**“Sinners Called”**

Psalm 119:65-72

Hosea 5:15—6:6

Romans 4:13-25

Matthew 9:9-13

Pentecost 2

Jesus said: “I came not to call the righteous, but **sinners**. Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are **sick**.”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

“**Come, Lord Jesus**, be **OUR** Guest” we say. But would we **enjoy** Jesus sitting with us at our family dinner table? The idea would be **intimidating** at the very least. We say it all the time, but what do we mean by it? Are we such Good and arrogant hosts that **He’d enjoy our company?** Is our cooking and conversation compelling? Is our front entrance and living room and dining room kept and attractive for Jesus’ arrival and seating? Which seat would you give to Him? **How would you even talk to Him?** “Come, Lord Jesus, be **OUR** Guest”. **Ouch …** **maybe not** in some gut-level or initially-conceptual way.

Or, maybe, **He walks up to us** at our office desk or in school in the hall or in class or in our garage at home (we’re cleaning it or grabbing our bike to go ride it), and it’s not quitting time at work nor the end of class but in the middle of it nor at an inconvenient time because you’d wanted this time for yourself. Yet **He says “follow Me to where we can talk”**.

First, imagine Him **seeking you out** desiring to have **your company (just you and He,or your immediate family and He)**. What might He **say**? What might **you** say? My assumption is **repentance**. As hosts we apologize for the appearance of our house with visitors or the dog that’s always jumping on people … or the behavior of the family or for our acknowledged inadequacies. **But it’s really appropriate that we do so in this case**. God is in the room as Christ Jesus is, and He’s owed better than what we offer … yet He’s “come” as, both, **invited** but (more importantly) **thrusting Himself into our situations**. He **visits everyone**. He “**calls**” sinners who know they’re that …

… and **does He expect your best? Yes**, but expects your **honesty** and **not-at-all any attempts at deception**. He sees through your skin and façade and **glances overall, yet lasers His sight on your soul**. You need not say anything. If you chance to speak words, they might best be sorrow for sin and pain sick of yourself in it. He’s come to **change all that. Forgive it and set an appropriate path**. You may still stray off it, but you won’t be **fooling Him about your direction as you do after His fix** …

**Text**

… and God always had a **fixing purpose** (in case you didn’t know that). He ventured into the womb of a girl (the Son did) He spent His earthly walk, then, in hospitals. Mostly those hospitals looked like roadways and house-fronts, cities and country-sides to us, but hospitals, doctors offices, and emergency rooms to Him. They looked like a Temple or synagogue to humans; they looked like a marketplace or a well … and like a work-desk in Matthew’s case, Him (Jesus) stepping up to not pay taxes but invite Him and friends of his to dinner, so **He saw every location as a saving location**.

That’s why I’ve always considered the pew area of a church building “the **waiting room, etc. of a doctors’ office**”. To even walk through the door (first parking in the parking lot and walking in), one has to know themself approaching and entering a **health and wellness facility / a location for diagnosis and healing (health or recovery toward health, even the “sniffles”)**. “No one is righteous, no not one.” Abraham and Sarah and all who’d follow by faith gained a **righteous identity** by the prescribed medicine of grace, not **natural** health. “**Barren**” she knew **she was**, Abraham “**old**” **Abraham**, yet a people (a whole nation of descendants were granted the healing medicine of grace) with words to sum up **their ailments: dying and self-serving, liar or crook, moralist or sorely and overly (inappropriately) proud, frustrated or frustrating, lazy and its cousin in being uncaring, chosen ignorance or real obliviousness on things one shouldn’t be**. The only difference man to man or woman to woman, child to child, is **honesty before God in Christ Jesus**. He’s “come” and stands before your face. **How are you with that?**

You are **Good if He (and You knowing of Him) drops you to your knees**. ….

**Application**

Jesus gave us an **assignment** in the text. We could consider it our summer assignment; but, better yet, let’s let it last much longer. We each might figure out the answer (at least conceptually) before the summer’s out, but the **application?** **That**, I’m betting, is one for the **rest of a lifetime**. “Go and learn what this means”, He said, then “’I desire **mercy**, and **not sacrifice**.’”

Let me **suggest** that this is a **life** **KNOWING MERCY**, and **not just duty** (yet, certainly, **duty as an afterthought)**. I want to tell you the **mercy part: that God in Christ Jesus invites Himself into you. He stands right before you and won’t leave. He confronts you to change you. And in every context of the remembrance of that, you will be humbled, and “fear” (with “love” and “trust”) will be your response**. All of that is **Good** … and to be **well-practiced**.

The ”**sacrifice**”**-part** is always only an **afterthought**. The **remembrance of God’s mercy in Christ Jesus and our (each individual) need for it (necessity for it / craving for it hungrily)** **THAT’S the “mercy”, or “steadfast love” and “knowledge of God” to which’s company He seeks to feed and calls to bless**.

It is **then (in faith like that)** that He does what’s spoken of in even the Old Testament book of Hosea fulfilled, though, in Jesus’ walk upon the earth as a man: “**He will** **revive us**; **He will** **raise us up (with Himself) on the third day … that we may ‘LIVE before Him**”.

In His name, +Jesus. Amen.