They were self-righteous.

2) Self-righteous people think they are good people.
   a) They do not think God would condemn them.
   b) They reason that God a loving God.

3) In reality, no one is without sin.
   a) (Psalms 14:2-3) "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."
   b) (Isaiah 64:6) "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."
   c) Sin is any disobedience of God’s law (e.g., lie, steal, swear, lust). In fact no one has ever kept God’s first law – Love God completely. It only takes one sin to make us guilty. (James 2:10) "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
   d) Yes, God is loving, but He is also holy and cannot overlook sin.

b. The self-righteous must admit their sin to repent.
   1) Without admitting sin, repentance is impossible.
   2) Without repentance, God’s forgiveness is impossible.
      a) Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)
      b) (Acts 3:19) "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"
   3) By repenting and trusting Christ, anyone can be saved.

Concluison: All of us here today fall into one of those two categories – sinners or self-righteous. Those who admit they are sinners, can be saved and have eternal life in heaven through Christ. Many of you have already done that. If you believe you are self-righteous, my friend, may I urge you to take another look.

Song: Amazing Grace - 236

Danger of Self-Righteousness

18 June 2017 AM – Mark 2:13-17 – Mr17 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Some of the most difficult people to reach with the message of salvation are not the drunken wife-beaters who live wicked vile lives, who curse God and sleep on the streets. No, it is far more difficult to reach the clean-living, upright person who is faithful to his spouse, respected in the community, goes to church some and believes he is a good man deserving of heaven. He is more difficult to reach because he does not see his need. The drunk knows he has problems, but the self-righteous person thinks all is well.

Transition: In our text, Jesus was dealing with two categories of people – sinners and self-righteous. As we look at this passage, notice with me what Jesus said was the main prerequisite for salvation.

1. Jesus Preached Repentance to the SINNERS.
   a. Jesus taught the COMMON people (v.13)
      1) Jesus went where the common people were.
         a) Many small villages were located along the shore of Galilee – fishermen, village markets, etc.
         b) Multitudes of common folk flocked to the sea side to hear Jesus preach.
      2) Jesus taught the common people along the shore
         a) The sloped shoreline made a natural amphitheatre.
         b) He clearly instructed them from the Word of God.
         c) Earlier we learned that Jesus’ message was a call to repentance. (Mark 1:15) "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."
      3) Many of the common people saw their spiritual need.
   b. Jesus called a CHEATING publican (tax collector)
      1) Jesus walked by the cheating tax collector’s office.
         a) Levi (Matthew) was a tax collector (Mat 9:9).
            1) Tax collectors were usually dishonest – they charged more than was fair and kept the profit.
            2) Publicans were considered traitors because they were Jews who worked for the Roman government to get rich.
They were hated by their fellow men, shunned socially and religiously

b) Levi sat at the receipt of customs
   (1) Toll house, tax office
   (2) Possibly along the main road from Syria to Mediterranean Sea or near the harbor

2) Jesus called Levi the tax collector to follow Him (v.14).
   a) Levi was a most unlikely choice for a disciple
   b) Levi’s immediate response implies that he had heard Jesus preach earlier
      (1) He may have witnessed Jesus’ miracles.
      (2) He probably heard Jesus preach repentance.
      (3) Possibly he had been struggling with conviction.
         Jesus would have known this before he called.

3) Levi, the cheating tax collector, admitted his guilt
   a) He repented and followed Christ.
   b) He left his dishonest job – never to return.
   c) He desired to introduce others to Christ.

c. Jesus witnessed to the CORRUPT guests.
   1) Jesus attended Levi’s evangelistic dinner
      a) Levi invited the corrupt people he knew (v.15)
         (1) Publicans: fellow-tax collectors
         (2) Sinners: devoted to lives of sin and vice, immoral
      b) Religious leaders watched in shocked (v.16)
         (1) Scribes and Pharisees considered it a defilement to sit at the same table as publicans and sinners.
         (2) In their minds Jesus was defiled and could not be holy.
   2) Jesus used the meal as an opportunity to witness
      a) By attending this meal Jesus did not condone sin; He convicted sinners (v.17). His righteous life and holy message brought conviction. This is obvious since He was calling for repentance.
         (1) Repentance is a change of mind about their sin.
         (2) Guilt must precede repentance
      b) Jesus never participated in sin to reach sinners.
         (1) To do so would be against His character.

2. Jesus Offered No Hope For The SELF-RIGHTEOUS.
   a. The self-righteous think they are good enough.
      1) When Jesus spoke of the “righteous” (v.17), He referred to those who considered themselves to be righteous.

   (2) It is never right to do wrong to get a chance to do right.
      (a) For example, playing “Christian rock” to get a crowd to preach to is wrong.
      (b) Jesus did not become like the wicked to try to win the wicked. He let His light shine.
         (Matthew 5:16) “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

   c) Jesus did eat a meal with sinners to reach sinners.
      (1) He did not isolate Himself. If we are going to reach sinners we must reach out to them. Jesus illustrated this in a parable. (Luke 14:23) ”And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”
      (2) Jesus did not shun sinners. Instead He met them in work places, markets, at meals, and on the hillsides where they were and preached to them.

   d) Where can we be around sinners without sinning? Here are some questions to ask yourself.
      (1) Must I disobey the Bible to attend?
      (2) Will my attendance make it look like I approve of sin? [wild party]
      (3) Could people get the wrong idea? [tavern for a coke]
      (4) Am I making provision for my flesh if I attend?
      (5) Could my attendance lead others into sin?

   e) Paul wrote, (1 Corinthians 9:21-22) ”To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”