

8. Jesus Calls Levi (Luke 5:27-32)

So they went out and proclaimed that people should change their hearts and lives.
(Mark 6:12)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Jesus Calls Levi
Optical Illusions
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversation
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Who Would Jesus Invite?
Confession
Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: CD player | DVD player | Projector or screen | Television | Craft glue | Crayons | Markers | Offering basket | Paper | Pencils | Scissors | Tape

Gather: Bell | Carpet squares

Explore: Bell

Respond: Bell | Candle | Carpet squares | Multipurpose lighter

Bless: Cup | Medicine dropper | Towel | Water

Before You Teach

During Jesus' time, tax collectors were very unpopular. The payment of taxes to the Roman Empire caused resentment among people; tax collectors reminded people of Roman rule. Additionally, tax collectors made their living by charging more money for taxes than the Romans expected and keeping the difference, a system seemingly designed to encourage greed and dishonesty. While collecting taxes, tax collectors handled things that Jewish law considered unclean, such as coins stamped with images of pagan gods. Most Jewish people hated tax collectors.

In this week's lesson, we hear the story of Levi, also known as Matthew. The story of Jesus calling Levi to follow him is found in similar accounts in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Levi was a tax collector and was sitting at a tax booth, probably collecting a toll along a major road. When Jesus saw Levi, he issued the invitation, "Follow me." With these words, Jesus extended an invitation to one who was despised by society.

It is likely that Jesus' association with tax collectors surprised many. We are told in particular of the response of the Pharisees. Pharisees were Jewish religious leaders. They interpreted the Jewish laws found in the Torah and applied them to everyday life. Pharisees opposed Jesus because they thought he was teaching Jews to stop following these laws. The Pharisees also opposed Jesus' association with those they identified as sinners, such as tax collectors. In the Pharisees' eyes, if a person associated with someone identified as a sinner, then that person became unclean.

The story of Jesus calling Levi is good news for us! Jesus issued the invitation to follow, not to those who were perfect and righteous, but to imperfect, ordinary people. Jesus calls people like us to follow him.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display your choice of attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16-17 or pp. 18 & 15).

- Play “Only You” (Annual Music CD).
 - Welcome and greet each child as he or she enters the room.
 - Indicate location of the offering basket.
 - Help children mark their attendance inside the building on the Community Attendance Chart (opt.).
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A—Jesus Calls Levi (Activity Sheet)

Before class: Obtain Activity Sheets (Session 8).

- Distribute “Mistakes Happen”/“Eating Together” (pp. 17-18).
- Encourage the children to follow the journaling prompt and complete the activities.

OR

B—Optical Illusions (Science)

- Distribute sheets of paper. Direct children to fold the paper in half lengthwise. Instruct them to draw a quarter-size circle and color with a red marker. Direct them to place a small black dot in the circle’s center. Instruct the children to stare at the black dot for 20 seconds, then look to the side.

ASK: Did you see another circle? What color was the second circle? (*blue or bluish green*)

- With a green marker, draw and color a square the size of the circle. Make a small black dot in the square’s center. Instruct the children to stare at the black dot for 20 seconds, then look to the side.

ASK: Did you see another square? What color was the second square? (*reddish blue or pink*)

- With a blue marker, draw and color a triangle the size of the circle. Make a small black dot in the triangle’s center. Instruct children to stare at the black dot for 20 seconds, then look to the side.

ASK: Did you see another triangle? What color was the second triangle? (*yellow*)

SAY: The eye is incredible. The back of the eye contains certain cones that are sensitive to particular colors. When we stare at one color, the cones receiving input from that color become tired and take a break. When we stare at the white paper, we see color from the cones that are still working.

Transition to Explore

Before class: Obtain bell and carpet squares.

- Ring the bell to acknowledge that it is time to transition.
- Direct the children to choose carpet squares (or equivalent items), then sit in a circle on the floor.

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversation

- Ask a few wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- What made you laugh this week?
 - How did you help someone this week?
 - What are you grateful for?
 - Was there a difficult part of your week, and what made it better?
 - Where did you see God this week?
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Hear and See the Bible Story

Before class: Prepare television and DVD player.

- Read the Bible story together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible—Luke 5:27-32*).
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure DVD Session 8.

ASK: How are you called to follow Jesus?

Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets (Session 8).

- Distribute the Bible Story Sheets and draw attention to Bible Story Retelling (p. 1).
 - Assign the roles of Levi and Jesus, and let class read for Pharisees. Then present “Jesus Calls Levi.”
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display Poster: Unit 2 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 12 & 21). Review Unit 2 sign language (Leader Guide—p. 92).

- Recite the Bible verse, “So they went out and proclaimed that people should change their hearts and lives” (Mark 6:12).
 - Invite the children to say and sign the Bible verse with you.
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Transition to Respond

Before class: Obtain bell.

- Ring the bell, then invite the children to put away their carpet squares.

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RESPOND

A—Who Would Jesus Invite? (Writing/Art)

Before class: Photocopy “Who Would Jesus Invite?” (Leader Guide—p. 54), one per child.

- Distribute the photocopies of “Who Would Jesus Invite?”

SAY: In today’s Bible story, Jesus shared a meal with tax collectors. In biblical times, tax collectors were not always good people, but Jesus ate with them anyway.

ASK: Who would Jesus eat with today? Who would Jesus want you to invite to eat with you?

- Direct the children to complete and decorate their invitations. Invite willing volunteers to share.

OR

B—Confession (Worship)

SAY: Even when we do our best to listen and obey, we still make mistakes. I make lots of mistakes.

ASK: Who made a mistake in today’s Bible story? Do you ever make mistakes?

SAY: When we come together for worship, one thing we do is to tell God about our mistakes and ask for forgiveness. God always forgives us.

SAY: Let’s tell God about our mistakes together, then ask God to forgive us.

PRAY: Dear God, we have made mistakes. We are sorry for the times when we have not listened and obeyed. Please forgive us. Amen.

SAY: God promises that if we tell God our mistakes and say we are sorry, we will be forgiven. God loves us, and we are forgiven!

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Obtain Map 6: Deep Blue Shores (Class Kit—p. 8) and Figures/Pieces: Deep Blue Shores Map 6 (Class Kit—p. 25). Display Mission Poster (Class Kit—p. 5).

- Display the Deep Blue Shores Map 6 on the floor or table. While the children interact with the map and figures, talk about the mission.

SAY: Today we will continue to talk about our mission project, The Jubilee Project, which helps people who live in poverty without clean water. Let’s make cards to encourage this important mission.

- Invite the children to use paper and markers to make cards for the Jubilee Project.
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Transition to Bless

Before class: Obtain bell, candle, multipurpose lighter (or battery-operated candle), carpet squares.

- Ring the bell to signal transition.
- Direct the children to each choose a carpet square, then sit in a circle on the floor.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Continue to display Poster: Unit 2 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 12 & 21) where it is easily accessible for children. Obtain Poster Pieces: Unit 2 Bible Verse (Class Kit—p. 29).

- Gather the children around the Bible-verse poster.
- Display the poster pieces.
- Invite a child to attach to the poster the poster piece “Jesus calls me to follow him.”

PRAY: Dear God, help me to always follow you. Amen.

Praising

Before class: Obtain CD player and Deep Blue Song Sheets.

- Distribute the song sheets for “Only You” (Annual Music CD).
 - Sing the song “Only You” (Annual Music CD).
 - Sign the Bible verse (Leader Guide—p. 92).
 - Collect the song sheets and store until the next session.
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Blessing

Before class: Obtain a cup of water, medicine dropper, and a towel. Fill the dropper with water.

- Direct the children to be seated in their chairs in a circle.
- Working inside the circle, place a drop a water on the back of each child’s hand.
- As the water runs off the child’s hand, say the blessing.

SAY: You are dearly loved.

At Home with God

ASK: What is one thing that you learned today? Can you share with your family what you learned?

- Send home with each child Bible Story Sheets—Session 8 leaflet.

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Who Would Jesus Invite?

A large rectangular frame containing a party invitation. The text 'You're Invited to a celebration!' is written in a mix of cursive and bold sans-serif fonts. The background is decorated with various geometric shapes: stars, circles, and squares. Below the main text are four horizontal lines for writing, each preceded by a label: 'For:', 'Date:', 'Place:', and 'Details:'. The 'Details:' line is followed by a second blank line. At the bottom left, the text 'RSVP to:' is followed by a horizontal line.

You're Invited
to a celebration!

For: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Details: _____

RSVP to: _____