

# Follow Me: The Cross

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## 1. Call of Levi

- A. Why was it so significant to the Gospel writers?
- B. Two possible explanations.
1. Possibly - The shocking nature of Jesus' choice of Levi.
  2. Possibly - The decisive nature of Levi's response.
- C. The shocking nature of Jesus' choice of Levi.
1. Tax collectors were generally despised by "good" Jews of Jesus' day.
    - a. Worked for the Romans.
    - b. Often less than honest.
    - c. Contact with Gentiles made them "unclean."
    - d. Grouped with prostitutes - but worse.
2. Levi was a tax collector they probably knew.
- a. Levi was from the same city as Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
  - b. Since Jesus was based in Capernaum, there would be no way the other disciples could run from the fact that Levi, a former tax collector, was on the team.
3. Matthew's account of the events hints at how he viewed the situation.
- a. Cleansing of the leper.
  - b. Faith in a Roman centurion.
  - c. Paralytic forgiven and healed.
4. Matthew's account of the actual call is revealing.
- a. Mark (Peter)- "He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth."
  - b. Luke- "He went out and noticed a **tax collector named Levi.**"
  - c. Matthew- "He saw a **man called Matthew.**"
- (1) He saw a man- a person.
  - (2) Called Matthew- The gift of God.

## D. Decisive nature of Levi's response.

1. Brevity of Jesus' message - "**Follow Me.**"

## a. Two words that sum up the needed response of a man.

- (1) This is not the entire message, rather the entire message needed to respond.
- (2) The Lord asks for intelligent response. Levi must have had an adequate knowledge of Jesus.
  - (a) Heard teaching in Capernaum?
  - (b) Heard the Sermon on the Mount?
  - (c) Knew of the works of healing Jesus had done?
  - (d) Watched Peter and Andrew and James and John?

## 2. Decisiveness of the response- Levi got up and followed.

- a. Wordless- Actions revealed faith.
- b. Decisive- When he left, there would be no return.

**11. What does it mean to follow?**

A. Phrase "Follow with me."

B. Join me on my path.

1. Accompanying a person.
2. Taking the same road a person takes.
3. Fellowshiping with them along that road.

*As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him (Mark 2:14).*

*After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him (Luke 5:27-28).*

*As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him (Matthew 9:9).*