

Saint Matthew: The Call to Follow Jesus

An invitation to begin again

Ages about 7-11 | Video 3:50 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth Jesus calls Matthew from his tax table, welcomes people who need mercy, and invites a changed life.

Learning goals Children will recall the call and meal, explain mercy joined to change, and name a next step toward fairness.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online [Open this video on Servus Dei](#)

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: Can a person begin again after doing wrong? Watch how Jesus's welcome becomes an invitation to change.

Watch and notice

Notice the tax table, Jesus's call, Matthew rising to follow, the shared meal, and the teaching about mercy.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What did Jesus ask Matthew to do?

Follow him. Matthew rose from the tax table and accepted the call.

2. Why did some people object to the meal?

Jesus ate with tax collectors and people seen as sinners, challenging their expectations.

3. What does Jesus's welcome offer?

Mercy and a call to conversion; loving someone does not mean approving every wrong choice.

4. How can you choose a fair next step?

Tell the truth, return what belongs to another, share fairly, or seek an adult's help to repair a wrong.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Draw Matthew answering Jesus's call, then a fair next step today.

Read & Write Recall the call, explain mercy, and plan repair or fairness.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: practice a safe choice to share or return an item.

Ages 9-11: discuss welcome and accountability together, without labeling whole groups.

A next-step card | Optional 4 minutes

Use a pretend example of unfairly keeping extra game pieces. Write a truthful admission, a fair repair, and an adult helper if needed. Connect the plan with responding to Jesus's invitation to live differently.

Look for understanding Children connect mercy with a changed choice and avoid assuming Matthew's inner feelings are directly reported in Scripture.

Closing prayer Jesus, thank you for calling us with mercy. Help us leave wrong choices behind and follow you with honest, generous hearts. Saint Matthew, pray for us. Amen.

At home Read Matthew 9:9-13 with an adult and choose one fair action for the week.

Handout answer notes Call: follow Jesus. Meal: tax collectors and sinners. Fairness: tell truth, repair, share or return properly, adult help.

Teach with care

Explain that distrust of tax collectors was historical context, not proof that every individual was dishonest. Avoid stereotyping Jewish people or religious groups. The story paraphrases Matthew 9:9-13 and adds imagined feelings and scenes. Matthew's connection with the Gospel is traditional; its composition and sources are more complex than the simplified writing scene. Avoid presenting all tax collectors or Pharisees as alike, or assigning blame to Jewish people.

Words to explain Tax collector: someone collecting taxes, an occupation often distrusted in Jesus's time. Mercy: love that offers forgiveness and help. Gospel: the good news of Jesus and a written account of it.

Sources for the leader

Story source: [Servus Dei video and English subtitle](#)

Scripture: [Matthew's call and the meal: Matthew 9 - USCCB](#)

Called to begin again

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Jesus invited Matthew to follow him and live differently.

Name _____

Adult helper Read aloud. Invite drawing, pointing, or spoken answers. Writing is optional.

1 Draw Matthew rising to follow Jesus.



2 Draw a fair or truthful choice you can make.



Tell What changed for Matthew? What next step could you take?

Pray Jesus, help me follow you with honesty and kindness. Amen.

At home Share your picture and one thing you learned about God or following Jesus.

Mercy invites change

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Remember Jesus's call and Matthew's response.

Name _____

1 Recall the call

What did Jesus invite Matthew to do?

Jesus asked him to ...

2 Recall the meal

With whom did Jesus share the meal?

Jesus ate with ...

3 Choose fairness

What can you do after an unfair choice?

I can ...

Pray Jesus, help me follow you with honesty and kindness. Amen.

Go deeper How can welcoming a person also help them begin a changed life?