Mark 2:13-17 - **Jesus Calls Levi and Eats With Sinners**

**Who are we here for?**

(SBC 23 January 2022)

***13****Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them.****14****As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.*

***15****While Jesus was having dinner at Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.****16****When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”*

***17****On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

1. In first century Israel tax collectors were regarded as thieves, banned from synagogues and treated as the dregs of society, no respectable Jew would ever have taken that job. Most people would look the other way when they saw a tax collector, but Jesus looked at Levi and said, ‘Follow me!’

Who in our society do we find it hard to make eye-contact with? Why?

1. Just as Levi, invited his friends to meet Jesus, the great physician, who could bring healing and forgiveness to their lives, we are called to come to Jesus for healing and forgiveness and to bring others too. In some ways the church should act as a hospital, a place where there is a welcome for the sick.

Does the analogy of the church as a hospital really work? Why or why not? What other analogies could we use to describe the role of the church?

1. We in Selsdon Baptist church recognise that we are called to be a generous church, seeking opportunities to bless our neighbours in Selsdon and beyond as we share the good news of God’s love and healing.

What stories could you share with others of God’s love, healing and forgiveness?

1. Who could you invite to meet Jesus? Spend some time praying.