

## Bible background

Matthew 9:9-13.

## Aim of lesson

To show how Jesus chose a man no-one else liked and was a friend to him.

## Preparation required

Prepare your activity sheet as two illustrations of the story. You may prefer to cut it so as to show one picture at a time. You will also need colouring materials.

## Suggested outline of lesson

1. Using the picture tell the children how Matthew was a man nobody liked. He collected money from the people for the Romans, and the people hated him for that. He was probably very lonely as no-one would be his friend. Ask the children if they think Jesus would choose Matthew as one of his disciples. Ask why. Draw out that Jesus does not only choose people who have lots of friends, or people whom everyone likes. Tell how Matthew left everything to follow Jesus. Tell how happy Matthew was when Jesus called him, and how he invited him home. Use the second picture to illustrate this.
2. Give out the activity sheets and get the children to draw a sad face on Matthew in the first picture and a happy one in the second. They can also draw the food they would like to have at a party if they could invite Jesus home for tea.
3. Use the song that Matthew might have sung: 'Jesus Is My Friend'.
4. An older class may be able to appreciate the nasty comments the religious leaders made about Matthew, saying: 'Why has Jesus gone to his house? He's not a good man' and Jesus' reply showing that he had come to help people who needed help, not those who thought they did not need help from anyone.

## Alternative activities

1. Make coins from modelling clay covered with silver foil or do some coin rubbing with wax crayons.
2. Make some food out of modelling clay or salt dough for Jesus, Matthew and his friends to share. Give each child a paper plate to put the food on.
3. Alternatively, you could make simple sandwiches, prepare some fruit salad or ice some biscuits (tubes of ready to use 'writing icing' are handy!) to share at Matthew's 'party'. Always check with parents and carers regarding food allergies. Make sure the children wash their hands thoroughly. Have all the necessary cleaning materials available e.g. surface cleanser, cloths, washing up liquid. You may find an extra pair of hands useful.

## Relevance to the children's lives

Ask the children if they know of any children who are unpopular at school or play-school. Could they be a friend to them, because Jesus offers to be a friend to everybody.

## Prayer

Ask the children what they think Matthew might have prayed that night after Jesus had been to his house for tea.

## Verse

'Follow me, Jesus said.' Luke 5:27.

## Song

Jesus is my friend (Tune: We will overcome)

Musical notation for the song 'Jesus is my friend' (Tune: We will overcome). The notation is written on four staves in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody is written on the top line of each staff, and the chords are indicated by letters above the notes. The chords are: C, F, C, C, F, C, C, F, E7, Am, D7, G, F, C, Am, Em, C, F, G7, C.

Jesus is my friend  
Jesus is my friend  
Jesus is my friend each day  
Oh deep in my heart,  
I am so glad  
Jesus is my friend each day.

*Music: Traditional.*

Another song that you may find useful for this lesson is 'Can you be a good friend' in Lesson 90.