



Matthew's Dinner

Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32

Memory Verse

How wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.
Ephesians 3:18 NIV

I can't wait to tell you a true story from the Bible.

Open the Bible for children to see, then set it down.

Today's true story from the Bible is found in the book of Mark, and it begins with a man named Matthew.

Show Kids Image 1

Matthew was a tax collector, and no one liked tax collectors! They took money from people for the rulers who were in charge. And they also took extra money to pay themselves. Some tax collectors took too much money, and it was unfair!

Everyone, say, "That's unfair!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: That's unfair!

LEADER: It was unfair so most people (hold palms up as if keeping someone away) stayed away from tax collectors. But not Jesus! Jesus (cross arms over chest) loves and cares about everyone. So Jesus went right up to Matthew and said,

Wave hands toward yourself as if inviting someone to join you.

Everyone, say, "Follow me!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: Follow me!

LEADER: Wow! Jesus was kind to Matthew, and Jesus asked Matthew to come with Him and be a close friend!

Let's do the sign for friend.

Make the ASL sign for 'friend' by hooking your index fingers twice, alternating which finger is on top.

It's like your fingers are hugging each other because they are best friends. And now switch so the other finger is on top.

Alternate which index finger is on top.

That's how you make the sign for friend.

Make the ASL sign for friend.

Show Kids Image 2

Jesus asked Matthew to follow Him because Jesus wanted to be (make the ASL sign for friends) friends forever with Matthew. Do you think Matthew went with Jesus? Yes! Matthew got up right away and left everything behind!

Show Kids Image 3

Matthew went home and prepared a big meal for Jesus. Matthew was so excited that he even invited other tax collectors and friends, so they could meet Jesus too! It was a big party, and all of Matthew's friends got to spend time with Jesus.

Show Kids Image 4

But some of the religious leaders did not think that Jesus should spend time with people who had done wrong things. The leaders asked Jesus' friends why Jesus was eating with tax collectors and people who don't do what God wants them to do.

Jesus heard what the leaders were saying, and He told them that He wants everyone to follow Him!

Show Kids Image 5

Jesus loved Matthew and his friends, even though they had done wrong things. Jesus loves us too, no matter what. He will never stop caring for us!

Tell me, Who does Jesus care about?

CHILDREN and LEADER: Jesus cares about everyone.

Yes, Jesus cares about everyone.

Pick up and close Bible.

Prayer:

Dear God, it is so amazing that Jesus cares about everyone and wants to be their friend forever. Help us to care about everyone like You want us to. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.