

Follow the Leader

Scripture Reading — Matthew 9:9-13

"Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. Matthew 9:9 —

In the ancient Roman world, tax collectors weren't government officials. They were members of syndicates that financially devoured ordinary citizens. After they had prepaid taxes to Rome, the tax collectors were free to gouge their own people. Their take far outstripped their initial investment. So we can assume that Matthew was reaping a vast fortune as a tax collector. Only when we understand this can we imagine the cost of Jesus' invitation to follow him. Some of us may likewise have to face tough decisions about the cost of discipleship. Some of us are making money in ways that dishonor Jesus. We may be engaged in business practices that the world considers smart, but we know down deep that we are doing wrong. Our business practices may even influence us to keep our distance from other believers. Christ came into the world for people like us. He came to restore us to spiritual and moral health. Don't be upset with the surgery he may need to perform in your life. And it may help to know that while Jesus calls us to sacrifice, he also offers an amazing investment policy: "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Matthew 19:29).

Prayer

Lord, help us not to be put off by free grace that calls us to costly obedience. Heal our moral brokenness. Lead us to confess our sins and live faithfully for you. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#)

Written by Bob Heerspink — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/bob-heerspink>

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