

The Pharisees
Luke 5:17-6:11

Weekly Key Scripture:
Read Luke 5:17-6:11

Key Verses...

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Weekly purpose statement for leaders:

This week group members should discuss the change that takes place as a result of knowing and following Jesus. As we change to be more like Jesus, many people find themselves with a feeling of self righteousness, this shouldn't be the case. At the same time our salvation is not a license to sin. Use this week's discussion to feel the tension here and use it to draw us closer to Christ. Realize there may be issues in discussion this week that do not have clear answers and use that to point your group back to scripture and prayer and eventually steer the discussion on to "how we live" and "how we love others."

Ice Breaker Question:

Do you have a pet peeve? Share something with the group that absolutely drives you nuts. Is there a person in your group who would admit to violating your pet peeve?

Transition:

Use the above, hopefully funny, discussion to help members see what it is to be legalistic. Pet peeves are often an irritation where frustration eclipses logic. The discussion of pet peeves should help them to understand the Pharisees dedication to rules above people and the vitriol with which they greeted the love and people focused teachings of Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

1) What motivated Paul to change?

Read Phil 3:4-7

though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for

righteousness based on the law, faultless.

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

2) In what ways did he change?

- What was his lifestyle before meeting Jesus? After?
- What were his goals, occupation before Jesus? After?

3) Why did the Pharisees dislike the fact that Jesus reached out to “sinners”?

- What were their cultural objections?
- What were their “biblical” Torah or law objections?
- What objections were based on politics or power?

4) In what ways do we wrongly avoid “sinners”? How often are our objections (as in the passage above)...

- Cultural?
- Biblical?
- Political?

5) How can we be “light” in this world

Digging Deeper:

1. It's clear that Jesus wasn't ok with sin. How do you “find the line” in this situation? Are there issues where you struggle with the line between grace and law? Discuss these areas with your group with openness and patience.
2. At Rabbit Creek Church we say that in essential beliefs we have unity and that in “nonessential” or beliefs aren't “salvific” we have liberty. Read and discuss the following quote from our Membership Class booklet...

Our Faith Statement

What We Believe

1. It starts and ends with love . (1 Corinthians 13)

2. In essential beliefs, we have unity.

There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:4-6 (NIV)

3. In non-essential beliefs, we have liberty.

Accept him whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.

Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.

Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves.

Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22 (NIV)

Children's Study: (Kids Key Theme here)

Luke 6:9 Then Jesus said to them, "What does the Law say we should do on the Sabbath day? Should we do good? Or should we do evil? Should we save life? Or should we destroy it?"

- **Song:**
- **Preschool Video:**
- **Kid Video:**
- **Activity:**
- **Coloring Sheet:**