

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Calls Matthew

Luke 5:27-32

Opening

Gathering: What occupations do we despise? How does God feel about the people in these jobs?

Today's Focus: Jesus reached out through the crowd and called Matthew personally to follow Him.

Key Verses: *Levi got up, left everything and followed Him.* Luke 5:28

It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Luke 5:31-32

Opening Prayer

Lesson

WHERE Jesus Begins to Minister

Where did Jesus grow up?

Matthew 2:23

Where did Jesus go to begin His ministry?

Mark 1:9

Where did He go after being baptized?

Matthew 4:1

Where is Jesus the next time we see Him?

John 1:28-29, 35-36

Does He stay around John for a good while?

John 2:1-2

Did He then go back home to Nazareth?

John 2:12

Why did He only stay there a few days?

John 2:13

Did Jesus go home to Nazareth after the Passover was over?

John 3:22

What caused Him to leave and where did He go?

John 4:1-5

Where did He next spend time ministering?

John 4:40-41

Where did He go after Sychar?

John 4:43, 46

Did He stay in Cana to minister there?

Luke 4:14-15

What is one of the places where He went to minister in Galilee?

Luke 4:16, 29

Where did He go then?

Matthew 4:13

Did Jesus settle in Capernaum and take a break from His continual travels?

Luke 4:42-43

Since Capernaum served as the home base for His ministry, did Jesus consider it home?

Matthew 8:20

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Jesus Gathers Disciples (*John 1:35-45*)

Where and when do we first see people following Jesus?

John 1:35-42

How soon do we see more disciples being added?

John 1:43-45

Did these disciples follow Jesus on His travels, or did He meet different disciples in different places?

John 2:1-2, 12; 3:22

Did these men become full-time disciples from the beginning?

Mark 1:16-20

Another Called Disciple (*Luke 5:27*)

What other disciple do we see specifically called by Jesus?

Luke 5:27

What other interesting point do we get from Matthew's account?

Matthew 9:9

Matthew - *gift of God*

Matthew calls himself Matthew, Mark and Luke call him Levi

How was this tax collector even further called by Jesus?

Mark 3:13-18a

What do we learn from Mark about this Levi?

Mark 2:14a

What interesting point do we find as we continue through the list of the twelve select apostles?

Mark 3:18b-19

What stretch do some make about James?

Mark 15:40

What further stretch do some make beyond this?

John 19:25

Tax Collectors

What did Matthew point out that the other gospel writers leave out in their lists of apostles?

Matthew 10:3

Two types of tax collectors - Gabbai and Mokhes

Gabbai - Collected regular taxes:

Ground Tax - 1/10th of all grain, 1/5th of all wine & fruit

Income Tax - 1 % of income

Poll Tax - Pre-set fee on all persons, slave & free (men 14-65, women 12-65)

Mokhes - Collected miscellaneous taxes on anything they could dream up

Imports, Exports, Sales, Bridge money, Road money, Harbor dues, Town dues, etc.

Expanded to include things like axles, wheels, pack-animals, pedestrians, roads, river crossings, bridges, market admission, licenses, etc.

Travelers were stopped & unloaded, everything was searched to determine tax

2½ - 5 % on goods, up to 12½ % on luxury items

Mokhes territories were auctioned to the highest bidder

Romans required a certain amount, Mokhes was able to charge and tax whatever he wanted

Mokhes could become very wealthy, especially in high traffic areas

Great Mokhes coordinated a network of little Mokhes'

Little Mokhes did the dirty work, personally sat at collector booth, directly approached people

Little Mokhes was the worst of the worst

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The Publican

Which type of tax collector was Matthew?

Luke 5:27

Publicanus - Latin for a man who did public duty, most often referenced Little Mokhes
telones - Greek for "a farmer of the tax"

How did the "righteous" Jews feel about tax collectors?

Luke 18:11

Why were tax collectors so hated by the Jews? Because they took their money like IRS agents?

Matthew 22:15-17

Leviticus 25:36-37

Tax collectors would loan at high rates if person unable to pay tax right then

Acts 11:2-3

Rabbinic writings:

Tax collectors were virtually impossible to save

Tax collectors were banned from the temple as unclean

Okay to lie about your property to a tax collector

Forbidden to accept alms for the poor or use money for exchange from tax collectors (tainted)

A Pharisee who became a tax collector was expelled until he quit and repented

Tax collectors could never become judges and were inadmissible as witnesses

Did Jesus agree that tax collectors were great sinners?

Matthew 18:17

Did Jesus agree that tax collectors could never be saved?

Matthew 21:31-32

Did any tax collectors really respond to John's call for repentance?

Luke 3:12-13

What great example do we have of a tax collector responding to Jesus in repentance?

Luke 19:1-2, 5, 8

Matthew's Job (*Mark 2:13-14*)

Where did Matthew serve as a Little Mokhes?

Mark 2:1, 13-14

Capernaum was a major hub on the trade route from the east (Persia, orient) to/from Tyre & Israel

Matthew would have had a toll booth on the highway into Gaulanitis (Golan Heights)

High traffic area would have made him very wealthy

Matthew had to be well educated for such a position

Likely the most educated of all of the apostles

Education allowed him to research Scriptures to show Jesus as the prophesied Messiah

Early church historians say his gospel was written in Hebrew to reach intended Jews

Tax collectors in Palestine typically had to speak Aramaic, Greek and Latin

God used Matthew's background in His service – just as with Joseph, Moses, Paul, etc.

Besides calling a despised tax collector, how else do we see Jesus reaching to Matthew in grace?

Mark 2:13-14

When Jesus first approached Matthew, crowd probably expected Him to condemn the sinner

How did Matthew respond to this call of grace?

Luke 5:28

Note: Other disciples could always go back to their occupations at any time - fishing...

Matthew would be immediately replaced - He truly left everything

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Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (*Luke 5:29-30*)

How else did Matthew respond to his calling?

Luke 5:29

Being outcast from society, who was Matthew able to get to come to this party?

Mark 2:15

Besides honoring Jesus, what was the key purpose of Matthew's feast?

Acts 4:20

Did anyone have trouble with this celebration?

Mark 2:16

Wouldn't the Pharisees become unclean by going into Matthew's house to see this?

Luke 5:30

The Doctor Is In (*Luke 5:31-32*)

How did Jesus respond to the comments of the Pharisees?

Luke 5:31

ischyo - Used in Matthew & Mark for healthy - Greek for able, strong, healthy

hygiaino - Used by Dr. Luke - Greek for opposite of diseased, root for hygiene

How did Jesus explain His purpose?

Luke 5:32

How did Matthew show that Jesus was trying to make certain that the Pharisees understood Him?

Matthew 9:13

Why did Jesus say "I desire mercy, not sacrifice"?

Hosea 6:4-6

Micah 6:6-8

How did Jesus further explain this later?

Matthew 25:40

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. Am I proud of the work I do? Is it pleasing to God?
(*Luke 5:27-30; 18:11; Ecclesiastes 5:18-20; Matthew 18:17; John 6:27; 9:4; Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 3:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17*)
2. When have I felt more righteous than someone else?
(*Luke 5:30; 14:7-14; Proverbs 3:34; Matthew 23:5-12; Romans 3:9-20; 12:3; Galatians 2:15-16*)
3. When have I shared with others the joy I have of knowing Jesus?
(*Luke 5:29; 7:16-17; 8:38-39; John 4:28-30; 5:15; Acts 4:20; 5:41-42; 8:4; 26:12-23*)
4. In what ways am I sick and in need of the eternal healing power of Jesus?
(*Luke 5:31-32; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 1:4-6; 58:8; Jeremiah 33:6; Hosea 14:1-4; Matthew 11:1-6, 28-30; Romans 3:21-24*)
5. Do I try to please God with displays of sacrifice or with showing His mercy?
(*Matthew 9:13; 12:1-8; Proverbs 15:8; Isaiah 1:10-20; Hosea 6:4-6; Amos 4:4-5; 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8; Hebrews 10:1-18*)