

246 12 Ordinary Men

Lesson 7— Matthew

I. Matthew's (also called "Levi") "SPHERE OF INFLUENCE"

A. Matthew was a TAX COLLECTOR

1. No type of person is looked at worse than a tax collector
 - *they represented the Roman Empire who was trying to run the Jews
 - *they were looked at as worse than sinners
2. Jesus chose to use this DESPISED person to be a Disciple (**Luke 5:27**)

B. Matthew didn't care about what people THOUGHT about him (**Luke 5:28**)

- *he immediately followed Christ "leaving EVERYTHING behind"

C. Matthew's friends were tax collectors and others HATED by the Jews (**Luke 5:29-30**)

1. Matthew knew that he had an INFLUENCE on a group of people who no one else could reach
2. Matthew used his INFLUENCE to bring his "sphere of influence" to Jesus
3. If it wasn't for Matthew, this group of people would have never heard the Gospel

So...why do you think Jesus chose to pick Matthew as a disciple?

- he could reach those no one else could

II. Who Is My "Sphere of Influence"?

A. God has given each of us a personality, popularity, and place to reach a SPECIFIC group of people that no one else could (**I Corinthians 7:17**)

- ex. Boys on rafting trip were open ears to what they had to say
- point out obvious "sphere's of influences"
- *if you don't, who will?

B. God has given each of us GIFTS that will cause those in our "sphere" to listen (**I Corinthians 12:18**)

- there was something about Matthew that caused multitudes to come to his party

Ask Yourself...

1. What types of people are in my "sphere of influence"?
2. What has God given me that will be a tool to share so others will listen?
3. Do I realize that I may be the only one who can reach those in my "sphere"?

Verse for the Week: **I Corinthians 7:17** Take it Home: **Luke 5:27-30**