinners. The Roman Empire needed to levy various taxes, but there were no bank transfers or checks to collect taxes at the time. So the government found a group of people who specialized in collecting taxes, and sold the right of tax collection to these people. Only rich people could afford this right of tax-collection. After these people were authorized, they became chief tax collectors, and they hired a group of officials to collect taxes, namely tax collectors. They would use all kinds of methods of robbery and plunder to squeeze the people's money, imposing heavy taxes and levies, so as to enrich themselves, so the people hated them very much. Not only were they considered the same kind as thieves, but they were also considered traitors and betrayers of God because they worked with the Roman government to oppress their own people. But Jesus loved to be with them and be their friend.

2. Prostitute

If tax collectors were most despised by men, then prostitutes would be the most despised by women. Just imagine how you would feel if your husband or boyfriend was called a friend of a prostitute? How would you feel if your pastor was called a friend of prostitutes?

The eighth chapter of the Gospel of John records a touching story about a prostitute who was caught by the Pharisees and brought to Jesus. The Pharisees said that according to the law, the prostitute should be stoned to death. But Jesus replied, "If anyone among you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." As a result, everyone left in shame. Then Jesus said to the prostitute, "Neither do I condemn you. Go away and do not sin again."

3. Lepers

Lepers were considered unclean. The disease was contagious, and the bacteria would eat away the skin, causing flesh to ulcerate, releasing an unbearable stench. It was a very disgusting disease. The Israelites drove them away to a place far away from people and forbade them to have any contact with humans. If someone approached them, they would also shout to warn. People at that time believed that leprosy was caused by the fact that they or their ancestors had committed serious sins and were punished by God, making them obvious sinners. However, Jesus often reached out to them, even touching them, to show his acceptance of them.

4. The Prodigal Son

Although the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15 is not based on a true story, it fully expresses the heart of Jesus. The rebellious son forced his father to divide the family property, then left home to live a life of debauchery and squandering all his money. When he was penniless, he returned home to beg for mercy from his father. The father did not beat him, scold him, or drive him away. Instead, he warmly welcomed him, loved him, and gave him the best. This is the kind of person Jesus loves.

5. Jesus' disciples

There were many problematic people among Jesus' disciples. Not to mention Judas' greed, selfishness and betrayal; even Peter, the chief disciple, denied the Lord three times. John and James had bad tempers, were nicknamed "Sons of Thunder," and were often fighting for fame

and fortune. Matthew was a tax collector, the same type as today's gangsters. Nathanael was self-righteous. Thomas was suspicious and unbelieving... Some of them seem more normal, but they were probably just not recorded!

Why did Jesus enjoy the company of sinners so much? The reason is simple, because He is a merciful Lord who comes to help and save the lost. He is not a harsh judge who rank people according to their behavior. This is the Heavenly Father that Jesus knew, not the Lord who rewards good and punishes good deeds that people in the world worship. Sinful people know that they need to be saved, sinful people understand grace and are grateful for it, sinful people are willing to accept God's love and understand love.

Once, a prostitute came to Jesus and wiped Jesus' feet with perfume and tears. Everyone present looked at her with despise, but Jesus said, "The greater a person's sins, the deeper his love." Sinners need forgiveness, and this is the wonder of the gospel.

The heart of Jesus is full of compassion. He is pained when He sees sin stealing, killing and destroying people. He wants to save and release those who are oppressed by Satan and bring them to repentance. These people are not bad people by nature; they are just bound by Satan. They are God's precious children. As long as they are released, they can live out the glory of the life created by God.

People who confess and repent are very lovable. Look at David, a hypocritical king who raped another person's wife and killed her husband. After he confessed his sins and repented before God, he wrote Psalm 51. God loves the sorrowful and contrite.

You may say that there are many sinners who refuse to repent! Shouldn't these people be angered? God is a God who hates sin, but He loves sinners. He has mercy on sinners because they are deeply bound by sin and cannot even confess. What they need is not condemnation, but more mercy and more love. Now is the time of acceptance, now is the time of grace.

Who does God hate the most? Those who are self-righteous. They think they are better, more pious, and holier than others, so they criticize and judge others and exclude sinners. This blocks their hearts of mercy and goes against the heart of our Heavenly Father!