

Jesus Transforming Call

Jonathan Landis 4-13-07

Farmer Joe and Bessie

Farmer Joe decided his injuries from the accident were serious enough to take the trucking company (responsible for the accident) to court. In court, the trucking company's fancy lawyer was questioning farmer Joe. "Didn't you say, at the scene of the accident, 'I'm fine'?" questioned the lawyer.

Farmer Joe responded, "Well I'll tell you what happened. I had just loaded my favorite mule Bessie into the..."

"I didn't ask for any details," the lawyer interrupted, "just answer the question. Did you not say, at the scene of the accident, 'I'm fine'?"

Farmer Joe said, "Well I had just got Bessie into the trailer and I was driving down the road..."

The lawyer interrupted again and said, "Judge, I am trying to establish the fact that, at the scene of the accident, this man told the Highway Patrolman on the scene that he was just fine. Now several weeks after the accident he is trying to sue my client. I believe he is a fraud. Please tell him to simply answer the question."

By this time the Judge was fairly interested in Farmer Joe's answer and said to the lawyer, "I'd like to hear what he has to say about his favorite mule Bessie."

Joe thanked the Judge and proceeded, "Well as I was saying, I had just loaded Bessie, my favorite mule, into the trailer and was driving her down the highway when this huge semi-truck and trailer ran the stop sign and smacked my truck right in the side. I was thrown into one ditch and Bessie was thrown into the other. I was hurting real bad and didn't want to move. However, I could hear ole Bessie moaning and groaning. I knew she was in terrible shape just by her groans. Shortly after the accident a Highway Patrolman came on the scene. He could hear Bessie moaning and groaning so he went over to her. After he looked at her he took out his gun and shot her between the eyes. Then the Patrolman came across the road with his gun in his hand and looked at me. He said, "Your mule was in such bad shape I had to shoot her. How are you feeling?"

It was then that I said, "I'm fine."

Contributed by: [Andrew Chan](#)

Often times we take farmer Joe's approach to our spiritual condition. When asked if we have a problem, we answer, "I'm fine." When asked if we need prayer, we answer, "I'm fine." When God tries to confront sin in our lives... we answer, "I'm fine." Often times we are not really fine. We are sinners in need of forgiveness. We need God's help. Let's check out this story about Levi and Jesus. Levi was a guy who, like us, needed help.

Mark 2:13-17 NIV

Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. [14] As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

[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. [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.**"

The Pharisees walked in legalism and spiritual pride. They thought that spiritually they were better than others who didn't follow the Laws of God as well as they did. The Pharisees in their attempt to stay spiritually "clean" kept away from people that were known "sinners" all together. When Jesus came into the picture, He didn't follow the religious Jewish norm. He hung out

with the "wrong kind" of people. Jesus let a prostitute pour perfume on his feet and wipe them with her hair. He healed people who had all kinds of sicknesses and deformities... and often He said to them, "Your sins are forgiven, go and sin NO more." He touched people with leprosy... a horrible, and contagious skin disease, which literally rots flesh off of people's bodies. He didn't do things the way a "good Jewish rabbi" did things. In this particular instance He walked up to a tax collector. Tax collectors in those days were not held to the high standards of our day... they were known for overcharging people to make an extra buck on the side. They were thieves. He walks up to this known thief... this sinner, this tax collector... and He does the unthinkable. Jesus asked Levi to follow HIM. You see... Jesus didn't come for the spiritually healthy... He didn't come for the righteous.

1. Jesus Came for the Spiritually Sick (sinners).

Jesus didn't just come just to "hang out" with sinners, although He did hang out with them.

1 Corinthians 15:33-34 NIV

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."
 [34] Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God--I say this to your shame.

He came to transform them. When Jesus hung out with sinners, He never fell into the same traps and sins... His purpose for being there wasn't simply to fit in, or check out some parties. Instead Jesus' reason for being around the spiritually "sick" (sinners) was to heal them. He set them free of sin and invaded their lives with the loving power of God and truth. Sinners, when they hang out with Jesus, see the error of their ways and LEAVE BEHIND their old ways and follow Him. Jesus always changed His environment.

He carried truth with Him. His undying love and undeniable truth transforms.

2. Jesus Transforms Sinners

Levi was a thief. He was a dishonest man, a man who helped the Roman government to literally rob the Jewish people... and he robbed them even more to get rich quick. He was a sinner... just like me. But Jesus didn't condemn Him for his sin. Instead He called him OUT of His sin. Jesus called him to leave behind his tax collectors booth, and follow after Him. It takes commitment to follow Jesus. It takes being willing to leave behind the old life of sin. Sometimes people have to leave behind much of what they've known their whole lives. Levi left behind his income, his job. That's commitment.

Do you what the difference between being committed and being involved are???

For you to have a ham and egg breakfast... two animals have to be a part of that. The chicken that laid the egg. That chicken is involved. The pig was committed. The pig had to give his life.

When we become committed to Christ, we have to give our whole lives over to Him. We must be changed to walk after Christ... we cannot follow Him and also serve ourselves.

Matthew 6:24 NIV

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

So the question is... who are you going to serve? Will you serve yourself? Seeking after all the things that you can get, all the popularity you can gain. Will you serve the "American Dream" chasing after the finest house, car, and dream job? Or will you serve Jesus?

Jesus is looking at you tonight and saying, "_____, Follow me!" Leave behind your tax collectors booth. Leave behind your past, and follow me!

Altar Call: