

Mark: “Conflict Begins” Part 3

Mark 2:13-17

Who were the tax collectors and sinners?

Tax collectors represented everything faithful Jews despised.

- They worked for Rome, Israel's oppressor.
- They became wealthy by exploiting their own people.
- They were viewed as ceremonially unclean.
- They were considered moral and spiritual outsiders.
- Religious leaders believed close fellowship with them would compromise holiness.

Why was eating with them so scandalous?

The first-century Jewish world, a meal wasn't just a meal.

Table fellowship communicated:

- Acceptance
- Relationship
- Friendship
- Honor
- Identification

To eat with someone was to publicly say, **“I receive you.”**

Who is Jesus?

- Jesus is a rabbi
- Jesus is God
- Jesus is a doctor

What is Jesus revealing?

- Grace is prevenient (the divine grace that precedes human decision)
- Grace is scandalous
- Grace is why He has come

Questions to ponder?

- Can I accept that God extends grace even to people who have deeply hurt me?
- Can I see sinful people as patients who need the Great Physician instead of enemies to avoid?
- Is there anyone I've decided is beyond God's grace?
- Will I follow Jesus closely enough that my life reflects His scandalous grace?

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