

1. Read Luke 15:1-2. From the standpoint of the religious establishment, what was remarkable about the relationship of Jesus and the “tax collectors and sinners?” What two things did they specifically complain about (under their breath)?
2. What risks was Jesus running in relating to them in this way? See Lk. 7:34. Was Jesus following the advice in the Old Testament to generally stay away from wicked people? See Job 21:16; Ps. 1:1; 26:4-5; Prov. 22:24-25; 23:20; 24:1. If not, why not?
3. Read Lk. 5:27-32. Last week we read about Jesus being invited to dinner at the home of a prominent Pharisee (Lk. 14:1-14). What were the main differences between the circumstances of these two meals? What were the main similarities?
4. Since the tax collectors and “sinners” had such a bad public reputation, we can assume that they were generally *of* the world (except for Levi and any others who responded to Jesus’ call to repentance). What was it about Jesus that (1) made worldly people want to be with him, and (2) made him want to be with worldly people?
5. None of the three gospels that record the dinner at Levi’s house quote anything that Jesus said. They all just say that he ate with Levi and his guests. Can you imagine Jesus turning to the “sinner” next to him and saying (as he said to Nicodemus in Jn. 3:3) “You must be born again”? Why or why not?
6. Read Lk. 19:1-10. This familiar Bible story also involves a disreputable tax collector’s encounter with Jesus. What are the main differences between this story and the one about Levi’s dinner for Jesus? What did Jesus mean by using the word “too” or “also” in v. 9?