

Why were tax collectors despised?

- 1. Corruption
- 2. Contribution
- 3. Contamination

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Imperfect tense in the original Greek indicates continual action

Open transgressors (NIV puts this of the law of Moses (word in quotes)

Luke 15:1-10

Matt 9:9-13
 Mark 2:13-17
 Luke 5:27-32
 Luke 19:1-10

1 Now the **tax collectors** and **sinner**s were all *drawing near to* hear him.

2 And the **Pharisees** and the **scribes** *grumbled*, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

3 So he told them this parable:

4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? (1)

5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, **rejoicing**. (2)

6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, '**Rejoice** with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.'

7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more **joy in heaven** over one sinner who **repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

8 "Or what woman, having ten **silver coins**, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? (1)

9 And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, '**Rejoice** with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.'

10 Just so, I tell you, there is **joy before the angels** of God over one sinner who **repents**."

Wide contrast between the purpose of their coming to Jesus

Jesus argues that they do the same thing he is doing

Arguing from the less to the great - Matt 6:26-30

Jesus draws His challengers into the illustration.

Matt 18:10-14

1. God is interested in the lost
 -Luke 19:10

*Are We?

-Matt 8:1-4
 -Matt 9:9-13
 -John 4:1-41
 -Gal 2:11-14

2. God rejoices when the lost are found*

Jesus had already told the "crowd" about the cost of being a disciple
 *Luke 14:25-33

Jesus wasn't just eating with "sinners" for leisure. He was seeking repentance.

*In contrast to the disposition of the Pharisees and scribes-V.2

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V. 1-2

The complaint of the Pharisees, and particularly of those among them who were also scribes, is more than a superficial attempt to find fault. To join in table fellowship with irreligious “sinners” is to cast doubt on one of the essential assumptions of Pharisaic teaching. This sect was dedicated to upholding the purity of Jewish faith and life. Implicit in their teachings was strict adherence to both law and tradition, including necessary rites of purification and separation from all whose moral and ritual purity might be in question...The Pharisees’ complaint is specifically directed to the act of eating and drinking because in their society table fellowship implied mutual acceptance. No act, apart from participation in the actual sinful deeds of the guests, could have broken the wall of separation more dramatically....Expositor’s Commentary – comments on Luke 5:29-30 (calling of Levi).

Grumble - G1234 - διαγογγύζω – *diagogguzo* - *dee-ag-ong-good'-zo*
From G1223 and G1111 ; to *complain throughout* a crowd:—murmur.

Pharisees

Separatists (Heb. *persahin*, from *parash*, “to separate”). They were probably the successors of the Assideans (*i.e.*, the “pious”), a party that originated in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in revolt against his heathenizing policy. The first mention of them is in a description by Josephus of the three sects or schools into which the Jews were divided (145 B.C.). The other two sects were the Essenes and the Sadducees. In the time of our Lord they were the popular party (John 7:48). They were extremely accurate and minute in all matters appertaining to the law of Moses (Matt. 9:14; 23:15; Luke 11:39; 18:12). Paul, when brought before the council of Jerusalem, professed himself a Pharisee (Acts 23:6-8; 26:4, 5).

There was much that was sound in their creed, yet their system of religion was a form and nothing more. Theirs was a very lax morality (Matt. 5:20; 15:4, 8; 23:3, 14, 23, 25; John 8:7). On the first notice of them in the New Testament (Matt. 3:7), they are ranked by our Lord with the Sadducees as a “generation of vipers.” They were noted for their self-righteousness and their pride (Matt. 9:11; Luke 7:39; 18:11, 12). They were frequently rebuked by our Lord (Matt. 12:39; 16:1-4).

From the very beginning of his ministry the Pharisees showed themselves bitter and persistent enemies of our Lord. They could not bear his doctrines, and they sought by every means to destroy his influence among the people

Scribes

Anciently held various important offices in the public affairs of the nation. The Hebrew word so rendered (*sopher*) is first used to designate the holder of some military office (Judg. 5:14 ; AV, “pen of the writer;” RV, “the marshal’s staff;” marg., “the staff of the scribe”). The scribes acted as secretaries of state, whose business it was to prepare and issue decrees in the name of the king (2 Sam. 8:17 ; 20:25 ; 1 Chr. 18:16 ; 24:6 ; 1 Kings

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4:3 ; 2 Kings 12:9-11 ; 18:18-37 , etc.). They discharged various other important public duties as men of high authority and influence in the affairs of state.

There was also a subordinate class of scribes, most of whom were Levites. They were engaged in various ways as writers. Such, for example, was Baruch, who “wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord” (Jer. 36:4 , 32).

In later times, after the Captivity, when the nation lost its independence, the scribes turned their attention to the law, gaining for themselves distinction by their intimate acquaintance with its contents. On them devolved the duty of multiplying copies of the law and of teaching it to others (Ezra 7:6 , 10-12 ; Neh. 8:1 , 4 , 9 , 13). It is evident that in New Testament times the scribes belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, who supplemented the ancient written law by their traditions (Matt. 23), thereby obscuring it and rendering it of none effect. The titles “scribes” and “ lawyers ” (q.v.) are in the Gospels interchangeable (Matt. 22:35 ; Mark 12:28 ; Luke 20:39 , etc.). They were in the time of our Lord the public teachers of the people, and frequently came into collision with him. They afterwards showed themselves greatly hostile to the apostles (Acts 4:5 ; 6:12).

Some of the scribes, however, were men of a different spirit, and showed themselves friendly to the gospel and its preachers. Thus Gamaliel advised the Sanhedrin, when the apostles were before them charged with “teaching in this name,” to “refrain from these men and let them alone” (Acts 5:34-39 ; compare Acts 23:9).

V. 7

Silver Coins – δραχμή – drachme - *drakh-may'* - From G1405 ; a *drachma* or (silver) coin (as *handled*):—piece (of silver).

Matthew 9:9-13

⁹As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

¹⁰And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Mark 2:13-17

¹³He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them. ¹⁴And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

¹⁵And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹⁷And when Jesus heard it, he

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

Matthew 6:26-30

²⁶Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Luke 5:27-32

²⁷After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, “Follow me.” ²⁸And leaving everything, he rose and followed him. ²⁹And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” ³¹And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

Luke 14:25-33

²⁵Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ ³¹Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. ³³So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Luke 19:1-10

¹He entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature. ⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” ⁶So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. ⁷And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” ⁸And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it

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fourfold.”⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.”¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Acceptance

Illustration – Wife / Sign-Language Interpreter / Acceptance of deaf children

Jesus Cleanses a Leper – Matthew 8:1-4 (ESV)

¹When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. ²And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.”

³And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I will; be clean.” And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴And Jesus said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them.”

- Leper’s were considered “ceremonially unclean,” and anyone who touched a leper was defiled. This did not stop Jesus from touching this man and making him clean.

Jesus Calls Matthew – Matthew 9:9-13 (ESV)

⁹As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

¹⁰And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

- Tax-collectors were despised for many reasons in Jewish society
 - Prone to corruption
 - Contributing to enslavement of Jews by Roman authority
 - Possible Gentile contamination
- Jesus accepted Matthew in spite of his profession

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria – John 4:1-41 (ESV)

⁷There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.”

⁸(For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)... ¹⁶Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” ¹⁷The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.”... ³⁹Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.”... ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word.

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Paul Opposes Peter – Galatians 2:11-14

¹¹But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. ¹³And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

- Only recorded confrontation between the Apostles of Christ was dealing with acceptance (in a meal setting).