

## **FOLLOWING JESUS MEANS CHANGING HEARTS & SOCIETY: MATTHEW 9:9-13**

In these few verses we read Matthew's account of his own conversion, and his first steps as a disciple of Jesus. Looking at the historical and social background of this passage will help us appreciate how Jesus brought transformation: internally in people's hearts and externally in society.

### **Systems and Powers in 1st Century Palestine (in context of Matt 9:9-13)**

<b>POWER</b>	<b>SYSTEM</b>	<b>EFFECT</b>
The Roman Empire	Political System	Political Oppression
The Tax Collectors; Rome	Economic System	Economic Oppression
The Jewish Community	Social System	Social Marginalization
The Religious Leaders	Religious System	Spiritual Oppression
Sin & Satan	World System	Spiritual Oppression
Jesus	The Kingdom of God	Total Salvation (liberation)

In Matthew's call, Jesus' followers were learning that there is a very natural link between discipleship and justice. These first disciples were learning that being a disciple is not just about turning from sin, it is also about transforming society - outcasts were being accepted; social, religious and economic structures were being challenged and changed.

### **Some questions to frame conversation / discussion:**

- Who are the sinners and outcasts in our communities/society today?
- What powers and systems exist in our communities/society today?
- How do we challenge and change these power structures?
- How do we challenge the religious church structures that marginalize the outcasts?
- What is the link between discipleship and justice?
- How do we disciple new and existing believers to make the connection between turning from sin and transforming society?