

Hillingdon Park Baptist

## **Commitment Sunday**

*“Come, follow me” Jesus said*

**Family Service**

**Matthew 4:19**

So we are all back to work and back to school!  
Matthew was at his desk, doing his job. A nice Civil Service job collecting taxes for the government. He could live comfortably with reasonable prospects. Slight downside was this was that he lived in Israel and the government was the Romans who were a deeply resented occupying force. But the sun was shining and he had security guards to look after any unpleasantness. He worked in Capernaum which was by Galilee so he could walk along the beach after work. Just nobody but his family and colleagues liked him!  
Then Jesus turns up and says to him “Follow me”. We don’t know what Matthew knew about Jesus at that point but  
Matthew gets up leaves his desk with all the paperwork , and the security guards behind and follows Jesus.

Well actually it began a bit less dramatically than that. Matthew invited all his mates, mainly taxmen and people that were labelled ‘sinners’, to meet Jesus at his house and share a meal with Jesus and let them hear what Jesus had to say.

You see following Jesus starts in your own home. Today is about Commitment. But not just commitment to anything, it is about commitment to following Jesus. You see, Not only was Matthew called to Follow Jesus, many of his disciples were called in the same way Jesus comes to them and Jesus said “follow Me”. And this morning you are invited to commit yourself to do just that. I want you to go away remembering 5 words this morning

**“Come, follow me” Jesus said Matthew 4:19**

He said these words to Peter, Andrew, Matthew, Philip and probably James and John and many others. So the big question today is what does saying Yes to Jesus in 2024 mean?

And that is a big question and Matthew spend three years with Jesus learning all about it, then the rest of his life sharing it with others. He wrote Jesus’ teachings down for us in a book we call the Gospel of Matthew. It is like a manual of discipleship and following Jesus.

Following Jesus has a lot to do with changing the way we think. It begins with recognising that Jesus came to save us. That we need forgiveness for our sins, understanding that we don’t get to heaven by what we do but what Jesus has done in dying on a cross and rising again. He sends his Holy Spirit to empower us to live as he would have us live. The teaching of Jesus challenges our prejudices, and transforms our priorities. Today is a day to refresh our

commitment to Jesus or, if you haven't done it before, to begin to follow Jesus and begin a new life.

Following Jesus involves other people. We need to understand that Jesus was all about our relationships with others. Church, at heart, is about worshipping and relating to Jesus together. It is about encouraging each other through the struggles of life.

So Matthew wrote a book about following Jesus.

If you have a Bible check out What Jesus meant by "Come, Follow me"

**Lets sample just 5 examples for now.**

**What do we have to do when we fall out with our friends?**

Matthew 5:9

*Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.*

So following Jesus is about making up with friends.

**What do we have to do when we fall out with your brother or sister?**

Matthew 5: 22-24

*<sup>22</sup> But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*

Jesus says that we shouldn't be horrible to our brothers and sisters. That making up to them is as important as going to church!

### **What does Jesus say to the weary and despondent?**

Matthew 11:28

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.<sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

### **What did Jesus says about eating?**

Matthew 15:10; 19

<sup>10</sup> *Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand.<sup>11</sup> What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”*

<sup>9</sup> *For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.*

<sup>20</sup> *These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”*

So it not what you eat but what sinful thoughts that spoil us. By the way, you still have to wash your hands, that's good hygiene. Just don't forget cleaning up your mind is even more important!

### **What did Jesus say about paying tax?**

Matthew 22:17& 21 Jesus was asked:

*Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?”*

*Jesus said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”*

So we pay our taxes!

Time does not allow us to examine how we react to strangers, enemies, poor people, refugees, but if we are serious about following Jesus, we need to check out our thinking on all these things.

Jesus found Matthew sitting at his desk. Three years later Matthew discovered that Jesus came to suffer and die on a cross for our sins. And three days later rise again.

He records the Great Commission to all his followers in Matthew 28:19

*<sup>9</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Matthew did just that, writing down what Jesus had said and done so we can know how to follow him. We think he may have travelled as far as Ethiopia doing just what we are called to do, here in Hillingdon. Telling others how to follow Jesus. But first we have to respond to the call of Jesus.

**“Come, follow me” Jesus said Matthew 4:19**

We say, “Yes, I will!”