



small groups

*Discussion Guide*



# Becoming Gracious

*Matthew 9:9-13*

## Ice Breaker

*(10 minutes)*

### Discuss

- We identify ourselves partly by what groups we join. What clubs have you belonged to? Any club counts: school clubs, social clubs, country clubs, neighborhood associations, etc.
  - What's the difference between the clubs you listed and your small group?
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## Lesson Review

*(40 minutes)*

**Read Matthew 9:9-13**

Andy talked about the Pharisee's reaction to Jesus' friendship with "tax collectors and sinners." Jesus was friends with the people whose sin seemed most offensive to the Pharisees.

### **Discuss**

- Whose sin seems most offensive to you?

Jesus ended his retort to the Pharisees with a quote from the prophet Micah.

### **Read Micah 6:1-6**

### **Discuss**

- What was Micah saying to the people of Israel?
- What was Jesus saying to the Pharisees?
- What does the mercy / sacrifice idea have to do with loving sinners? How are the two ideas related?

In the early 20th century, Princeton theologian B.B. Warfield wrote a book called *The Emotional Life of Our Lord*. It was a study of what the gospels infer about Jesus' attitudes and emotions while he was on earth. Warfield noted that the emotional disposition most often attributed to Jesus in the gospels is compassion.

### **Read Matthew 9:36, Matthew 15:32, Mark 1:41, Luke 7:13, Luke 10:33, and Luke 15:20.**

### **Discuss**

- On whom did Jesus (or types of Jesus) have compassion in these verses?
- What's the connection in these verses between compassionate feelings and action?

The scripture reading on Sunday used the New American Standard Version which translates "mercy" as "compassion" in Matthew 9:13 – "I desire compassion, not sacrifice."

If we are to live, love and serve like Jesus, that will mean showing compassion on people, especially people whose behavior offends us.

The Pharisees labeled other people "sinners" but the message of the gospel is that we are all sinners. We are all Matthew. We are all outsiders whom God has invited in. God has opened the door to us; we dare not close the door to others.

## Read 1 Timothy 1:15 and Romans 5:8

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## Application

*(10 minutes)*

### Discuss

- Think of the people you listed in answer to the first question. Identify one way you can show compassion to those who offend you.

## Life Marks

As we move through this series, we'll be building a list of six characteristics of a mature disciple. Each week, we'll add another of these "life marks" to the list.

A mature disciple of Jesus is:

- Regularly engaged in time with the Father
- Wholly devoted to God's perfect will
- Graciously disposed toward all

