

GET OUT OF THE HOTHOUSE!



It's surprising how many Christians have the idea that, when you're a Christian, you associate only with Christians.

So they travel in Christian circles.

They have only Christian friends.

They attend mostly Christian events.

They listen only to Christian radio, Christian music, Christian news.

They consult the Christian Yellow Pages to find a Christian doctor, lawyer, car dealer.

"Let's keep everything spiritually sanitary."

Question: How did we get to be so respectable and sanitary, when the One in whose name we gather every Sunday wasn't like that at all?

Jesus didn't limit his contacts to religious people.

He was out there in the real world.

He mixed with all kinds of people as an equal, as a peer.

He sat down and ate with them.



And as he sat at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Matthew 9: 10-13



Prayer: Yes, Lord, get us out of our hothouses. We admit that we are too isolated, too protected, too insulated from the real world. We are so sanitized that not only are we prone to weakness and disease, but we are also losing our ability to interact outside of our hothouses. Call us out of these sanitary, stale bubbles. Draw us back to humanity, to eating with, socializing with, and holding the hands of sinners, unbelievers, and the unchurched. May they sense that we see them, we hear them, we care, deeply care for them right where they are, for who they are. May through us they find the mercy, the kindness, the healing that you the Great Physician want to bring them. Forgive us for seeing them as potential converts to our faith, as a means to grow church membership, and for wanting to make them into our own sanitary images. Help us to see them as equals, as valuable, as called, and as precious, very precious to you, dear Lord. Amen.

Message: Richard E. Bieber 2003

Featured Artists: Image 1 by Gerd Altmann (Geralt on Pixabay), Image 2 by Ross Boone "Jesus Sits with Sinners", Image 3 by Sieger Koder "Jesus Eats with Tax Collectors and Sinners".

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WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN