

Even Who?

“All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus’ words, acknowledged that God’s way was right...”

Luke 7:29 (NIV)

There is a remarkable shift in society as you pass from the last book of the Old Testament to the first of the New Testament. When you finish reading the Old Testament you see a nation fairly well united in its mix of people.

When you come to the New Testament you are suddenly confronted with many different groups in Judaism. There are Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Publicans and other groups all interacting with the common people—and with Jesus. The Bible does not explain where they all came from. But it seems they came into existence during the 400 years between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

One of the classes of Jews in Jesus’ time were the Publicans, or tax collectors. These people were Jews who had sold out to the Roman occupational forces in Palestine, and whose job it was to collect taxes from ordinary Jews on behalf of the Roman government.

You can imagine how unpopular they were with their

fellow Jews! Everyone hated them not only because they had betrayed their countrymen but because they often used the Roman soldiers to extract more tax money that necessary. They were regarded as cheaters and thought to be disgusting people by the common Jews of the time.

In Luke 7 there seemed to be a mass movement of people to embrace the message of our Lord. Jesus had won the hearts of many citizens of the country. So completely did Jesus appeal to the Jewish nation that, “even the tax collectors” were believing on Him and walking in God’s way.

We are convinced that Jesus is the universal Savior of humanity. No class is above His teaching and no one is so low, so depraved, so disgusting in the minds of others, that they are unfit to come to Jesus and receive eternal life from Him.

However, Luke writes in our verse for today that even the most despised and rejected of people—the tax collectors—were coming and accepting the teaching and witness of

Jesus. Many Jews of the time would think that tax collectors were quite beyond hope when it came to developing a relationship with God. Hence the shock and surprise in the comment about tax collectors.

Today Jesus is the same, and no one has sinned so much, no one has sinned so horribly that they are beyond the reach of this gracious and meek Savior. Perhaps you can look back on a very evil past. You may have spent many years in prison for your crimes against humanity. You may be rejected by everyone who comes near you.

Jesus is in the business of reclaiming the worst and the most despised of people, “even the tax collectors” are welcomed by Him. There is simply no one so evil that Jesus cannot rescue him or her from their lifestyle and put them into the way of the Lord. Come today to the One Who is the universal Savior.

© Rumford Ministries
www.RumfordMinistries.org
Some rights reserved