



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

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

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

Most people stayed away from tax collectors. But not Jesus! Jesus loves and cares about everyone. So Jesus went right up to Matthew and said, "Follow me," (Mark 2:14 NIV).

Jesus asked Matthew to follow Him because Jesus wanted to be friends forever with Matthew. Matthew got up right away and left everything behind!

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.

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!

Jesus loved Matthew and his friends, even though they had done wrong things.

Jesus cares about everyone.

Questions:

- **Where is the true Bible story found?** (In the book of Mark.)
- **Who does the true Bible story begin with?** (A man named Matthew.)
- **What was Matthew's job?** (He was a tax collector.)
- **Why did no one like tax collectors?** (They took money from people for the rulers who were in charge and they also took extra money to

pay themselves.)

- **Why did Jesus not stay away from the tax collectors?** (Jesus loves and cares about everyone.)
- **What did Jesus ask Matthew?** (To follow Him.)
- **Why did Jesus want Matthew to follow Him?** (Jesus wanted to be friends forever with Matthew.)
- **What did Matthew do when Jesus asked him to follow Him?** (He got up right away and left everything behind.)
- **What did Matthew go home and do?** (He prepared a big meal for Jesus and he invited other tax collectors and friends, so they could meet Jesus too.)
- **What did the leaders ask Jesus' friends?** (Why Jesus was eating with tax collectors and people who don't do what God wants them to do.)
- **What did Jesus tell the leaders?** (He told them that He wants everyone to follow Him.)
- **Who cares about everyone?** (Jesus.)

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.

Parent Cue:

- **Morning Time:** When you go into your child's room, say: "Good morning! It's time to wake up and eat. We can pretend we're eating with Jesus and Matthew at Matthew's house!"
- **Cuddle Time:** Cuddle with your child and pray: "God, thank You for giving us Jesus to be the best friend ever!"
- **Drive Time:** While on the go, talk about what you would give Jesus for dinner if He came to your house for dinner? Who would you invite to dinner so they could be friends with Jesus?
- **Bath Time:** Add toy plates, cups, and food to bath time. Encourage your child to have a pretend dinner party. Talk about how when Jesus went to Matthew's house for dinner, He invited lots of people so they could be friends with Jesus too!