

One of the more misunderstood statements about Jesus is found in Matthew 11:19 (NIV):

“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”

This verse shows us how Jesus was falsely accused by His critics. But were these accusations true? Did Jesus really overindulge in food and drink? Let’s explore this question through biblical and theological reasoning.

1. Jesus Was Misunderstood, Not Guilty

The terms *glutton* and *drunkard* were not statements of fact, but slanderous accusations. Jesus was not a sinner — He was sinless.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV) affirms this:

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him

we might become the righteousness of God.”

It's clear from Scripture that Jesus never sinned. Overeating (gluttony) and drunkenness are both categorized as sins throughout the Bible (see Proverbs 23:20-21). Jesus lived a perfect life and obeyed every command of God without fault.

2. Why Did They Accuse Him of Being a Glutton and a Drunkard?

Jesus often spent time with people considered “undesirable” by the religious elite — tax collectors, prostitutes, and other outcasts. His love and mercy for them stood in contrast to the self-righteousness of the Pharisees.

Luke 5:30-32 (NIV) shows this tension:

“But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, ‘Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?’
Jesus answered them, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but

sinner to repentance.’”

Jesus’ mission was to reach the lost. He dined with them not to indulge, but to bring them truth, repentance, and salvation. This association led some to wrongly assume that He must also be like those He spent time with.

3. His Presence in Their Homes Was Missional, Not Carnal

Jesus was frequently seen in the homes of sinners — not to feast, but to restore. For instance:

- With Zacchaeus, the tax collector, in Luke 19:1-10, Jesus declared, *“Today salvation has come to this house”* (v. 9).
- In Matthew 26:6-13, Jesus was at Simon the leper’s house, where He praised the woman who anointed Him — a spiritual act misunderstood by others.

These visits were spiritual interventions, not social indulgences.

4. Theological Insight: Wisdom Is Justified by Her Children

In Matthew 11:19, Jesus ends by saying:

“But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”

This means the truth of His actions — the lives changed, the hearts transformed — would ultimately vindicate Him. Even if critics didn't understand His method, the results of His ministry proved the righteousness of His mission.

5. The Church Must Follow Christ's Example

Today, the Church is called to go beyond its walls and reach those in spiritual need. Like Jesus, we must be willing to risk misunderstanding in order to bring hope to the broken.

Romans 10:14-15 (NIV) reminds us:

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? ... And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Our mission isn't to sit comfortably among the spiritually healthy — it's to bring light where there is darkness, love where there is rejection, and truth where there is confusion.

Conclusion: Jesus Was Misjudged but Remained Faithful

Jesus was neither a drunkard nor a glutton. He was wrongly judged by those who didn't understand His purpose. Yet, He continued to minister with boldness and compassion. His wisdom, power, and love brought transformation to countless lives — a testimony that still stands today.

May we, too, follow His example: not fearing what people say, but courageously carrying the Gospel to those who need it most.

Maranatha — Come, Lord Jesus.

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