

INTRO

Share with your group a time when you experienced something unexpected?

What comes to your mind when you hear the word “unexpected”?

IDEA 1

- What do you notice about Jesus from how He invites Matthew to follow Him?
- The invitation to follow is about surrender and proximity. Jesus is central, it is about being conformed to the character of Christ, and it is a lifetime invitation. How would you describe Jesus’ invitation?
- Share with your group what it was like to receive your invitation to follow Jesus?

IDEA 2

Throughout history, when the infected and unclean come in contact with the healthy, the healthy get sick. The clean become unclean and so religion said to stay away. But when the unclean come in contact with Jesus they walk away healed because nothing can make Jesus unclean. Our sin cannot corrupt Jesus. His holiness overcomes our sins. Infection works in reverse when Jesus is a part of the equation. Contact isn’t contamination, contact is cleansing.

This is why Jesus invites those who are so often ignored, overlooked and avoided.

- If you were to imagine this dinner today, who would be at the table?
- Do you believe Jesus was condoning the behavior of everyone He was dining with? Why or why not?
- How would Jesus’ actions be perceived today?
- Who do you typically have around your table?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

God graciously extended this unexpected invitation to us. However, life can sometimes make us forget the joy of our salvation (Psalm 51:12) and affects our ability to live in joyful gratefulness.

Take some time, individually, to write out a personal thank you note to Jesus for His invitation to you and what it means for your life.

Save some time at the end for those who are willing to share some of their note with the group.

NEXT STEPS

We are unexpectedly invited in to invite in the unexpected.

The unexpected are those who are overlooked and avoided, the hurting, the broken, the ones with special needs, those that look different or dangerous, the ones who fit all of the wrong categories in our imaginations.

So, who can you invite to your table in the coming weeks?

(If you are thinking “anyone but them,” it’s probably them.)