

LESSON 3: JESUS EATS WITH SINNERS AT MATTHEW'S HOUSE

Leader Guide for One Room

Classroom: Dig Deeper as a Family

 Matthew 9:9-13

03/21/2021

Note to Parents

Dear parents,

Welcome to Dig Deeper as a Family! These lessons are the same as the lessons done at church; however, this packet is meant for you to learn about God as a family. There are lots of fun activities here, but you know your kids best, so don't feel like you have to do all the activities. Pick and choose what will work best for your family. The first section is an overview of the lesson to help you get comfortable with the story. Followed by a list of supplies broken into each activity and the links to songs, videos, and printable pages. The final pages are the actual lesson to follow along with. We hope you enjoy following along at home with these fun activities and learning more about God as a family. If you have any questions contact me at sstrong@horizoncc.com.

Best Regards,
Sierra Strong

Overview of Lesson

Parts of the Lesson:

- Opening
- Music Video
- Talk-About Video
- Object Lesson (the cups don't have to be clear)
- Low-Energy Game (doesn't have to be groups of 5; families can just work together)
- Life Application Wrap-Up

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 9:9-13
- In This Passage: Jesus asks a tax collector named Matthew to be his disciple. Tax collectors were known for being greedy, cheating men who no one liked. So when Jesus went to Matthew's house for dinner with a lot of other "bad" people, the religious leaders got mad. But Jesus came for everyone—and those who realize they are sinners need Jesus.
- Bible Point: Jesus came for everyone.
- Summary Verse: "When Jesus heard this, he said, 'Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do' " (Matthew 9:12).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus came for everyone.* Kids will be familiar with the categories of popular people and outcasts. They may have experienced similar scenes as the one in the Bible story, where someone was judged for associating with a "loser." Maybe *they've* felt like the "loser." Help kids learn that in Jesus' view, there are no outcasts. Everyone is welcome.
- Think About: Who is someone you'd consider an outcast? Ask Jesus to help you show that person the same kind of welcoming attitude he showed Matthew and his friends.

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray for kids in your group who seem like outcasts among the others. Pray for everyone to show Jesus' welcoming attitude and include those kids.

Quick Tip

When questions arise, resist the temptation to preach an answer to your kids. Instead, ask several kids what *they* think about a particular idea. Ask them why they think the way they do or to back up their answers with information or experience.

Supplies for each activity



OPENING

▲ Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



MUSIC VIDEO

▲ Kids sing songs of praise to God.

Supplies

- "All Around the World" music video (watch or download [here](#))
- "Give It Away" music video (watch or download [here](#))
- "O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus" music video (watch or download [here](#))



CORE BIBLE AT HOME

▲ Kids reenact a dinner with sinners and then experience why we all need Jesus.

Supplies

- Bible
- paper
- markers or crayons

Easy Prep

- Leaders only, make a sign that says "Taxes: two dollars."



OBJECT LESSON

▲ Kids see how different colors of water can travel into one cup via paper towels.

Supplies

- 6 clear cups (1 set for every 10 or fewer kids)
- water
- super-absorbent paper towels
- red, yellow, and blue food coloring
- spoons (1 for every 10 kids)
- scissors

Easy Prep

- For each set of 6 clear cups, fill 5 of them about $\frac{3}{4}$ with water.
- Cut your paper towels in quarters.



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

▲ Kids watch a video and discuss the Bible Point.

Supplies

- “Spying on Jesus” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))



LOW-ENERGY GAME

▲ Kids include everyone in acting out different machines.

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

▲ Kids pray for people who are similar to and different from them.

START TEACHING HERE



OPENING

[5 min]

Welcome

Supplies

- Bible

Introduce the Lesson

Say: Today we'll learn about a time Jesus ate at the house of a tax collector named Matthew with a group of Matthew's friends—even though a lot of people didn't like Matthew or his friends. We'll see that Jesus came for everyone—even unpopular people.

Share

Say: Each one of us is different, but we all have things in common, too—like the fact that Jesus came for all of us.

Tell about something *you* have in common with a friend or co-worker and something that's different from that person.

Have kids get in pairs and find one thing *they* have in common with their partner and one thing that's different.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: No matter how different we are, Jesus came for everyone. Today we'll dig into the Bible to find out about that. One way God talks to us is through the Bible—his special book. God is here right now, ready to talk to you!

Pray, thanking Jesus that he came for everyone.



MUSIC VIDEO

[10 min]

All Around the World

Supplies

- “All Around the World” music video (watch or download [here](#))
- “Give It Away” music video (watch or download [here](#))
- “O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus” music video (watch or download [here](#))

Sing Songs to God

Choose songs you’d like to do, click the link and enjoy!



CORE BIBLE AT HOME

[20 min]

Jesus Eats With Sinners at Matthew’s House (Matthew 9:9-13)

Supplies

- Bible
- paper
- markers or crayons

Easy Prep

- Leaders only, make a sign that says “Taxes: two dollars.”

Find Differences

Say: Today we’re exploring that Jesus came for everyone. That includes people who are very different from us. Sometimes it can be hard for people to hang out with others who are different. So let’s start by finding differences. See if each person in your family can find two things about himself or herself that are *not* true of anyone else in the family. For example, maybe only one of you likes eating brussels sprouts. Allow time for families to think of differences.

If you are leading over video chat, have families share some of the differences they found with everyone.

Ask: • **What kinds of differences make it hard for you to like someone?**

Collect Taxes

Say: The differences you found probably don’t make you like each other any less. But what if you found out someone had stolen money from you? That might change your view

of that person! Our Bible story is about a tax collector. For you to understand why people didn't like him, let's see what tax collectors did in Bible times.

Have each person draw ten dollar signs on a piece of paper.

Say: **Right now you have \$10. Nice! But, you have to pay taxes.**

Hold up your sign. Say: **I'm a tax collector. Taxes are how the government gets money to pay for things like roads and schools. People still have to pay taxes today. But back then, taxes were collected by people who sat in booths along the side of the road. I'm Matthew the tax collector. You can see from my sign that you each owe me two dollars, so pay your taxes by crossing out two of your dollar signs.** Pause.

Oh wait! I forgot to mention that there are higher tax rates for the wealthy. If you have over \$5, you have to pay me an extra dollar. Pause. **Oh and also, if you're wearing anything blue, there's a tax for that. Please cross out two more dollars if you're wearing blue.** Pause. **Oh! And if you have the letter "a" in your name, that costs \$1 in taxes.** Pause.

Oh one more thing! If you play any sports, that's another two dollars. Sports cost money! Pay up. Pause.

Say: **Now what if I told you that none of those rules I just gave are actually from the government? All I have to give my boss is two dollars per person, and I get to keep all the extra money I collected. And this is the way a lot of tax collectors did their job.**

Ask: • **What do you think of that method of tax collecting?**

• **Why would it be wrong?**

• **Based on what you just experienced, why do you think tax collectors were so unpopular?**

Read Matthew 9:9.

Ask: • **Knowing what you know about tax collectors, what do you think about Jesus' choice?**

Have a Dinner

Say: **It may seem weird that Jesus chose a tax collector to follow him when tax collectors were known for cheating people! But Jesus came for everyone. Let's see what happened next with Matthew.**

Read Matthew 9:10.

Say: **Jesus was hanging out with Matthew the tax collector and a bunch of people who were known just for all the things they did wrong! That might not seem like Jesus' kind of people, but Jesus came for everyone. Let's think of what kinds of people might have been at that dinner by thinking of kinds of people who do wrong things. For example, **maybe there was a robber**. Have families fold a piece of paper to make a place card for a table setting, and write "Robber" on it. Then families can set that place card on their table, or make a**

part of the floor their imaginary table. Have families make a second place card that says "Tax Collector" and set that one out.

Families can think of more ideas for the kinds of people at the dinner and write each one on a place card until their table is full. For example, kids might say cheaters, liars, or bullies. Everyone also needs a place card that says "Jesus."

Say: **Earlier we found differences among ourselves. But this group having dinner is certainly a case of "one of these things is not like the others." We have a bunch of imperfect people who are known for their sins, and we have Jesus—who's perfect. Jesus came for everyone—even all the people at your table!**

Some people in the Bible saw this and didn't think it was a good group for Jesus to be with. Read Matthew 9:11.

Say: **We're going to talk about a hard thing to share, so it's important to listen in love and show kindness and respect like Jesus would.**

Tell kids about a time you felt unpopular. Then have family members share about their own experiences feeling unpopular.

Say: **Thank you for sharing about that. Most people want to hang out with the most popular people. Let's think about why Jesus would hang out with unpopular people.** Have family members walk to each place setting and try to answer the question posed to the disciples: "Why does Jesus eat with such scum as [read the place card]?"

Make Paths

Say: **Thanks for thinking about why Jesus would eat with people like this. Let's see what Jesus had to say.**

Read Matthew 9:12-13.

Say: **That's an odd statement! Jesus isn't a doctor. What did he mean? It means Jesus came for everyone—especially people who have sinned the most. Let's think this through with.**

Have families line their place cards up side by side along a wall. Then have them make a path all the way across the room for each "sinner" by placing pieces of paper on the floor.

Say: **Let's say one side of the room represents us, and the other represents God. Without having done anything wrong, if we're totally perfect, we have a direct path to God. But the problem is, all of these people have done wrong things.** Make up a number of sins for each place card, and have families pick up one piece of paper per sin from their path. For example, you might say the tax collector ripped off 10 people, and a robber stole from three people, and each instance is a sin. Try to make some of the paths very short, and make others more medium-length.

Say: **Jesus came for everyone. He died on the cross so that he could repair our broken paths.**

Ask: • **Looking at the paths, which person in our group needs the most help from Jesus?**

Tell kids just to think silently about this question.



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

Everyone Can Come to Jesus

Supplies

- 6 clear cups (1 set for every 10 or fewer kids)
- water
- super-absorbent paper towels
- red, yellow, and blue food coloring
- spoons (1 for every 10 kids)
- scissors

Easy Prep

- For each set of 6 clear cups, fill 5 of them about $\frac{3}{4}$ with water.
- Cut your paper towels in quarters.
- Test the experiment to make sure your paper towels are absorbent enough to work within the timeframe.



Set Up the Experiment

Say: **The Pharisees didn't think Jesus should eat dinner with the tax collectors or other people they thought were bad, but Jesus came for everyone. Let me show you what I mean.**

Have each mixed-age group of 10 gather around their set of 6 cups. Have them arrange the 5 cups with water in a circle, and have them put the empty cup in the center of the circle. (They'll want the cups close together.)

Say: **First of all, Jesus came for you. He loves you personally! One of the cups in your circle will represent you all.** Have an older child in each group add about four drops of red food coloring to one of the cups of water and stir it.

Repeat this process, making each cup of water represent a different group with a different color: friends (yellow), family (blue), people who have hurt us personally (orange, made by using some red and some yellow), people who have done some of the things we think are the worst things people could do (green, made by using some blue and some yellow).

Watch the Water Move

Give each group five quarter-sheet paper towels. Have five children in each group fold a paper towel into fourths the long way.

Say: **Your center cup represents Jesus. He wants *everyone* to come to him—you** (have groups place a folded paper towel in the red and put the other end in the empty center cup), **your friends** (have groups place a folded paper towel in the yellow and put the other end in the empty center cup), **your family** (have groups place a folded paper towel in the blue and put the other end in the empty center cup), **people who have hurt you** (have groups place a folded paper towel in the orange and put the other end in the empty center cup), **and even people who have done really bad things** (have groups place a folded paper towel in the green and put the other end in the empty center cup). **Jesus came for all these people.**

Keep an eye on your cups as we talk.

Point to the red cup. Share a good quality about yourself, and then ask the children to share good qualities about themselves with their groups.

Point to the yellow cup. Share a couple of good qualities about one of *your* friends. Ask: • **What are good qualities your friends have?**

Point to the blue cup. Share a reason you love your family. Ask: • **What are reasons you love your family?**

Point to the orange cup. Briefly share a way someone has hurt you (without giving a name). Ask: • **What's a way someone has hurt you? Avoid specific names.**

Point to the green cup. Ask: • **What are some of the worst things that people do?** If children have trouble thinking of ideas, you might ask what kinds of things people go to prison for.

By this time, you'll see the water traveling into the center cup from all of the other cups of water.

Ask: • **In this experiment, all the water was "equal." Does that seem fair to you, knowing the different kinds of people represented? Explain.**

Say: **Just as you can come to Jesus, all the other people can come to Jesus. Matthew and his friends could come to Jesus, even though some people didn't think they were good enough. That's because Jesus came for everyone.**



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

[10 min]

Spying on Jesus

Supplies

- “Spying on Jesus” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Discuss and Watch “Spying on Jesus”

Ask: • **Have you ever spied on someone? Maybe you spied on your brother or sister or sneaked around to listen in on what your parents were saying. For me...** Tell about a time you spied on someone. Try to keep your story humorous to set the tone for what you expect kids will share when it's their turn.

After you share, ask: • **What about you? Tell about a time you spied on someone. What happened?**

Have kids share in groups of three, and after a few minutes, invite a few children to share their stories with the larger group.

Say: **In the Bible story, a group of people called Pharisees were upset that Jesus was eating and spending time with sinners—people who did wrong things. The Pharisees thought that Jesus should spend time only with people who tried their best to be good. But since Jesus came for everyone, he also came for people who don't even know about God. Let's see what might have happened when the Pharisees spied on Jesus to see what he was doing.**

Watch “Spying on Jesus.”

Ask: • **What did you think was funny about this video?**

• **Why do you think the Pharisees were so worried about what Jesus did and who he hung out with?**

Say: **The Pharisees were always watching Jesus to see if he would make a mistake. They kept trying to trap him doing or saying something wrong. But their plans never worked. This time, Jesus told them, “Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do.”**

Ask: • **What do you think that means?**

Say: **Jesus came for everyone, not just people who are always good. And that means Jesus came for each of us! That's great news!**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Human Machines

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

Create Machines With Their Bodies

Have children form groups of five.

Without letting other groups hear you, assign each group a machine or appliance—such as a car, airplane, blender, sewing machine, or alarm clock. Play upbeat music while kids work on their creations (optional).

Give all the groups one minute to create their assigned machines with their bodies, making sure every person in each group is included in making the machines.

Turn the music off or call time at the end of one minute.

Have each group demonstrate its machine while the other groups guess what the machine is.

Play a second round by assigning each group a new machine to create.

If you have time, play a third round by having groups think of their own machines to create.

Talk About It

Have children sit where they are.

Say: **In this game, you had to include everyone in your group to create your machines.**

- Ask:
- **Explain whether it was hard to include everyone in your machine or not.**
 - **Why is it sometimes hard to include other people?**

Say: **It isn't always easy to include people. Sometimes it's because we want to do something by ourselves or with just a few friends. Other times, it's because someone acts or looks different than we do. Either way, it hurts when *you're* the one who doesn't feel included. But just as you included everyone in making your machine, Jesus came for everyone! That means he invites everyone to be a part of his family—including you!**



Everyone Equal in Jesus' Eyes

Be Sorted

Sort the kids into groups based on colors and/or patterns on their clothing. For example, all of the kids wearing red shirts could be a group. Try to avoid groups larger than six kids, and make sure no one is alone.

Say: **Jesus came for everyone.** He came for you and for the people you like. Tell your group about someone you know who's easy to love. Then pray together for those people. Allow a couple of minutes.

Talk About Differences

Say: It's easy to remember that people came for us and for people like us. Sometimes we forget that **Jesus came for everyone.**

Ask: • What if I *always* kept you in groups based on the way you dressed? Why would that be silly?

Say: It's great to have things in common with others, but there are special things about the way God made you different from other people. When we remember that, it can help us remember that **Jesus came for everyone.**

Mix It Up

Have the children regroup by finding partners from other groups.

Have the children sit with their new groups and think of someone who's hard to love. Have them silently pray for those people and try to picture them the way Jesus sees them.

Close in prayer, and then say: **Jesus came for each of you, and I'm glad you all came today. This week, if you come across someone who is different from you or hard to love, remember that Jesus came for everyone.**
