**Sermon Notes:** June 7, 2026
**Focus:** Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Matthew from his tax booth to a good meal.
A young girl rises from her death.
The hemorrhaging woman rises back into her life.
Resurrection vibes are happening today.

**Meals were social and political, not just personal.**
When Jesus eats with "tax collectors and sinners," this is not a Friday night dinner out. In the ancient Mediterranean world, shared meals signaled acceptance, loyalty, and social boundaries. They still do today but turn the volume up to eleven in the time of Jesus.

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*Jesus is not simply being polite to outsiders. He chooses community with them. He forgives while chewing food with people. That is love.*

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**"Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.'"**
This was not a gentle suggestion. Jesus is using a rabbinic formula often employed when someone had misunderstood Scripture. The point is not simply that Jesus is compassionate while the Pharisees are cold-hearted. Jesus is publicly challenging their interpretation of Torah.

**Matthew the tax collector represented collaboration with empire.**
Episcopalians often say the Church should "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." Admirable as that is, Jesus goes further than slogans. He sits down with someone many would have viewed as complicit in an exploitative imperial system.

Do we know Matthew was personally corrupt? No. But tax collection under Rome frequently involved overcharging and enrichment through coercive leverage. Matthew would likely have been viewed with resentment and suspicion by his own people.
One of my favorite passages is Luke 6:35–36, perhaps because I have been ungrateful and cruel like a tax collect at times. I am glad that Jesus still sits at table with me:

> *The Message Luke 6:35-36*
> *"I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind."*

*Another version- NIV Luke 6:35-36*
*But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because* ***he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked****. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

It is difficult, but necessary, to engage both the broken and the breakers of this world. I am still learning how to live into that calling.

**"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."**
In the ancient world, healing was not only about relieving physical pain. It was about restoring people to social wholeness. Matthew links meals and healing because both restore people to community.

- The bleeding woman is restored socially.
- The ruler's daughter is restored to family and communal life.
- Healing in Matthew is almost always communal.

The hemorrhaging woman is doubly marginalized. Under Leviticus 15, chronic bleeding carried ritual impurity, social exclusion, economic vulnerability, and gendered marginalization. Normally impurity spreads inward. But in Matthew's Gospel, holiness spreads outward. **In Jesus, restoration becomes contagious.**

**Jairus' daughter and the bleeding woman are paired intentionally in today's reading:**

the girl is twelve years old,
the woman has bled for twelve years.
One stands at the beginning of life;
the other lives at the edge of social death.
Both are called "daughter."

**Jesus touches the dead girl** Touching a corpse produced ritual impurity under Torah practice. Yet instead of impurity spreading to him, life spreads outward from him.

**Matthew discipleship is a type of resurrection.**
When Matthew "rose and followed him," the Greek verb overlaps with resurrection language used elsewhere in the Gospel. Matthew portrays discipleship as leaving one life behind to live a new one. I found far more in these meal and healing stories than I expected. I hope you can find some form of hope and resurrection in your own life as well. **Todd**