

BC AD, Mark 2:13-17



BC-AD

- “Put a pin in it”
 - To remember an idea or thought that has just been mentioned or remembered, especially because it will be useful later, to remember - post-it notes
- God has put several pins in the timeline of creation
 - BC – Before Christ, AD - Anno Domini, Latin for “in the year of the Lord”
 - There was a recognition of a massive change in the world when God’s Son came to “pitch His tent” (*John 1:14*) with us

BC-AD

- There are many lives here this morning where their timeline must also be measured by BC and AD
 - Paul definitely had a BC AD “stick a pin in it” event when he discovered a risen Jesus on the Damascus Road
 - **Romans 1:16 NIV**, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation (*change, transformation*) to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”
 - There was another disciple that became an Apostle whose “put a pin in it” moment was not nearly as dramatic but just as transformative

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 13 Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them.

- I wonder what Jesus taught
 - Did He cover the Sermon on the Mount where the message was love, compassion, and selflessness
 - Did He encourage his listeners to love their enemies, to forgive others, and to care for the poor and marginalized
 - Did He cover seeking the lost sheep of Israel and bringing them home
- One thing I do know is Jesus lived out His word, teaching
 - There wasn't two Jesus' – the teaching Jesus and the everyday living Jesus

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 14a As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth.

- He saw Levi
 - This was not a glancing view then forget but He perceived Levi with complete understanding
 - His name was Levi, making it likely that he is a descendent of the tribe of Levi, from whom the priests and Levites descended
 - His birthright was to worship and serve God in the Temple, to offer sin sacrifices for forgiveness of sins and lead in worship, to teach people how to live close and accepted by God, be a model
 - He now finds himself associated with the word, “sinner”
 - One who does not keep the Law of Moses, Torah

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 14a As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth.

- He is looked upon as a traitor, thief - worse than a demon possessed
 - A social outcast, disqualified from serving as judge or witness in court, excommunicated from the synagogue, and a disgrace to his extended family
 - The term applied to him would have been – hated and hopeless
 - Wealthy but poor spiritually and relationally, prisoners of their wealth, oppressed wherever they went, and blind or full of darkness
- Hatred in the Netherlands
- What does Jesus see when he looks at you?

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 14b “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

- Notice Jesus did not call Levi to repentance, to go to the Temple and give the appropriate sacrifices, to straighten and clean up his life then come find me
 - No flashing lights, booming voice, out of body experience
 - There in the middle of his tax booth Jesus calls him personally
 - Just simple profound words, “Follow me” and a decision
 - Follow me to the place of forgiveness, wholeness, acceptance, hope, truth

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 14b “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

- **Matthew 11:28-30 NIV**, 28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
- This must have had a massive influence on Levi’s life
 - Here is the most famous, holy and in demand Rabbi asking me to follow Him, to be a part of His movement
 - Here is my opportunity to change my life but it seems risky
 - Will others accept me, instead of trusting in me I must learn to trust Him, no idea where He will be leading

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 14b “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

- This is Levi’s AD, “put a pin in it” moment
 - **Luke 5:28 NIV**, “and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.”
 - He left not just His tax collection business but his hopelessness at the feet of Jesus, failures, opinion of others...
 - He simply left everything and followed Jesus
 - He began learning who Jesus is, God’s Word is true, make decisions that bless rather than curse, He got in the yoke with Jesus

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 14b “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

- This is Levi’s AD time
 - Levi’s whole life was transformed into something new and blessed
 - **Romans 12:2 NIV**, 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
 - Levi was conformed to the pattern of the world
 - Now Levi will start being transformed by learning how to think and obey like Jesus
 - So he can know with assurance the presence of God in his life and how to live to please His awesome Heavenly Father

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

- Can you hear Levi say "Jesus, I would be very honored if you would be a guest in my home this very night." - Jesus accepts
 - Luke describes this as "a large crowd of tax collectors and others"
- We find Jesus comfortable
 - I can see him enjoying the occasion, getting acquainted with people who have been afraid to approach him before, now enchanted in his presence
 - His joy before them lights up this party of outcasts into an occasion that they will never forget

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

- As he cleans up after the party Levi is no longer Levi the tax collector. He is Matthew the Disciple, and it feels very good. Very good indeed.
- When Jesus sat down with them it was a visible sign of fellowship, acceptance, grace, and forgiveness
 - He sat down not to condemn them but to offer them a better way in love

Mark 2:13-17 NIV, 16 When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” 17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

- It must hurt Jesus’ new followers to hear the put down, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and ‘sinners’?”
 - What will Jesus do, how will He respond?
 - Will He reject us after hearing this like everyone else does?

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- **Vs. 17** On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the (*self*) righteous, but sinners.”
 - The invitation to salvation, full and free, is extended not to “righteous people,” that is, not to those who consider themselves worthy, but rather to those who are unworthy and in desperate need
 - Jesus was not accepting their sinfulness but calling them out of it and into following Him
 - Come to Me, get in the yoke of life with Me, Learn of Me

BC AD

- **Luke 4:18-19 NIV**, 18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- Someone said, “Jesus didn't concentrate on polishing the already self-righteous, but on rescuing the perishing - the poor, the sick, the oppressed, and the brokenhearted”

BC AD

- There is a place for you where you will fit
 - Close to the heart of Jesus
 - A place of acceptance, mercy and grace, forgiveness, love, devotion to you
 - A place of strength, truth, hope, and change
- Why would Jesus choose Levi as one of His disciples?
 - He does so in order to show us divine grace is available to all who, “call upon the name of the Lord”
- I started with the wrong question, “Why did Jesus choose Levi?”
 - Right question – “Why not Levi? Why not you?”



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