

Meals with Jesus



A journey through
Luke's Gospel

Lesson 1

Lunch with Levi

faith **in** kids



9
lessons

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Living Out (www.livingout.org) commissioned Faith in Kids (www.faithinkids.org) to produce these resources to help children understand Jesus' care for the marginalised. Visit www.faithinkids.org from November 2020 to download these resources.

These resources tie in with our book of family Bible times, 'Meals with Jesus'. Published by The Good Book Company.

thegoodbook.com | thegoodbook.co.uk | thegoodbook.com.au | thegoodbook.co.nz | thegoodbook.co.in

We recommend the International Children's Bible for use with children during the lesson. Our leader's notes use the New International Version.

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'All for the glory of God alone' (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Contents

Preparation	4
Bible Story Idea	6
Lesson Overview	9
 Explorers (3–5s)	10
 Discoverers (5–7s)	12
 Adventurers (8–11s)	14
Mixed Ages (3–11s)	16
Appendix	
Illustrations for this session	19
Worksheets	22
Take Home Truth	24
Craft	25

Lunch with Levi

LUKE 5:27-32



Big Idea:

Jesus came to save sinners. He is like a doctor because he can fix the problem of sin.



Faith in Kids looks like:

Children who are amazed by Jesus' love for sinners and who want to follow him.



Preparation

Pray and read the Bible passage. Read **Where are we going?** and **Win my heart first** to give you a better understanding of the passage and the **Big Idea**. Spend some time thinking through how this makes a difference to your life.

Read the lesson plan for the age group you will be teaching. Use a **Get Going** or **Brain Break** idea from a different age group if it is better suited to your children.

Prepare your lesson. Think through the **Take 10 minutes to focus!** questions before preparing your

Teaching Time. Use the International Children's Bible (which can be found online at www.biblegateway.com) for a simplified version of the text during **Teaching Time**. Keep the **Big Idea** in your mind to help you teach it clearly in every part of your lesson. Collect/draw/print/make what you need for the different sections of the lesson.

Pray for the children in your group to grasp the **Big Idea** and to live it out in their lives. Remember that you have the Holy Spirit's help as you teach God's word!



Where are we going?

The saying goes 'You are what you eat'. But what about the people you eat with? The company you keep says more about who you are than what you eat. Most of us choose to eat with people we love, like or want to get to know better. We choose the people we value and are willing to give our time to. In this series, we get to join Jesus as he shares meals with different people - often they were surprising or less desirable members of the public. In this series in Luke's gospel, we will see

more of his character and his mission as he invited, welcomed and spent time with the marginalised.

The first meal in the series is Jesus' lunch with Levi. It was shocking that Jesus chose to call Levi and then ate with him and his sinner friends. Jesus loved, forgave and called someone totally undeserving. We want the children to realise what this means for them - they are also sinners, but Jesus came for them too!



Win my heart first

2020: a year of pandemic. When a virus ravages almost every country in the world, the greatest desire is for a cure or a vaccine to be found. We distanced, we sanitised and we stayed at home to stay safe. The virus is a real threat to many, but there is a sickness that is a greater threat to all of us – sin. It's deeply rooted in all of our hearts and no amount of social distancing or sanitising will protect us from it. But there is a cure. Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Jesus is like a doctor who came for sick sinners like us. He calls us to follow him, welcomes us, forgives us and changes our hearts. The sickness of sin is the greatest problem for you, me and the children we teach. Let's be quick to admit our need. Let's rejoice that Jesus called and welcomed us. And let's show our children how incredible Jesus is – he's the loving doctor they need to cure their hearts too.

v27 Levi was a tax collector – a traitor who raised funds for the Roman Empire. The Empire had oppressed and killed Levi's own people, and he was benefiting from their oppression. Tax collectors were notorious for making themselves wealthy by cheating their own suffering people. But Jesus called him! Levi knew his need: he wasn't good, he wasn't welcome, he wasn't clean.

v28 Perhaps this is why Levi is so ready to follow Jesus. Even though he is hated, rejected, unpleasant and a traitor, Jesus still loved and welcomed him. Jesus didn't need to ask twice – Levi followed him.

v29 Levi threw a party and invited all of his friends, who were probably no better than him. But Jesus was there too, hanging out with them all.

v30 The Pharisees didn't get it! Why would Jesus spend time with these horrible people? Why not with them? They had so much to offer. They didn't think sinners deserved Jesus, but they didn't realise that they didn't deserve him either. They needed his kindness and forgiveness just as much as this rabble did; the difference was that Jesus' dinner guests knew they needed him.

v31-32 Jesus explained his mission. It's the sick who need a doctor. He wasn't saying the Pharisees didn't need forgiveness. Of course they did. His point was that they didn't see their need. They thought they were good enough as it was. But Levi got it – he was hopelessly sick without Jesus healing him. He had no goodness to cling to, so he didn't waste time justifying himself. He turned away from his old life and put his all in with Jesus (repentance). Jesus' call to follow is for everyone who recognises they need him. Sadly, the Pharisees didn't see that.



Question for my heart

You are a sinner. But you are also forgiven, called and loved! Has that truth sunk into your heart or has it become merely head knowledge that no longer amazes you? What keeps you from feeling more astonished at how generous Jesus has been to you? How will you apply this truth to your heart in the highs and lows of life this week?



Bible Story Idea

This has been written as an all-age slot to introduce the whole church family to what the children are learning today, but it could be adapted for the children's classes.



Helpers Needed

Actors to play the parts of Jesus and Levi.



Props

Apron, table, tablecloth, plates, cutlery, napkins, Greggs/McDonald's paper bag, 2 large hearts with 'SIN' written on them (attach string so they can be hung around a neck), Bibles, money bag, money (coins/notes), 2 party hats.



What to Say



What to Do

I need to get ready for a very special visitor.
I am getting out all my posh stuff so I can make a good impression.
I've got my best plates which are beautifully clean.
Look at my shiny cutlery - I can see my reflection in this spoon!

Put on apron. Put cloth on the table. Start to set the table.
Hold up and describe objects excitedly as you put them out.

When my guest sees how lovely this looks he will be so impressed by the effort I've put in. This all looks amazing - I am just brilliant at this!

Stand back proudly surveying your table.

Oh, perfect timing, here comes Jesus now.
TA DA - doesn't this look wonderful? Aren't you so delighted to come and eat with me?!

Jesus walks over.
Wave proudly at your table.

Jesus: 'I can see you think you've done a great job, but I haven't come so you can impress me. I've come to help those who know they need me. Thank you, but I have already eaten.'

Jesus holds up Greggs/McDonalds paper bag.

Main speaker (horrified): 'WHAT! You've already eaten...where? With who?'



What to Say



What to Do

Jesus: 'I ate at Levi's house.'

Main speaker (disgusted): 'LEVI! You ate with Levi? That scumbag... that traitor. Do you know he's a sinner? Why would you eat with him when you could eat with someone like me? Look at all the effort I went to for you. I bet Levi didn't do all this.'

Point back at your table.

Jesus: 'I have come to save sinners, people who know they need me.'

Jesus, looking sad, turns and walks away.

Get out of character.

In today's true story, Jesus ate with someone rather surprising - Levi, a sinner. It's the first story in our new series called 'Meals with Jesus.' We're in Luke's gospel and we're looking at stories where Jesus shared a meal with different and sometimes surprising people.

The Bible tells us Jesus came to save sinners, that was his mission and that was why he spent so much time with people like Levi and his friends.

Take off the apron.

Levi, with a 'SIN' heart around his neck, enters the scene.

Hold up a Bible.

Levi was a tax collector. He was born one of God's chosen people, but he swapped sides and worked for the enemy - the Romans. They were the ones who had taken over the land. He took money from his own people to give to the enemy.

Levi holds up the Bible before swapping it for the money bag - take out coins/notes, count some and pocket them.

Jesus came to town and told Levi to follow him. Levi was delighted that Jesus would call someone like him. Levi was a cheat and a sinner - he needed help. So he left everything to follow Jesus. He was so happy, he threw a party for Jesus. He invited all of his friends, his house was filled with people just like him.

Jesus enters the scene. Goes to Levi and motions with his hand for Levi to follow him. Levi puts down money bag, empties his pockets of money and goes to stand with Jesus. Jesus and Levi put on party hats, laugh and smile.

continued →



What to Say



What to Do

Some people watching were unhappy. They thought, 'Jesus should know better, he should want to spend time with 'good' people like me.'

But Jesus said he came to save sinners. People who think they are 'good', look at what they say and do and believe that makes them a 'good' person.
They don't see they are a sinner who needs to be saved by Jesus.

The bad news is that we all have a sin problem.
But the Bible has good news for sinners - Jesus came to save us. However good you try to be, you still need to be saved by Jesus. So hear the good news that he came to save sinners. Hear him call you, follow him and let him save you.

I know I am a sinner. But I also know the good news that Jesus came to save me. That's the best news ever. Pray.

Hang the 'SIN' heart around your neck - turn it over to hide the 'SIN'.
Look at the table and look chuffed with yourself.
Turn heart around and point to 'SIN'.

Point to 'SIN' heart and do a thumbs down.
Hold up Bible. Thumbs up.

Point to 'SIN' heart.
Thumbs up.



Lesson Overview



10 minutes to focus



Get Going



Teaching Time



Brain Break



Heart & Hands



10 Minutes to Focus

When preparing, keep these questions in mind and check your planning to see that you are ready to engage your group. Take that clarity into your **Teaching Time** so that you get the **Big Idea** across.



Get Going

Focus the children's attention on the theme of the session using a game or activity. Light, not manic, so that the children can be calm afterwards, with their minds ready.



Teaching Time

Teach the key content of the lesson in an engaging way. Place emphasis to point clearly to the **Big Idea**. If you have used the **Bible Story Idea** already, you may not need to cover the whole story again. If not, you can adapt it to use here with your group or tell the story in another way, perhaps using the suggestions below. However you do this **Teaching Time**, conclude with a simple explanation of the **Big Idea**.



Brain Break

A chance to rest the children's minds before **Heart and Hands**. Get children moving. Finish by linking the activity to the **Big Idea** so that this time serves the Bible story.



Heart & Hands

Small group discussion:

The vital chance for the children to reflect on the story, so that its truths impact their hearts. They do the talking, not the leader. All the children need to be given the opportunity to respond. Ask each question to multiple children. The questions will lead the children to see how their heads (thoughts), hearts (feelings) and hands (actions) are shaped by the Bible story through the work of the Spirit.



Explorers

3–5s



Take 10 minutes to focus! What are the ‘wow’ moments and surprises in the passage? Think about how you will explain that Jesus is like a doctor who can fix our sin problem. How will you help the children in your group to be amazed by Jesus’ love for sinners?



Get Going

Teddy Bear’s Picnic


You will need:

A selection of cuddly toys/teddies, a picnic blanket, toy tea set.

Introduce the series of ‘Meals with Jesus’. Explain that in each story we will hear about who Jesus chose to eat a meal with, and what that tells us about him.

Set up the picnic. Hold up each teddy, give it a name and describe what it is like (describe some as good, kind or fun and others as mean, naughty or not very nice). Then, ask the children if they want it at the

picnic (hopefully the ‘mean’ teddies will be left out). Put the chosen teddies on the blanket and the left out teddies on the side. Ask the children why the ‘nice’ teddies were chosen and the ‘mean’ teddies weren’t. Move to sit with the left out teddies and explain the link to today’s Bible story.

 **Link:** In today’s Bible story, Jesus chose to have dinner with some surprising people! He chose to eat with the mean, naughty people who nobody liked. We will find out why he chose to be friends with those people.



Teaching Time

You will need:

First aid kit/toy stethoscope, plasters, picture of a doctor, Bible story illustrations (see **Appendix**), party hat.

Make in advance:

A ‘sin’ heart (a card heart with a crossed out crown drawn on it), a medicine bag craft (see **Craft Time**).

Ask the children what a doctor does (hold up the first aid kit/stethoscope, plasters and doctor picture). Talk about how we go to a doctor when we are sick. In today’s story, we will hear about a man who was sick with sin. Explain that Jesus is like a doctor because he can fix the sin problem in our hearts (hold up the medicine bag).

Tell the children the story of Levi in a simple way. Read the passage or summarise in your own words while showing the Bible story illustrations. After each scene/picture – bring out parts of the story in the

following ways:

Show picture 1. Point out Levi and explain that he was a sinner – he didn’t love God with all his heart (hold up ‘sin’ heart). His sin problem needed to be fixed. Ask the children if they can remember who can fix a sin problem – Jesus (hold up the medicine bag).

Show picture 2. Point to Levi and ask the children how he looks – happy/sad/excited? Explain that he was so happy he threw a party (put on a party hat). Point to Levi’s friends and explain that they were like Levi (hold up ‘sin’ heart). Ask the children who they needed to fix their sin problem – Jesus (hold up the medicine bag). Can the children spot the angry people in the picture? Explain that the Pharisees didn’t like sinners like Levi. They didn’t think they had a sin problem but they did (hold up ‘sin’ heart).

Show picture 3. Point to the people in the speech bubble – can they see their bandages? Who do they

need to go to? Explain that sick people go to doctors (hold up first aid kit/stethoscope). Explain that Jesus is like a doctor because he can fix our sin problem (hold up the medicine bag). Levi had a sin problem (hold up 'sin' heart). Levi had his heart fixed by Jesus (take the heart with the plaster on it out of the medicine bag).

Explain that we all have a sin problem (hold up 'sin'

heart). And we all need Jesus to fix it (take the heart with the plaster on it out of the medicine bag). Jesus loves us and he wants to fix our sin problem too!

End with your memory sentence - 'Jesus is like a doctor who can fix our sin problem'. Get the children to repeat it back to you a few times.



Brain Break

Doctor Doctor


You will need:

A toy first aid kit, plasters, bandages/strips of fabric and a 'sin' heart with a crossed out crown on the front and a 'J' in a crown on the reverse side (as used in

Teaching Time)

Play doctors. Let the children take turns being the doctor or a patient. Put plasters on sore knees,

bandage up arms, legs and heads. Can the children remember how Jesus is like a doctor? What can Jesus fix? (Hold up a 'sin' heart and turn it to show the 'J' crown.)

 **Link:** Doctors can make us feel better when we hurt something or feel sick. Jesus is better than any doctor because only he can fix our sin problem.



Heart & Hands

Craft Time - Make a doctor's bag

You will need:

A copy of the craft template (see **Appendix**) and a card heart to fit in the bag for each child, crayons, a stapler and plasters.

Cut out the templates, fold in half and staple the sides. Let the children colour and decorate the bag. Talk about how Jesus is like a doctor as they stick the plaster to the heart. Use this craft time to reinforce the **Big Idea** of the lesson to get them ready for **Think Time**.

Think Time

Use the illustrations to remind the children of the story. Point to different parts of the pictures and ask them to

tell you what is happening. Use the **craft** to help the children remember that Jesus is like a doctor because he can fix our sin problem. Spend some time talking about how loving Jesus is.

Big Question

Who did Jesus come to save? Sinners.

A follow up question

How is Jesus like a doctor? He can fix our sin problem.

Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us. Please help us to come to you to have our sin problem fixed. Amen.



Discoverers 5-7s



Take 10 minutes to focus! Who would the children in your group identify with more - 'bad' Levi or the 'good' Pharisees? How will you help them to see that sin is a heart issue that we all have? How can you show them Jesus' incredible love for sinners?



Get Going

Who is Invited?


You will need:

Pictures/toy figures that represent good and bad characters (e.g. heroes, villains, school bully, grandparents).

Introduce the series of 'Meals with Jesus'. Explain that in each story you will hear about who Jesus chose

to eat a meal with, and what that tells you about him.

Look at the different characters and talk about who you would want to invite to your party. Who would you invite and who would you not want at the party? Why?

 **Link:** In today's story, Jesus chose to have a meal with someone surprising. No one else wanted to eat with that person - we will find out why Jesus chose to eat with him.



Teaching Time

You will need:

Bible story illustrations (see **Appendix**), first aid kit, money, a cut out heart with 'sin' written on one side and 'saved by Jesus' on the reverse, 2 cut out hearts with string attached to them - write 'sinner' on one side of them. Ask 2 children to act as Levi and the Pharisee.

First, read the story from Luke 5:27-32 while showing the illustrations. In today's story, Jesus says he is like a doctor (hold up a first aid kit). Jesus didn't come to fix broken arms or make coughs better. He's like a doctor because he can fix the sin problem in our hearts (hold up heart with 'sin' written on it).

Introduce the characters and then ask the children who they think needed a doctor like Jesus.

- **Levi** (with a heart around his neck - write the following words on the heart as you describe him: thief, liar, cheat): He was a tax collector who worked for the enemy (hold up money). Everyone knew he was a bad guy. He didn't love God or live his way - he was a sinner (turn heart around to show 'sinner'). He knew that and so did

everyone else.

- **Pharisee** (with a heart around his neck - write the following words on the heart as you describe him - religious, clever, good): He thought he was great. He thought he'd done all the right things to make God happy. He didn't think he had a sin problem.

Explain that Levi had a big sin problem (hold up his heart - ask the children what else people would have said about Levi - write answers on the heart). Jesus called Levi because he needed his sin problem fixed. Levi knew he couldn't be good enough for God on his own - he needed Jesus' help. Levi the sinner was saved by Jesus (hand Levi the 'saved by Jesus' heart).

Explain that the Pharisee was angry because he thought he was good and wasn't a sinner (hold up his heart - ask the children what else people would have said about the Pharisee - write answers on the heart). He didn't think he needed Jesus. But, the Bible says we all have a sin problem (turn heart to show 'sinner'). He tried to do good things to impress God, but he didn't love him. He couldn't see that he had a sin problem (hold up his heart) and needed Jesus.

Finish with a point or two about what this story teaches us about Jesus. Keep in mind the **Big Idea** and the questions you thought through in **Take 10 minutes**

to focus as you explain that we are all sinners who need Jesus to forgive and change us.



Brain Break


Toilet Paper Bandages

You will need:

Rolls of toilet paper and a list of body parts that can be easily bandaged (e.g. arms, wrists, hands, fingers, legs, knees, ankles, feet, toes, head).

Divide the children into teams. Give each team a list of 5-6 body parts (or more if you have large teams) that must be bandaged with toilet paper. Set a timer or get the children to compete to see which team finishes first.

If you have the space and the children need to burn off more energy then adapt the game in the following way: stand on the opposite side of the room to the teams. Have one child from each team run up to you - tell them a body part to be bandaged. They return to their team, get bandaged and then send another child to you for the next body part. First team to complete the list wins.

 **Link:** Doctors can help us with broken bones and illnesses but only Jesus can fix our heart problem of sin.



Heart & Hands

Use the illustrations to help the children remember the story. Worksheet A is the suggested sheet for this age group. The questions below can mostly be found on the worksheet which has been designed to aid your discussion. If possible, enlarge the page to A3 so you can work on it together. Make sure each child can still answer the personal questions honestly for themselves (e.g. hand out Post-it notes for them to write/draw their answers to these questions).

Did you spot it?

- What were Levi, his friends and the religious leaders like?

Work it out

- How do you think Levi felt when Jesus chose him to follow him? Why?
- How did the religious leaders feel about Jesus hanging out with the tax collectors? Why?
- How is Jesus like a doctor?
- Who did Jesus say he came to save? What is a sinner?

Live it out

- Do you think you need Jesus to be like a doctor for you? Why?
- Jesus can save you. How does that make you feel?
- What could you say to a friend if they said they didn't need Jesus because they were good enough?
- What could you remember if you'd had a bad day and been rude/pushed a sibling/talked back to a teacher etc?

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving and saving sinners. Please help me remember that you welcome anyone who comes to you. Amen.

Craft Time

Make a doctor's bag. Use the craft if you have time available after your discussion. Craft instructions can be found in the Explorers Craft Time section. Get children to write what they are like on one side of the heart and 'sinner' on the back of it before sticking on the plaster.



Adventurers 8-11s



Take 10 minutes to focus! There are a number of surprises in these verses. Take your time to identify them, and think about what those people assumed about Jesus, which made his actions surprising. Would this be the same for the children in your group? What actions/attitudes of Jesus do they find surprising? What does this say about what they believe Jesus is like?




Get Going

Guess the Guests

Introduce the series of 'Meals with Jesus'. Explain that in each story you will hear about who Jesus chose to eat a meal with, and what that tells you about him.

Give each child a slip of paper and ask them to write down the names of three famous people/characters they would like to invite to a party. Collect in the papers

and read out the names. Children must guess whose guest-list is whose.

 **Link:** In today's story, Jesus chose to have a meal with someone surprising. No one else wanted to eat with that person - we will find out why Jesus chose to eat with him.



Teaching Time

You will need:

Highlighters/coloured pens and printouts of the passage for each child, the props listed below.

Before the lesson, set up 3 tables with the following props (if you have a small space then just use the props):

- A table with a 'Tax Collector' sign and piles of coins on it.
- A table with party items on it (e.g. party hats and balloons)
- A table with a doctor's nameplate and a first aid kit on it.

Use each table as a set to act out the scenes before looking at the text with your group.

Start at the tax collector table. Get the children to act out verses 27-28 using the props. Then ask them to highlight/circle the following verses before asking the questions below.

Find the verse that:

- tells us what Levi's job was. *What is a tax collector and why didn't people like them?*
- tells us what Levi did when Jesus spoke to him. *Levi left everything to follow Jesus. What can we work out from his response?*

Move to the party table. Get the children to act out verses 29-30 using the props. Then ask them to highlight/circle the following verses before asking the questions below.

Find the verse that:

- tells us who Jesus ate with. *Why do you think Levi threw a party for his friends and Jesus?*
- tells us how the Pharisees felt about this. *Why do you think they were angry about Jesus eating with sinners? Who do you think they thought Jesus should eat with? Why?*

Move to the doctor's table. Get the children to act out verses 31-32 using the props. Then ask them to highlight/circle the following verses before asking them the questions below.

Find the verse where:

- Jesus says who needs to see a doctor.
- Jesus says why he came. *How is Jesus like a doctor? How was Levi like a sick person? What did Jesus do for Levi?*

Finish with a point or two about what this story teaches us about Jesus. Keep in mind the **Big Idea** and the questions you thought through in **Take 10 minutes to focus** as you explain that we are all sinners who need Jesus to forgive and change us.



Brain Break


Doctor or Jesus

Write a list of reasons to go to a doctor (e.g. broken arm/leg, sore head/ear/stomach, cough/cold/flu) and reasons you need to go to Jesus because of being a sinner (focus on 'heart' problems rather than bad behaviour e.g. living your own way, loving things more than God, ignoring God etc.).

Put a 'doctor' label on one wall and a 'Jesus' label on the opposite wall. Read out the list and have the children run (or act out the ailment as they run) to the

person they need to help them with that problem - the doctor or Jesus.

This game can be adapted for a small space or a less active game: write the list on slips of paper, give them to the children to sort into a 'doctor' pile and a 'Jesus' pile.

 **Link:** We sometimes need doctors to help us with broken bones and illnesses but we all need Jesus for our biggest problem - our heart problem of sin.



Heart & Hands

Use the illustrations to help the children remember the story. Worksheet B is the suggested sheet for this age group. The questions below can mostly be found on the worksheet which has been designed to aid your discussion. If possible, enlarge the page to A3 so you can work on it together. Make sure each child can still answer the personal questions honestly for themselves (e.g. hand out Post-it notes for them to write/draw their answers to these questions).

Did you spot it?

- What happened to Levi that day? Tell the story as though Levi was telling it, child by child, one sentence at a time. Use the Bible story illustrations to help the children remember the story.

Work it out

- What did Levi leave behind? Why do you think he threw a party?
- What do you think Jesus wanted the Pharisees to understand that day?
- What would you prescribe for a person who is

sick with sin?

Live it out

- Jesus wants people to repent (turn from their old lives) and follow him. Including you, and me! Do you think this is good news? Why?
- If Jesus walked up to you and said, '[Name], follow me,' would you follow him? Why?
- Think of people you know who fit on a scale of very, very bad to very, very good. How does Jesus change how you think and feel about those people?

Prayer

- What are you thankful to Jesus for?
- Who would you like to pray for to come to see Jesus as their Saviour, doctor and friend?

Craft Time

Use the craft if you have time available after your discussion. Have a card heart and a plaster for each child. Get children to write a sentence about how Jesus is like a doctor on the heart. Stick plasters to the hearts.



Xtra Stretch

- Sometimes we can think like the Pharisees when we look at other people. When we do that, what mistake are we making?
- Sometimes we might feel like we have made too many mistakes/let too many people down/done

too many bad things. What did Levi realise about Jesus that we need to remember?

- What is hard to understand in this story?
- What is the best news in this story?



Mixed Ages

3–11s

This component is suitable for a mixed group of children aged 3–11 years old. Use this if you are unable to break your group into smaller classes because of the number of children or leaders you have.



Take 10 minutes to focus! Will your children be surprised that Jesus came for sinners? Or is that a familiar truth to them? How will you help them to be amazed that Jesus came for them as much as he came to save sinful Levi and the 'good' Pharisees?



Get Going

Plan a Party


You will need:

A mixed list of liked and disliked foods, activities and people/characters (e.g. chocolate cake, Brussels sprouts, bouncy castle, doing chores, grandparents, famous sportsperson, strict headteacher, cartoon villains etc.). If possible, have items or pictures to hold up so younger children can understand what is happening.

Introduce the series of 'Meals with Jesus'. Explain that in each story you will hear about who Jesus chose

to eat a meal with, and what that tells you about him.

Divide the room in 2 – one side for 'yes' and the other for 'no'. Call out the list, show the item/picture and let the children choose if they'd want it at their party by standing on the 'yes' or 'no' side of the room. Take note of the people they wouldn't want at their party – did they leave out the disliked characters?

 **Link:** Often we choose to have the 'nice/good/likeable' people at our parties. In today's story, Jesus chose to be at the party of the person no one liked. We will find out why Jesus chose to hang out with him.



Teaching Time

You will need:

Items a doctor would use (or pictures of them) e.g. bandages/first aid kit/stethoscope, printed Bible story illustrations (see **Appendix**), printed Bible verses and a large cut out heart with 'sin' written on one side and 'saved by Jesus' on the reverse.

Show the 'doctor' items/pictures and ask the children who would use those things. Talk about what a doctor does and when you would go to see one.

Explain that the man in today's story was sick and needed a doctor. But not the kind of doctor who could fix coughs or bones – he needed a doctor to fix his sin problem. Sin is the problem we all have, of not loving and obeying God with all of our hearts, the way that he

deserves.

Divide the children into 3 groups (include younger and older children in each group) or work together if you have a small group. Give each group a Bible story illustration and the verses that describe what is happening in the picture (pic 1 – verses 27–28; pic 2 – verses 29–30; pic 3 – verses 31–32).

Get the children to recreate the picture like a 'freeze frame'. One at a time and in order, get each group to present their 'freeze frame' and read out the text. Then, talk about who was in each scene and what they were like, what happened, how the people felt and if there was anything surprising.

Ask the children who they thought was 'sick with sin' and needed a doctor – can they see that the Pharisees

needed Jesus as much as Levi did? Talk about how sin is a heart problem that everyone has (hold up 'sin' heart) and there is only one person who can fix that problem - Jesus (turn heart to show 'saved by Jesus'). Remind the children of what a doctor can cure - can a doctor cure sin? No! Only Jesus can fix our heart problem - that is

how he is like a doctor.


Finish with a point or two about how we are all sinners who need Jesus to forgive and change us. Keep in mind the **Big Idea** and the questions you thought through in **Take 10 minutes to focus**.



Brain Break

Follow Me

Play a game of 'Simon Says' - quick pace to keep the game fun and energetic. Let older children take turns as the leader. When a child is out, they must sit on the side/away from the game. But when you call out, 'Jesus said, "follow me!"' any children who are out can join in the game again. Repeat this a few times.

 **Link:** Jesus didn't leave Levi out because he was a sinner. He called him to follow him. Anyone who comes to Jesus can be saved.



Heart & Hands

If you have more than one leader then you could split up into smaller groups of similar aged children (if possible). If not then get the younger ones busy with a craft so you can have some discussion time with the older children.

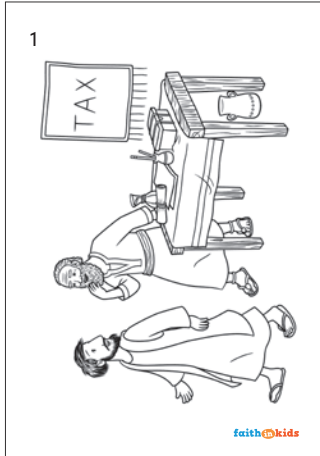
Use the illustrations to help the children remember the story.

Depending on your children, use the craft/worksheet and questions that will suit them best from the Explorers/Discoverers/Adventurers sections.

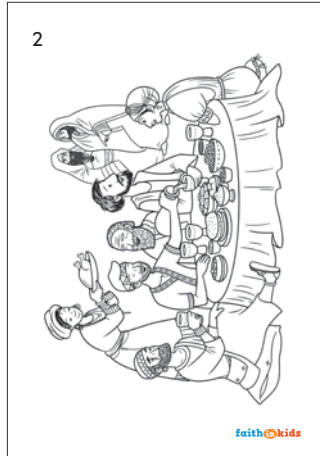


Appendix

The following pages can be copied, printed and used to accompany this lesson.



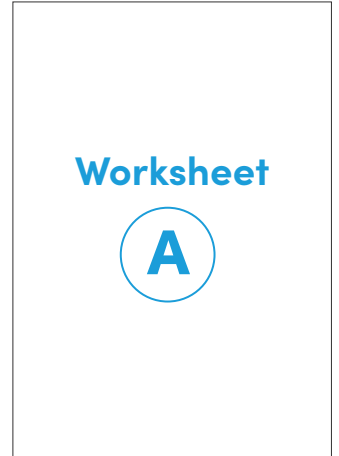
p19



p20



p21



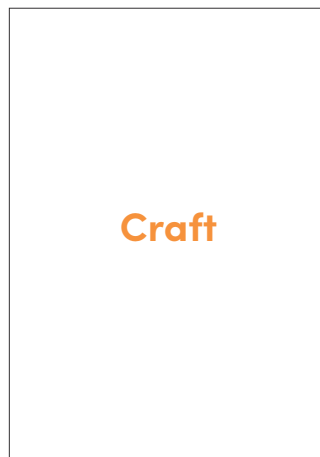
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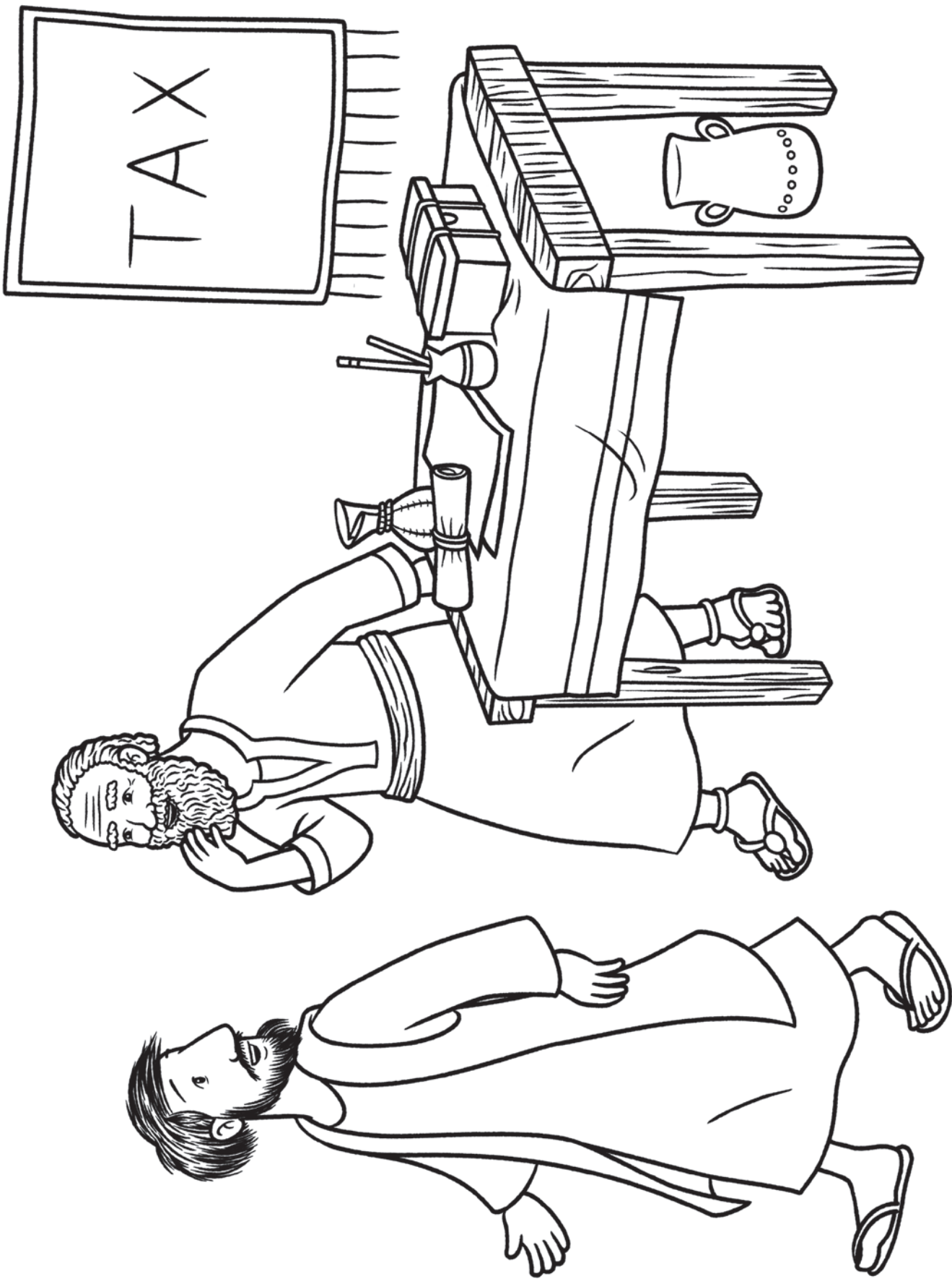
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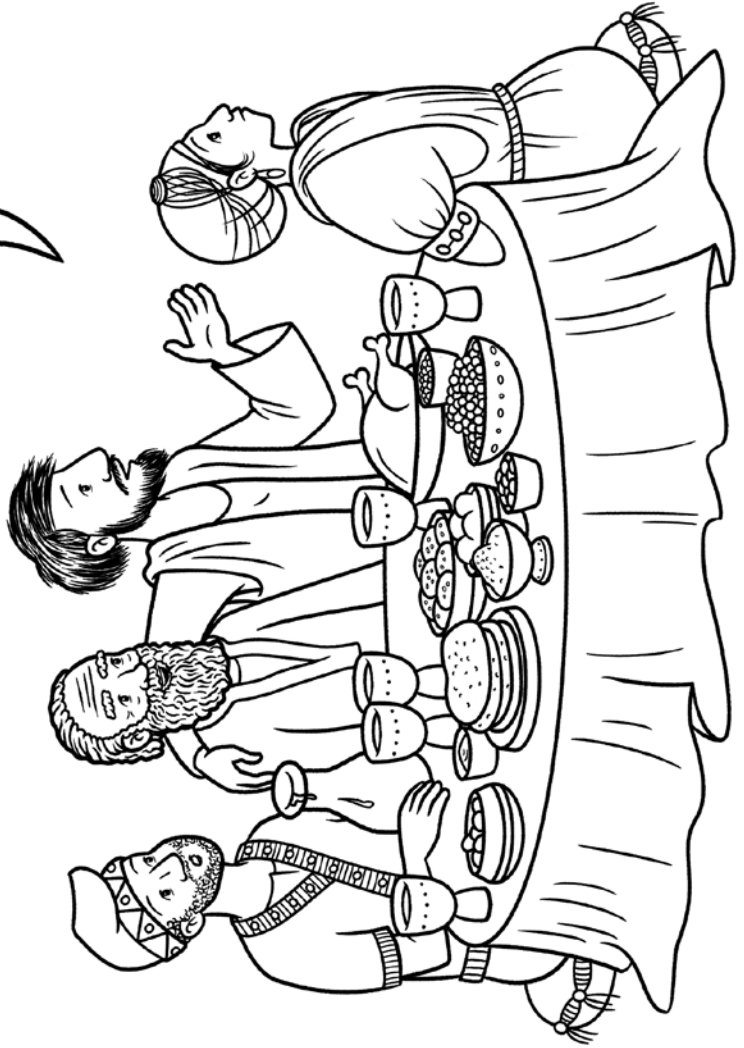
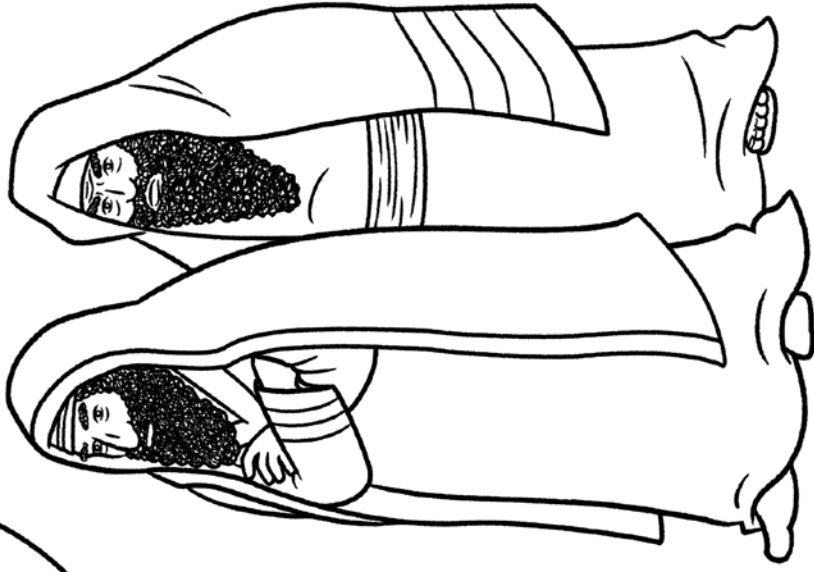
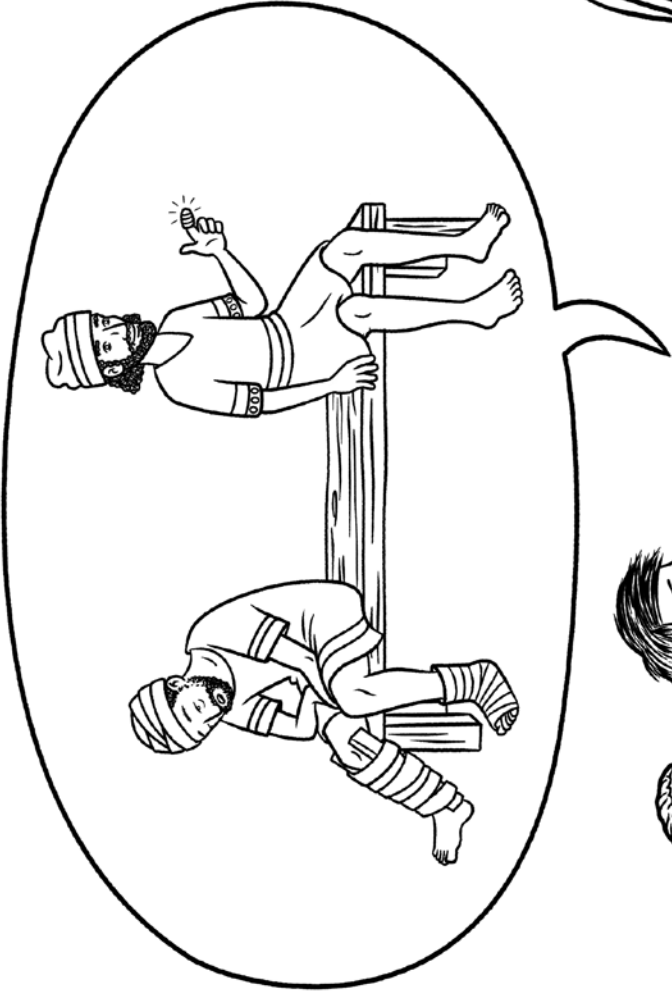
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p25









MEALS WITH JESUS

Lesson 1: Lunch with Levi

LUKE 5:27-32



Did you spot it?

In different colours, draw circles around Levi, his friends and the religious leaders. What were they like? Match the pictures to the people.

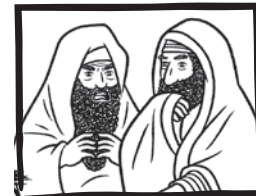


Work it out

Colour in a face to show how these people felt.



Levi when Jesus called him to follow him.



The religious leaders when they saw Jesus eating with Levi and his friends.



How is Jesus like a doctor? Draw what only Jesus can fix.

Who did Jesus say he came to save? Write the first letter of each word to find the answer.



Live it out

Do you need Jesus to be like a doctor for you? Colour a square.



Jesus can save you. Colour in a face to show how that makes you feel.



B

MEALS WITH JESUS

Lesson 1: Lunch with Levi

LUKE 5:27-32



Did you spot it?

What happened to Levi that day? Draw a cartoon to tell the story as if you are Levi.

		THE END!
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Work it out

Choose the correct words:

Jesus called Levi to *chase / hug / follow* him. Levi left his *shop / job / school* and his *money / breakfast / dog* to follow him. Levi threw a *ball / party / frisbee* for Jesus and his friends.



What would you prescribe for a person who is sick with sin? Who do they need to cure them?

PRESCRIPTION

Condition: *sinner* Treatment:



Live it out

Colour in a square to answer the questions:

Jesus wants you to turn from your old life to follow him. Is this good news?

YES NO

If Jesus walked up to you and said 'follow me', would you follow him?

YES NO

Think of people on the different points on the scale. How does Jesus change how you think and feel about them?



very, very bad



very, very good



Use these questions to get a conversation started about today's lesson with your child. Pick a time that sets you up for success - maybe in the car on the way home or before bedtime. Make yourself part of the conversation and share your own ideas - this is not a test!

MEALS WITH JESUS

Lesson 1: Lunch with Levi

LUKE 5:27-32



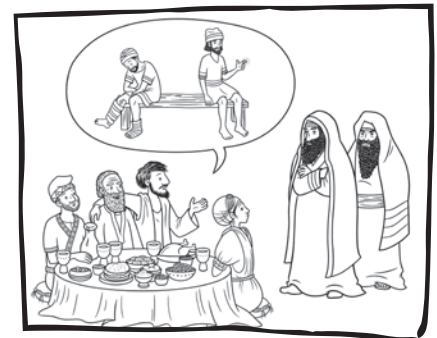
Big Idea:

Jesus came to save sinners. He is like a doctor because he can fix the problem of sin.



Faith in Kids looks like:

Children who are amazed by Jesus' love for sinners and who want to follow him.



3-5s

- Who did Jesus come to save? *Sinners.*
- How is Jesus like a doctor? *He can fix our sin problem.*



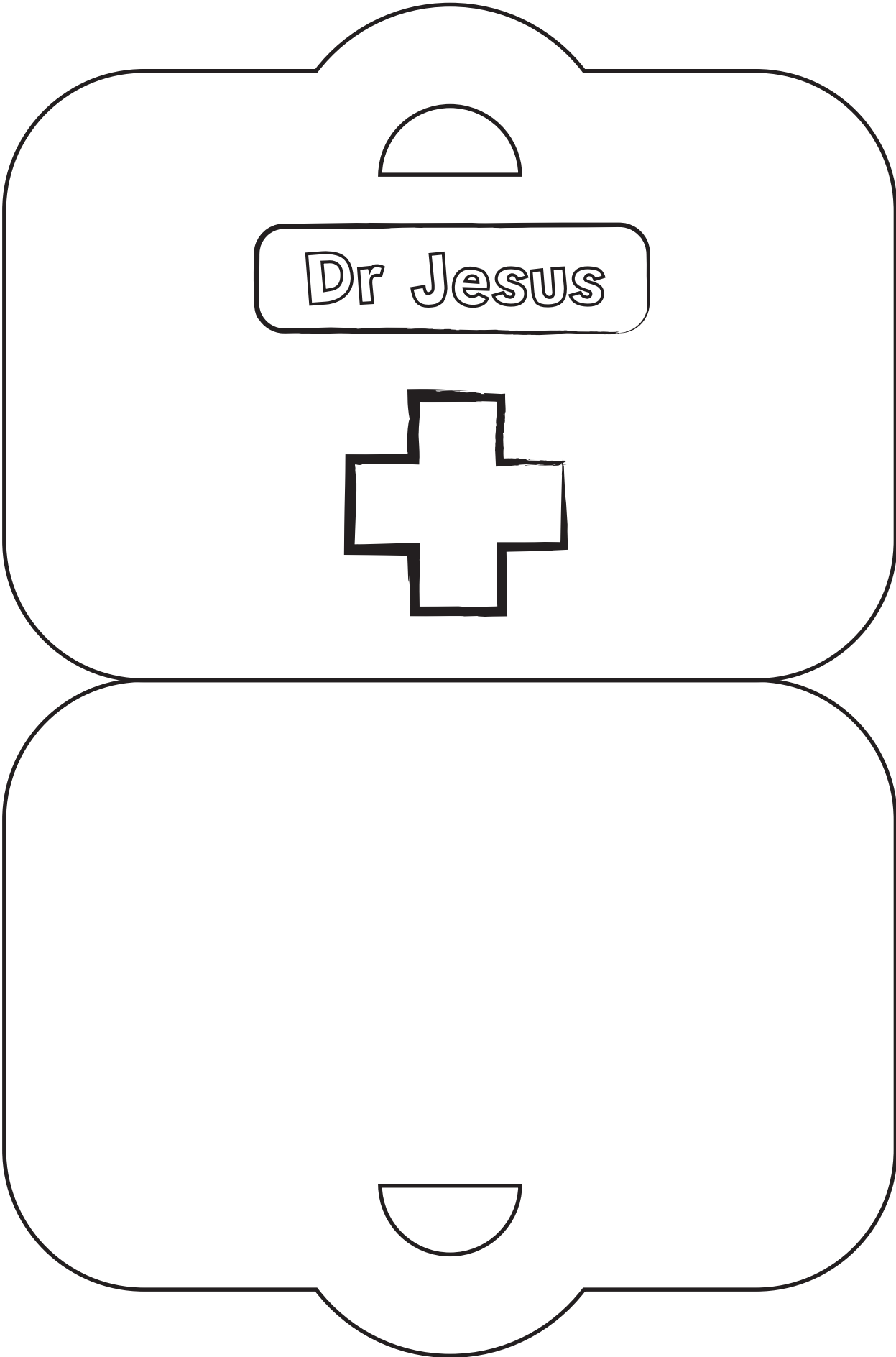
5-7s

- What were Levi, his friends and the religious leaders like?
- Who did Jesus say he came to save?
- Do you think you need Jesus to be like a doctor for you? Why?

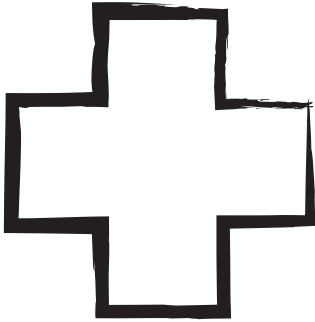


8-11s

- What happened to Levi in the story?
- How is Jesus like a doctor?
- Is there someone you think can't be saved by Jesus? Why? How does Jesus change how you can think and feel about that person?
- How is this story good news?



Dr Jesus



Meals with Jesus

Cover artwork
inspired by

The logo for The Good Book Company features a red swoosh above the text. The word "the" is in black, "good" is in red, and "book" is in black. Below this, the word "COMPANY" is written in a smaller, black, all-caps font.

the**good**book
COMPANY

The logo for Faith in Kids features the word "faith" in red, followed by "in" inside a red circle, and "kids" in red.

faith**in**kids

www.faithinkids.org