



Luke 5:27-32

Jesus saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him. Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were at table with them. The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."

Introductory Prayer: Sunny days, cloudy days and rainy days all come from you, Lord. You surprise us each day as you make each day different to bring us closer to your coming, in which we hope. Lord, your love explains everything and guides all things. I wish to respond to your infinite mercy and love by loving you more each day.

Petition: Lord you know how difficult it is for me to forgive. Help me to do so always.

1. The Doctor Who Cures the Sick: What a great reply: "I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners." It is a statement open to all humanity in need of redemption. It is an affirmation that shows us that God is not exclusive. Christ has come for all sinners, and he extends to everyone his call to repent and be transformed by his grace. It shows us that Christ wants to reach everybody and forgive everybody. He is not like us, who discriminate and hold grudges. When someone sins more, God makes particular efforts to reach that person and offer his pardon and his elevating grace. What an example for us to follow when we have difficult moments in our dealings with others! Christ teaches us patience. Christ teaches us that we must love and build bridges whenever the opportunity arises.

2. We Must Evangelize the Sick: Christ sets the example and sends us to evangelize people who do not know him, or who offend him knowingly, half-knowingly, or even unknowingly. Interestingly enough, it is those who oppose Christ whom he calls the "righteous," because they are inflexible, and their criteria

cannot be bent. Christ calls us, on the other hand, to forgive, as often as is necessary (Luke 17:4). We need to learn how to forgive in a world that tells us to be tough and not to let anything get past us.

3. Forgiveness Can Only Come from Love and Lead to Love: This Gospel reminds us of the story of the adulterous woman who was brought before Jesus. The Law of Moses was clear, yet Jesus knew that something had to be changed in order for man to be able to reach heaven. He knew that only forgiveness and love for everyone would unite all men in paradise. He knew all men had sinned, and therefore they could not accuse someone else without indirectly accusing themselves. That is why Christ answered to those who accused the adulterous woman, "Let the one who is sinless cast the first stone" (John 8:7). We are all sinners. We all need to be forgiven and to forgive one another. We all need to allow love to invade our hearts so that it may be the bond that reunites us.

Conversation with Christ: Thank you, Lord, for giving me the solution to my life. Help me to forgive wholeheartedly those who have done me wrong. Help me to love them, pray for them and do good to them even though they hinder and harm me. Help me to strive tirelessly to bring to the world your solution to division, discrimination, hatred and war.

Resolution: I will think of the people I dislike or am indifferent to, and I will consider at least one of their good qualities. If the opportunity arises, I will speak well of them, and if I can, I will do a good deed for them.