

Session 3

Levi / Matthew

Children learn that Jesus heals all our hurts

Scripture: Luke 5:27–32

Supplies:

- Cards with pictures of Jesus and a religious man/scribe (like the disciple cards)
- Toilet rolls or popsicle sticks to keep the pictures of the disciples upright
- Popsicle sticks (to make little figures)
- Paper, small boxes, crayons, glue, and scissors
- For older children: copy of the broken heart activity for each person, plasters, coloured paper or magazines, glue, scissors, pens
- Sand box



Welcome

Play any game where children need to make choices.

Use the disciple cards and repeat the names of the disciples in a memory game or “Snap”.

Which disciple do you think was very rich? Choose a card/picture. (It’s the one with the abacus.)

Yes, it’s Matthew! He was also named Levi. It’s the one with the abacus. He was a taxman – that was someone who collected taxes for the Roman government. People did not like him! They thought he was sinful and sneaky. They thought he was taking other people’s money and a little bit extra for himself. Today we are going to hear how Jesus **chose** him as a disciple and went to eat with him.

Practise Matthew’s hand gesture (see session 1).



Worship

Settle-down ritual:

Let us place ourselves in the presence of our loving God. Sit with your back resting against your chair. Put your feet on the floor. Feel the floor. Rest your hands gently in your lap or on your knees. Close your eyes. Listen to the sounds outside the room. (15 s) Listen to the sounds inside the room. (15 s) Listen to your breathing. “Thank you, Lord, for breath. Amen.”



Word

You can explain what a tax collector is (someone who collects taxes) and that people thought tax collectors were sinful and sneaky (because they asked for more money than they should have, so that they could take some for themselves and become rich).

Luke 5:27 – 32:

Use the sand box and let the children portray the story with the disciple cards.

“Afterward, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at a kiosk for collecting taxes. The tax collectors made people pay a lot of money, so nobody wanted anything to do with them. Jesus said to him: ‘Follow me. Leave what you are busy with and become one of my disciples!’

Levi got up, left everything behind, and followed him. Then Levi threw a great banquet for Jesus in his home. Many tax collectors and others sat down to eat with them. The Pharisees and their legal experts grumbled against his disciples. They said: ‘Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?’

Jesus answered: ‘Healthy people don’t need a doctor, but sick people do. I didn’t come to call righteous people but sinners to change their hearts and lives.’”

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder how you would feel if you were Levi (Matthew) and people didn’t like you.
2. I wonder how you would react if you were Levi and you heard Jesus chose you to follow Him.
3. I wonder why the Pharisees were surprised.

Jesus explains that He is like a doctor. What does that mean? Let’s think of all the things that Jesus can heal. (Give the children time to discuss this.)

Possible answers...

Jesus heals my: * illness * sin * mistakes * anger * sadness
 * doubt * loneliness



Working and Playing

For younger children:

- Each child makes a popsicle-person. Write on the back. “I am invited!” Each person can decorate their own popsicle-person.
- Make a dinner table with people and write “Jesus eats with me.”
- Make cards of Jesus and the Pharisees for your collection. Use the cards from the first session and let the children act the story out again.



For older children:

- Make a broken heart collage. Use coloured paper or magazines. Write promises from the story on the plasters, for example “Jesus calls you”, “Jesus invites you”, “Jesus is your friend”, “Jesus heals you”, “Jesus forgives you” etc. Afterwards the plasters are used to glue the two pieces of the broken heart together.



Close with the benediction:

Jesus loves you very much.

He has invited you.

You are very welcome at his table.

He forgives you. He heals your heart.

His Spirit lives in you.

