Matthew 1–13 Sermon Series
Supports Session 2: Invitation
Sermon Title: "Who Rejects Jesus's Invitation?" (Matthew 9:10-13)

Connection to Session 2

When Jesus called His first disciples, they dropped everything and followed Him. Their lives were forever changed when they accepted His invitation. In the story of Matthew's acceptance of Jesus's invitation, the gospel writer included another encounter—the one Jesus had with those who rejected His invitation.

Introduction/Opening

Receiving an invitation, whether it is by mail, email, text, or in person, is a part of our everyday lives. We are bombarded with invites. Even advertisements are invitations to participate in a "special deal" or sale. How does one sift through these invitations to choose which ones they should reply "yes" to and which ones to respond "no" to? It is simple for most of us. First and foremost, we ask: Is it something I need or want? If we determine we need or want it, then we will say "yes" to it.

In our passage today, Jesus invited people to repent, believe, and follow Him. He was at a party thrown by a man who had replied "yes" to that invitation—Matthew. Matthew brought other friends who had said "yes" as well. But others had rejected the invitation of Jesus. Let's take a look at the characteristics of those who said "no" to Jesus.

Outline

1. Those who are well (Matt. 9:10-12)

a) Jesus was in Matthew's home. Matthew invited his friends to come over and eat with Jesus and His disciples. Most likely, this was a party to celebrate what Jesus had done in Matthew's life.
b) The Pharisees saw that Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees had rejected Jesus's invitation, and now they questioned His choices. They naturally wondered why—if Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God—He would want to spend time with disobedient, sinful people. They assumed the Messiah would want to spend His time with the Pharisees instead.
c) The Pharisees were the experts in the law. They interpreted the law for the people and were the ideal observers of the law. The Pharisees were the leaders whom everyone aspired to follow. By all external appearances, they had it all together.
d) Jesus uniquely replied to their question. He told them they didn't need Him; thus, He went to those who believed they were sick and were in need of Him to heal them.

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e) The Pharisees, though experts in the law, forgot about the Suffering Servant described in Isaiah 53:4a: "Yet he himself bore our sicknesses, and he carried our pains."

2. Those who follow the rules (Matt. 9:13a)

a) The Pharisees were the experts in the Old Testament. It was a slight insult on Jesus's part to instruct them to go and learn what an Old Testament passage meant. The Pharisees were the ones who told others what those passages meant.
b) Jesus then referred them to Hosea 6:6. Hosea was written in a time when the people of God still observed the sacrificial law, but their hearts were far from God. They followed all the rules, yet they didn't really know God.
c) Jesus pointed to this passage to get the Pharisees to understand how they had become the same as God's people in Hosea's time.
d) Jesus doesn't want us to merely follow His rules. He wants us to know His heart. He wants us to love Him. He wants us to be transformed by Him.
e) Today, Jesus desires mercy not sacrifice from us.

3. Those who are self-righteous (Matt. 9:13b)

a) The Pharisees tried desperately to be righteous before God through obedience to the Law.
b) They believed that if they were obedient enough, God would accept them into His kingdom.
c) They failed to remember Old Testament passages that stated the impossibility of that belief.
d) The apostle Paul shared some of those teachings in Romans 3:10-18.
e) Jesus invited the sinner, the unrighteous person, to be saved and follow Him.
f) This invitation is appealing to anyone who knows they will never be good enough for God through their own obedience.

Conclusion

On any given day, we can receive several invitations. We will ignore or reject most of them. Jesus invites us into a saving relationship with Him. The invitation of Jesus is for the sick. It is for those who are the rule breakers, those who are in need of mercy. The invitation is for sinners in need of a Savior. Repent and put your trust in Jesus today. Accept His invitation of salvation and follow Him.

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