

# The Scandal of Grace

Mark 2:13-17

## **Jesus is the Friend of Sinners (13-15)**

Jesus reaches out to those least likely to follow and invites them to become a disciple.

Following is an act that involves risk and cost.

Shortly after his call, Levi throws a dinner party for his friends and business associates to meet Jesus.

## **Jesus is the Enemy of the Self-Righteous (16-17)**

Sharing a meal was one of the most intimate forms of friendship.

For the Pharisees, Jesus' contact with Levi was worse than his contact with the leper (1:40-45). The leper did not choose his condition whereas the tax collector did.

Jesus affirmed that his mission was to call sinners to repentance. For him to avoid sinners made as much sense as a doctor avoiding sick people.

## **Live a Scandalous Life**

The scandal of this story is that Jesus does not make moral repentance a precondition of his love and acceptance. Rather, Jesus loves and accepts tax collectors and sinners as they are.

In dealing with the world, Christians often go to one of two extremes. We either isolate ourselves among other Christians or we assimilate the world and adopt all its values. Rather than isolation or assimilation, the Christian life is to be one of mission.