

## How to Throw a Party Matthew 9:9-13

*“Later Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners.” - Matthew 9:10*

As a tax collector Matthew was seen as being friends with the oppressive Roman government and also someone who exploited people for money by charging more tax than was required by Rome and keeping it for himself. The “religious” people of his day would not associate with him, yet Jesus called him to be his follower and ate at his home.

**What people today are seen as outsiders either because of the people they associate with or because of their occupation?**

Even though the government overlooked Matthew’s actions of taking money, many people would have considered it criminal. Also, many of the “sinners” that were invited to the dinner party could have been criminals or at least involved in lifestyles that cared very little for doing what was right and yet Jesus accepts them by sharing a meal with them. It is a safe assumption that Jesus did not approve of their immoral actions (see Luke 3:13), but he still ate with them.

**Do you think there is a difference between accepting someone and approving of someone’s actions?**

**If so, what would it look like to accept a prostitute; or a daughter who chooses a homosexual lifestyle without approving the behavior?**

**When Jesus is questioned about eating with sinners says God desires mercy and not sacrifices. What does Psalm 40:6-8 say about the kind of sacrifice that is pleasing to God?**

**If you are a Christ-Follower, when was the last time you had someone at your table (not related to you) for dinner who was not a Christ-Follower?**

**For someone to invite us to his or her table implies a trust and that a relationship has been built up. When is the last time you had dinner at someone’s home who is not a Christ-Follower?**

**What would it take for you to throw a Matthew party?**