# LESSON PLAN

## JESUS CALLS MATTHEW

**SERIES**: Following Christ
**THE POINT:** Jesus Wants me, a Sinner, to Follow Him
**BIBLE STORY:** Jesus Calls Matthew || Matthew 9:9-13
**AGE:** Grade 3 - Grade 6

### ABOUT THIS LESSON

In Week 2 of the "Following Christ" series, children explore the story of Jesus calling Matthew, a tax collector. Matthew was someone many people disliked and avoided because of his job and past choices. Yet Jesus chose Matthew and invited him to follow Him. This lesson helps children understand that Jesus does not wait for people to be perfect before calling them. Jesus loves sinners and invites everyone to follow Him. Children will learn that even when they make mistakes, Jesus still wants a relationship with them.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Learn, understand and retell the story of Jesus calling Matthew
- Understand that everyone has sinned and made wrong choices
- Recognise that Jesus still loves and calls them to follow Him, even though they're sinners

### BIBLE CONTEXT

In Matthew 9, Jesus sees Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. Tax collectors were often hated because they worked for the Roman government and were known for taking more money than they should. When Jesus says, "Follow me," Matthew immediately gets up and follows Him. Later, Jesus eats with Matthew and other tax collectors and sinners. When religious leaders question Jesus, He explains that He came to help those who know they need Him. This story shows that Jesus seeks out sinners, offers grace and invites them into a transformed life.

### SERIES MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 16:24 (NIV) "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

### Pages 2-4 have a variety of different activities to add onto the Link Crew Video!

Make this toolbox your own! Use it in whatever way helps your group dive deeper into the lesson. The goal is deep understanding and great discussions.

| Page Number | Name | Activity Description |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | Discussion Guide | Discussions guides, application "Faith in Action" statements and prayer pointers to help facilitate a greater discussion. |
| 3 | Activities Page | Fun, topic based activities like a craft, game, quiz and Memory verse activity that bring the learning to life. |

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# DISCUSSION GUIDE

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### START THE CONVERSATION

"What was the best dinner party that you have been to? Who was there and what did you eat?"

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, GRADE 3 – 4

1. Matthew was a tax collector and many people thought he was a bad person, but Jesus still chose him. What does this teach you about how Jesus sees people? How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus wants sinners to follow Him?

2. Jesus asked Matthew to follow Him, and Matthew left everything behind. Why do you think Matthew said yes straight away? How can you be obedient like Matthew when Jesus calls you to something?

3. Jesus ate with people who were called "sinners." Why do you think Jesus wanted to spend time with them? How can you show kindness to people who feel left out?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, GRADE 5 – 6

1. Matthew's past choices did not stop Jesus from calling him. Why do you think Jesus invites people to follow Him before they change? How does this show God's grace?

2. The religious leaders thought Jesus should avoid sinners, but Jesus chose to be close to them. What does this teach you about who Jesus came for? How does this challenge the way people judge others today?

3. Matthew left behind a comfortable job to follow Jesus. Why do you think Matthew did that? Why can following Jesus sometimes feel costly?

### FAITH IN ACTION

Jesus does not call perfect people. He calls everyone and since everyone one is a sinner, he calls all sinners to come follow Him. When we say yes to Jesus, He changes us from the inside out. Think of one way you can respond to Jesus' call this week.

- "I can make the decision today to follow Christ and believe with my heart and mouth that Jesus us my lord and saviour."

If you have have made that decision and call yourself a Christian:

- "I can continue to follow Jesus even when it's hard."
- "I can repent for the sins that I make regularly and ask for God's forgiveness."
- "I can always remember that Jesus loves me no matter what."

### Pray

Go around the class asking your kids if there is anything they would like prayer for. Ask if anyone would like to pray for each other, and give them the opportunity to. If not, then pray for the needs as the teacher / facilitator. Remember to pray for the children to ask for forgiveness for their sins and follow Jesus with open hearts.

Take note of any prayer requests to be passed onto your child's support network.

### Lesson Wrap-up

Jesus called Matthew even though others judged him. This reminds us that no one is too sinful or too broken for Jesus. Jesus loves us and invites us to follow Him, not because we are perfect, but because He is gracious.

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# ACTIVITIES PAGE

## JESUS CALLS MATTHEW

### ACTIVITY - GOD KNOWS ME CRAFT

Supplies Needed: Paper, Pens or Pencils, scissors

Have the children draw themselves on a piece of paper. Have them cut themselves out and design both sides of the page. Where the child's t-shirt would be on the paper, on one side have them write a word like, "sinner" or "fallen short" or "made mistakes" and on the other side write, "AND YET CHOSEN AND LOVED BY GOD." Reinforce that we are all sinners who are loved and chosen by God to follow Him.

### GAME - FOLLOW THE LEADER

The aim of this game is for the person who is out to determine who the leader in the circle is. Choose one student to close their eyes and face away from the group. Have the rest of the children sit in a circle. Quietly choose one child in the circle to be the leader. The leader will change their actions, and everyone else must copy the new action as soon as they notice the change. The leader begins an action, such as slapping their hands on their knees to a steady beat, and everyone copies the repeated action. The student who was facing away is then invited into the middle of the circle and must work out who the leader is. Once the leader is correctly identified, choose a new student to stand outside the circle and repeat the game.

### BIBLE QUIZ

1. True or False: Matthew was a fisherman. (False)

2. True or False: Matthew was liked and respected for his job as a tax collector? (False)

3. Short Answer: What did Jesus say to Matthew? "Follow me."

4. Multiple Choice: When Jesus was having dinner with sinners what did he say to the Pharisees? (c)
   a) These guys are sinners
   b) You guys should come join
   c) I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners

5. Multiple Choice: What is the main lesson of this story? (b)
   a) Only good people can follow Jesus
   b) Jesus loves sinners and calls them to follow Him
   c) Money is bad

### MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY: VERSE CANNON

Memory Verse: Matthew 16:24 (NIV) "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Have the children form a line or a circle. Have them all clap to the same beat. Then, one at a time, have them start saying the memory verse one clap after the other. This means the first person will finish one word before the second person and so forth. Reverse the order of the circle or have other people start to change it up and make it harder.

### GAME

You can find a list of small group games at https://lmnetwork.com.au/small-group-games/

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