

Sinners and Salvation

Luke 15 – God Versus the Self-Righteous

Tax Collectors and Sinners are Drawn to Jesus!

Luke 15:1-2

Jesus *Received* Tax Collectors and Sinners

- These were the most contemptible, hated, and immoral people of Israel – 15:1
 - **Tax collectors** were seen as *scum*, considered traitors to Israel, and believed to be extortioners.
 - **Sinners** were the worst of the worst, being scum associated with tax collectors, and guilty of deliberate and persistent transgressing of God’s law.
- So, the Pharisees, *who did not draw near to Jesus*, questioned the character of Jesus’ ministry for receiving them – 15:2
 - The Pharisees couldn’t perceive their own sin and saw no need for a spiritual savior.
 - They were “separate” from such sinners!

The Character of Jesus' Ministry

- Reception of these sinners did define the character of Jesus' ministry!
 - The Pharisees were so blind that they could only see evil in Jesus because sinners were received by him.
 - Is this so strange considering the circumstances? – Mt. 23:27-33; 21:31
 - Would we be on the Pharisees' side?
- Consider this event:
 - The most righteous drew the most wicked! – Lk. 15:1
 - Why? Because Jesus's life was a living, breathing, talking light showing them the way to grace and salvation – Jn. 1:14; 3:16-21; Mt. 11:28-30; Lk. 7:36-39, 44-47

The Difference in Jesus and the Pharisees

- They both hated sin and what it does to one's life.
- The Pharisees hated sin *and* sinners, being to these sinners beacons of condemnation, hopelessness, and death.
- Though Jesus hated sin infinitely more, his life shined a pure and holy light of hope for these sinners' salvation – Lk. 19:10
- This difference is seen in the adulteress brought to Jesus – Jn. 8:3-11
- Though Jesus *never* condoned sin, He never condemned the downtrodden who were willing to come to him for healing!