



PUBLICANS AND SINNERS AND GOOD PROSTITUTES!



WEEKLY
CHRISTIAN
FOCUS

1. PUBLICANS AND SINNERS

There are 8 mentions of the words 'Publicans and Sinners' in the New Testament! When I was a young Christian I used to think that a Publican was a landlord who owned what we call in England, a Pub, or Drinking Inn! However I found out later this actually was a tax collector! (link below)

I have included all these 8 verses further below, but let's look at these two:

Mark 2:15

And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many **publicans and sinners** sat also together with Jesus **and** his disciples: for there were many, **and** they followed him.

Luke 5:30

But their scribes **and** Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat **and** drink with **publicans and sinners**?

So apparently, these publicans and sinners enjoyed being with Jesus and usually we see a lot of them following Jesus. The word 'Sinners' used in this way were possibly people violating the laws of Moses perhaps sexually, like 'loose women' or prostitutes, probably drunkards and other 'deviants'. They were regarded as **scum** probably by some people. (Please see the recent WCF issue called 'Scumbags and Low-borns')

Pharisees and Scribes, who considered themselves higher and closer to God because they had the Word of God and they disseminated this Word or the traditions of it to the Jewish people. So they could not fathom why Jesus, who was regarded as prophet by many people, would be associating with such people. It really didn't compute for them, because they were still under the Law.

I like these scriptures and these meanings, both implied and direct, because I have very often found that the publicans and sinners type of people were very easy to talk with and associate with. They sometimes were just more open to what I wanted to say to them about the Lord. It didn't seem to be a problem to them or me that I could just tell them Jesus loved them. I think in a way we were all like that at one time on our lives, what do you think?

Recently here where I live, I have been making friends with some lovely people, Greek Cypriots at our local fish and chip shop, a Lithuanian young



woman, and quite a few other such people, both young and

old, in a poorer neighbourhood of the city. Conversation flows easily between us, smiles are everywhere and people's hearts respond to the Love of God from inside me. God's Love can flow out of me, because their heart is open, exactly as Jesus experienced. When we go, they wish us well and smile and we likewise to them. You will find the exact same experiences on a daily basis.

Now I don't look at these people consciously as sinners (I hope not) mainly because they are such precious people who are friendly and respond to God's Love and the Word of God that I give them. I consider them as friends or becoming friends and I can see Jesus Christ had the same experience, because He knew that many of these people would become believers and inherit the Eternal Life He came to bring them! Wow!

Our happiness and acceptance by God and everything we receive in this temporal life, depends on the state of the heart, all of our hearts, as we see in this next parable Jesus told us in Luke 18.

Luke 18: 9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. (tax collector, remember)

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or



even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Romans 5:5

Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.

Why did these publicans and sinners love being with Jesus so much? Because He did not judge them. He only came to offer them truth and Salvation and advice on the straight and narrow way of believing which many of them would accept.

As Jesus Himself said: 'I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance'. Mark 2:17, Luke 5:32

So the real deeper meanings about all this are that we are all publicans and sinners. The only difference between people is whether they truly realise that or not!

If you don't realise you are a sinner (even if you don't happen to be a tax collector!), your reaction then will be to slowly or quickly become a critical person. But if you know you need the Mercy of God and the help of Jesus everyday, then things will become a lot easier for you. I pray to be like that, although I freely admit that many times I have not been like that in the past.

Why not pray a similar prayer like the publican above in Luke 18 and ask God to help you be humble, contrite, hungry for the Truth of His Word and a non-judgemental person who does not jump to conclusions. Your life will be easier once you pray this.

Here are those eight great verses, mentioned earlier.

Matthew 9:10

And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

Matthew 9:11

And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

Matthew 11:19

The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Mark 2:15

And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

Mark 2:16

And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

Luke 5:30

But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

Luke 7:34

The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

Luke 15:1

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2. GOOD PROSTITUTES

There is at least one notably good prostitute in the Bible. Rahab is the most prominent who 'plied her trade' as we say in English, in the ancient city of Jericho. Rahab, as you may remember



helped Joshua's two spies gather information possibly about the city's defences, and she hid them while the King of Jericho's spies were searching the city for them. She sent them out another way and gave them advice on how to leave successfully. The writer of Hebrews even includes her in the Faith hall of fame in chapter 11, no small feat.

Again this all shows that it is the heart that matters. Of course people who accept Christ will not be continuing in this way of life, as they have now found a better

way; and that's all this is all about; finding a better way.



I also have a very dear Pastor friend in Belgium who began his ministry winning African prostitutes to the Lord.

In fact, not a few of his first members came from this 'community' and he is still thriving today in his work. God bless dear Pastor Mike and his lovely wife Pastor Boma

The woman caught in adultery.
John 8:1-12

This woman, although perhaps not technically a prostitute, did commit the life threatening sin of 'adultery'. Please read the chapter John 8. Jesus actually saved her life right there and gave her the command, go and sin no more.



I pray I won't be like a Pharisee

any more, I pray I can by God's grace be like the person who saved the man among thieves on that road to Jericho. (Luke 15)

Let's close with these beautiful and inspiring verses. God bless you all.

Jerry and the WCF Team

Ephesians 2

1 And you hath he (God) quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in

heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.



[Publican meaning in the Bible - Google Search](#)

[15 sex workers abandon trade as popular pastor intervenes - Daily Post Nigeria](#)

["Prostitute to Christian -How God Saved Me" - CHRISTIAN TESTIMONIES \(bibliatodo.com\)](#)

[Jesus Befriended Prostitutes. So This Victorian-Era Woman... | Christian History | Christianity Today](#)



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