



Crowds and Followers | Connor Grim | 7.24.22  
Weekly Study

## START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What is a TV show that you grew up watching?

## SHARE

Welcome back to Group! This week we heard from Connor Grim our pastor of Young Adults here at Red Rocks Church. Connor challenged us to step out of the crowd of comfort and into the calling of participation in God's Kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven. We see this in the life of Matthew as Jesus invited him out of the crowd into something much better, to follow him.

**But before we dive in, take a few minutes to check in with your Group:**

**After last week's message from Levi, did anyone start a new morning routine? If so, share about it.**

## GROW

**Read Mark 2:13-14**

Up to this point, we have seen Jesus work miracles. Now he does something different. He comes in and radically changes a sinner's life.

As Jesus preached beside the sea his words had a different impact from person to person. For some, pure curiosity. For others, maybe half-interested. And still others, could not get enough of him; his words, his teachings, his life. In this passage of scripture, Jesus calls the Jewish tax collector, Matthew to follow him and calls him to be his disciple. In this particular invitation, Jesus picked one of the most unlikely men, with a despised occupation. Matthew was a tax collector, despised by the Jews, his own people! Yet it was Matthew who had an attentive ear and a potent curiosity that gives way to an invitation and an entirely changed heart.

**How do you hear his call to follow him - as a gentle invitation, or an urgent word?**

**Who are the current day “tax collectors” in our culture? (As a Jewish tax collector, Matthew was not only responsible for taxing the Jewish people a Roman tax, but he could collect over and above the Roman tax for his personal gain)**

Connor pointed out this week, the certain encounters Matthew would have had while being a distant observer from the crowd. Hearing from Jesus must have stirred his heart. It cultivated something in him for when Jesus invited him to be a disciple, a sojourner, and a co-worker for the Kingdom. We don't know how long it took for his heart to be ready to respond but God knew. The truth is, we can only sit back on the sidelines, at a distance, in the crowds for so long.

Then, Jesus called. Matthew responded immediately without delay and no option of dismissal. He knew all he would have to leave behind. He understood what would be required of him from this invitation. He knew the day he walked away from his tax booth, with all the comfort and conveniences, and all the Roman protection, he would never get it back. Matthew said goodbye to his lucrative career for the rest of his life. What Matthew gave up in order to step out and follow Jesus as an active participant was significant, and it changed him forever.

**What were some of the things you personally had to give up when Jesus first called you?**

**What are some things that you have held onto that keep you in the crowd at a distance?**

**What is so alluring of the crowd? Why?**

**Is proximity with Jesus better and more fulfilling than proximity to the crowd? How?**

**So why is the pull of the crowd so strong?**

## M O V E

**Read Mark 2:15-17**

As we have already seen, the mission of Jesus is a mission of salvation and redemption, of restoration and wholeness. How is he to help sinners change unless he is among them? Jesus loves crowds because he loves people. As Jesus invited Matthew to be his disciple, he demonstrates his authority to rescue even what the culture would deem most horrible and “too far gone” of people. His grace and mercy have the power to redeem. This is the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Matthew’s joy in being accepted by Jesus is seen immediately as he throws a big dinner party at his house. Jesus being the guest of honor among the only people who would attend, other tax collectors and those on the margins. This was not the most socially acceptable group of people among the Jewish people. A Jewish rabbi dining among filthy sinners. Jesus continues to invite his Church in redeeming this story among us today.

**Would you have felt comfortable at Matthew’s dinner party?**

**Who are the people (for you), most difficult to gather with?**

Jesus uses the analogy of a doctor. Jesus did not come for the healthy people; he came for the sick. He came for those who recognize within themselves their desperate need for a savior. He came not for the righteous but for the sinners: not for the healthy but for the sick. He came for you and I, because he knew we all need the Great physician to bring us to wholeness.

***May we walk in the wholeness of the Gospel this week.***

## P R A Y

*We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time-sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate groups (or calls if you are an online group) to share more freely.*

