

I. ME

- A. Welcome/Online/So, What about...?
- B. Coming up on our 1 year birthday
- C. Mission/Vision-
- D. Foundation is laid...but it's not enough to sit back and hang out w/ each other
- E. Why? Jesus is the hope of the world and the church is his chosen instrument to give that hope.
- F. We have work to do!
- G. Gotta get out of these walls and interact and share the hope...
- H. Why? -- Most people think God is against them.
- I. Feels like God is against a lot of stuff...
 - 1. Game: Is God against it...?

II. WE

- A. You ever feel like God doesn't like you very much?
 - 1. Like he loves you b/c he has too, but he isn't too cool with how you live, what you do, what you think?
 - a. You definitely don't do enough of reading your bible and praying and going to church... so it's not like your picture is on the wall as Xian of the year.
 - 2. Or if he does exist he's doing his thing and you're doing yours and he's not too interested in you unless you get in his way?
 - 3. Or maybe that he's mad at you b/c of what you've done, how you've treated people?

- B. If there is a God what does he want from you?
 - 1. Obey- Be good. Don't drink too much, stop sleeping with them, stop watching that, stop smoking this, stop saying that, stop doing these things.
 - 2. Like God is against most things that you like?
 - 3. God is against most people? Maybe you?
 - 4. God is against you and what you want to do... so obey or he'll get mad.
- C. I know that's really simplistic... but when we boil down a lot of our feelings (we live by what we feel) about God... I think that's how many of us operate... I do things God doesn't like so God is against me.
- D. But nothing could be further from the truth...
- E. **God is for way more than what he is against.**
- F. In fact Jesus showed this over and over again...
- G. One of my favorites is about Levi in the eyewitness account of Mark

III. GOD (MARK 2:13-17)

A. Background

1. **Roman tax collectors**- One of the most hated groups of people
 - a. Bought the exclusive rights to collect taxes in a certain area.
 - b. Roman Gov. stipulated how much it expected from each area and sent soldiers to enforce the process
 - c. But collectors could set their own amount and keep anything above what Rome expected...
 - d. And with the muscle of the soldiers behind them, they got pretty rich.
2. **Levi**- Jew. Traitor!
 - a. Worked for the overlords.
 - b. Multiply how some of you feel about Antifa and how some of you feel about Fox News Trump Conservatives by 100.
 - c. Going against everything you hold dear about your nation.
3. **Sinner**-
 - a. Didn't live by ceremonial laws
 - b. Sometimes by choice... just didn't care.
 - c. Or b/c they weren't allowed.

B. V. 13

1. People loved being around Jesus.

C. V. 14

1. Follow me... not just join the crowd or take a walk... be one of my 12 main guys... my inner circle.
2. What did Levi do to deserve that honor?- Nothing.
 - a. Hadn't cleaned up his act, publicly apologized, memorized, a bunch of Bible verses, hadn't stepped foot in a synagogue since he was a little boy.

3. Jesus was for Levi... before Levi was for him...
 - a. **Jesus is for people before they are for him.**
 - b. **Romans 5:8**
4. That acceptance and love changed Levi's life...
 - a. Also known as **Matthew**...
5. Not only changed Levi...

D. V. 15

1. "Were eating with him"... probably means he's throwing the party/ he's the host!
 - a. Jesus wanted to be around "sinners"
2. To share a meal in that culture... meant you identified with them, these are your people, intimate friendship.
3. "There were MANY who followed him"
 - a. Followed- Part of his group.
 - b. Let that sink in for a second.
4. **Jesus is for people who don't deserve it.**
5. Religious leaders could not wrap their minds around it... totally freaked out.
6. **Pharisees**- 613 Laws. The best of the best. The people God "obviously" blessed and loved.

E. V. 16

1. Couldn't get it.
2. Isn't Jesus supposed to be Holy and separate?
3. Doesn't he know these people aren't good synagogue goers?
4. Doesn't he know this religious stuff is for religious people?
5. Doesn't he know he's supposed to be a good example and instead he's condoning their lifestyle?
6. Jesus hears them...

- F. **V. 17**- One of my all time favorite verses...
1. I didn't come for people who think they have it all together... who think they are God's chosen ones, the self-righteous...
 2. I came for people who know they have messed up, sinned, don't know everything.

3. Jesus doesn't condone sin.

4. He forgives and heals sinners.

- G. He saw that they were lost, unaccepted, that they believed God was against them.
1. And he had compassion.
 2. He knew every fear, heartache, feeling of inferiority, every failure that made them think they weren't worthy of God's love and attention.
 3. And he came to heal them. To show them God's love. To show them that when you feel like you deserve God's love the least... he offers it the most.
- H. He doesn't condone sin...
1. He told Levi to follow him... meaning leave that life... and join me in a new life.
 2. Woman caught in adultery- **John 8:10-11**
 3. "Leave that sin behind"
 - a. Why- B/c it's naughty?
 - b. No- B/c it hurts people, it hurts you, and it hurts your relationship with your heavenly father.
- I. He doesn't condone sin... He heals it so that there can be freedom, joy, peace, hope, RESTORATION.
- J. **Jesus is for sinners.**

IV. YOU

- A. Good news! YOU'RE A SINNER!
1. Law of love
 2. Gospel.
 3. Admit that you've sinned... acknowledge that you need healing...
 - a. Not to make you feel bad...
 - b. Benji... "Tell the truth so you can be forgiven"

B. God is for you

1. He's not mad at you and barely tolerating you.
2. He is for your healing
3. He is for your freedom
4. He is for your fulfillment, joy, peace
5. And... He likes you.
6. Accept it!

C. Pray

1. Today I accept that you are for me... you are for my _____.
2. Opportunity to accept
3. God is for you.

D. **Shack**- "I'm especially fond of you."

E. God likes you

V. WE

- A. He's not just for **you**...
1. He's for your family, your neighbors, your city...
- B. 3/5 of Salem don't know God is for them.
- C. We want to change that...
- D. #forSalem**
1. Show the city that God is for them and so are we.
- E. Next two weeks... what that is actually going to look like.
- F. In the meantime... God is for you and **God is #forSalem.**