

Luke 19:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

Analysis

And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. The verb *diagongyzō* (διαγογγύζω, "murmured") conveys grumbling, complaining—the same word used of the Pharisees' complaint in Luke 15:2. The phrase "they all" (*pantes*, πάντες) suggests unanimous disapproval—the crowd that moments before pressed around Jesus now turns hostile at His association with Zacchaeus. Their complaint centers on Jesus becoming *xenisthēnai* (ξενοισθῆναι, "to lodge as a guest") with *hamartōlou andros* (ἁμαρτωλοῦ ἀνδρός, "a sinful man").

The irony is profound: the crowd accurately identifies Zacchaeus as a sinner but fails to recognize their own sinfulness or need for grace. They see Jesus's fellowship with Zacchaeus as contamination rather than transformation. This murmuring echoes Israel's grumbling in the wilderness (Exodus 15:24, 16:2)—rebellion against God's grace masked as concern for righteousness. **The same religious spirit that crucified Christ rejects the gospel of grace that welcomes sinners.** The crowd's complaint sets up Jesus's climactic declaration: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (v. 10).

Historical Context

The crowd's reaction reflects first-century Jewish purity regulations and social boundaries. Entering a tax collector's house would incur ritual defilement—contact with a collaborator who handled Gentile money and consorted with Romans.

Religious leaders taught strict separation from sinners to maintain holiness. Yet Jesus consistently violated these boundaries (Luke 5:29-32, 7:36-50, 15:1-2), demonstrating that His mission was not to avoid sinners but to save them. The crowd's murmuring reveals their fundamental misunderstanding of God's kingdom—they expected Messiah to vindicate the righteous and condemn sinners, not to dine with tax collectors.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the crowd's murmuring reveal self-righteousness masquerading as concern for holiness?
2. What does their unanimous disapproval teach about peer pressure and conformity to religious expectations?
3. In what ways do modern Christians sometimes murmur against grace extended to 'undeserving' sinners?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἰδόντες	ἅπαντες	διεγόγγυζον	λέγοντες	ὅτι	Παρά
And	when they saw	all	it they	saying	That	with
G2532	G1492	G537	G1234	G3004	G3754	G3844
ἁμαρτωλῷ	ἀνδρὶ	εἰσῆλθεν	καταλῦσαι			
that is a sinner	a man	he was gone	to be guest			
G268	G435	G1525	G2647			

Additional Cross-References

Luke 15:2 (Sin): And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

Luke 7:39 (Sin): Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

Luke 7:34 (Sin): 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!

Matthew 9:11 (Sin): And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

Luke 5:30 (Sin): But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

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