



Levi the Bad Guy (Luke 5:27-32)



Jesus is like a doctor who came to save spiritually sick sinners.



Children who see they're sinners and are amazed that Jesus calls people like them.

You will need: Props for the Bible drama (piggy bank, money, 2 party hats, 2 party blowers), 2 people outline cards (fold a large piece of card in half and draw the outline of a person on the outside and inside of each. Write 'Levi' on the outside of one and 'Pharisee' on the outside of the other. On the inside of each card, Blu Tack a heart with 'sinner' written on it to the outline of the person), an extra heart with 'forgiven' written on it (matching the 'sinner' hearts), thick marker pen, Blu Tack, large cardboard heart with 'God' written on it.

Powerpoint slides: Pictures of heroes and villains that the children know from books and movies (one picture per slide), 2 talk points, pictures of a sick child and a healthy child.

Space for notes

(Slides of superheroes and villains. Ask the children if they are the 'good guy' or the 'bad guy'.)

In today's story, Jesus called a bad guy to follow him. Jesus is the ultimate good guy so this was a shock to lots of people. But, Jesus didn't come to call the good guys, he came to call sinners.

Space for notes

1. Jesus calls sinners to follow him

(Slide of talk point)

(2 leaders act, using the props, as you read the verses.)

'After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me!" Levi got up, left everything, and followed Jesus. Then Levi gave a big dinner for Jesus. The dinner was at Levi's house. At the table there were many tax collectors and other people, too. But the Pharisees and the men who taught the law for the Pharisees began to complain to the followers of Jesus. They said, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" (Luke 5:27-30)

First, let's find out what Levi and the Pharisee were like.

(Stick up the Levi card. On the front, write inside the person outline what Levi was like.)

This is Levi. He was the bad guy. People were shocked when Jesus called him because he was a tax collector. When you get paid for doing a job, you have to give some of the money to the government - those are taxes. Levi's job was to collect that money. But he took extra to keep for himself. He was greedy and mean. It wasn't fair. He got rich while others got poorer. Everything on the outside showed people he was a bad guy.

(Stick up the Pharisee card. On the front, write inside the person outline what the Pharisee was like.)



Space for notes

This is a Pharisee. He was a good guy. He was religious and knew a lot about God. He tried really hard to be good and do what was right. Everything on the outside showed people he was a good guy. He was shocked that Jesus called Levi because he thought good people like Jesus should only be friends with good people like him.

It would be a shock to see the good guys we looked at earlier hanging out with the bad guys. Imagine if (name of hero) invited (name of villain) to their birthday party or chose them for their football team. Or, what would you think if the nicest child at school started hanging out with the meanest? It's a shock because we think good and bad don't mix. But Jesus didn't come to call good people. He came to call sinners.

Maybe you think sinners are bad guys like Levi or villains because you can see the bad things they do. But sin isn't about what's on the outside - it's a heart problem **(open the Levi card to show his heart.)**

Sin means we love ourselves the most. It says 'I love me!' **(Write 'me' all over Levi's heart.)**

I'm the most important. I know best. I'll do things my way.' This is a problem because God made us to love him the most. It's also a problem because it's the opposite of what God is like.

(Stick up 'God' heart and write what he is like on it.)

He is perfect, holy and has no sin. He loves us perfectly. He is good, faithful and always keeps his promises. And because sin is like saying, 'No!' to God and his ways, it has to be punished.

Space for notes

Just like when you disobey your parents and get into trouble, sin means we're in trouble with God and we have to be punished. But it's more serious than a time out or no TV for a week. The punishment for sin is death and not being part of God's family. With his sinful heart, Levi couldn't be anywhere near God **(stick 'God' heart far away from Levi).**

And the bad news is, we all have hearts like Levi. Whether we look good or bad on the outside, we are all sinners.

But, God loves us so much, he sent us Jesus. Jesus has a cure for our sin problem - forgiveness. Only Jesus can give us God's forgiveness. That's why he called sinners, because he can save us.

2. Jesus saves sinners who come to him

(Slide of talk point)

The Pharisees couldn't understand why Jesus chose to call Levi. So Jesus explained it to them. Listen carefully to what he said...

'Jesus answered them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor. It is the sick who need a doctor. I have not come to invite good people. I have come to invite sinners to change their hearts and lives!"
(Luke 5:31-32)

(Slide of the sick and healthy children.)

Which of these children needs to see a doctor?

(Take answers.)



Space for notes

If you're sick, you go to a doctor. If you're healthy, you don't. Jesus was saying that he's like a doctor because he can cure the problem of sin - he can forgive it. Sin isn't an actual sickness like a cold or the flu. But it's a problem we all have and need fixed. Just like a person who knows they are sick knows they need a doctor, a person who knows they are a sinner knows they need Jesus. Levi realised he was sick with sin. So when Jesus called him, he followed. And like a doctor, Jesus cured his sickness of sin - he forgave him and changed his heart. Levi was no longer a sick sinner. Now, he was forgiven by God. That day, Levi's heart was changed. **(Remove Levi's 'sinner' heart and Bluetack the 'forgiven' heart in its place.)**

That didn't make him perfect - only God is perfect. Levi would still sin, but because he trusted Jesus his sin would always be forgiven. He wouldn't be punished for it by being far away from God any more. Now he could be welcomed into God's family. **(Move 'God' heart to be near the Levi card.)**

Levi needed Jesus because he was a sinner. But what about the Pharisee? Remember, on the outside he looked like a good guy. But even though he did good things he still had a sinful heart. He couldn't be near God either. **(Open Pharisee card to show his heart.)**

Remember that sin makes you think you know best. He thought he was good enough for God. He didn't see he was sick with sin. He didn't think he needed Jesus. The surprise of this story is that the good guy, the Pharisee, was the one left far away from God. His heart didn't change. He was left with his

Space for notes

unforgiven sin. He couldn't be near God or be in God's family. **(Move the Pharisee card far away from Levi and the 'God' heart.)**

Everyone's heart is sick with sin. In God's eyes, we're like villains who need to be kept out of his good family. But it doesn't have to stay like that. Jesus can forgive us and change our hearts from being sick with sin to being forgiven by God. We can't be 'good enough' for God on our own. But we're not too bad to be saved by Jesus. He invites all of us to come to him to be saved. Levi got it - he saw that he was sick with sin. What about you? Can you see that you need Jesus? Come to him to have your sin forgiven and your heart changed.

Pray to close.

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



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Discussion Time

Talk 6: Levi the Bad Guy
(Luke 5:27-32)



Big Idea
Jesus is like a doctor who came to save spiritually sick sinners.



Faith in Kids looks like
Children who see they're sinners and are amazed that Jesus calls people like them.



Did you spot it?

1. What was Levi like?
2. What was the Pharisee like?
3. Which one of them was a sinner?



Work it out.

1. Who did Jesus come to call? Why?
2. How is Jesus like a doctor?



Live it Out.

1. How does it make you feel that everyone (including you!) is a sinner? Why?
2. Do you think you need Jesus to cure your sin problem? Why?



Pray.



Spiderman's Web

You will need: String, drawing pins and room dividers.

Set up: Place the room dividers parallel to each other. Create a web of string between them by attaching it to the screens with drawing pins. Leave large enough spaces for the children to climb between the string but don't make it too easy! You could also do this in a corridor - attach the string to the walls with masking tape.


- The aim is to climb through the web without touching the string.
- One child at a time climbs through the web. They can touch the screens/walls and floor but not the string.

Activity Pack 6

Hero vs Villain

- Encourage the rest of the team to cheer each person on and point out 'next moves' so they don't get bored while waiting.

Scoring: Give a score out of 10 to the team for their overall performance.

Safety: Make sure the screens are stable and can't fall over onto a child. If a drawing pin comes loose, have the child stop and replace it before they continue. 

DIY Lightsaber


You will need: Table, foam pool noodles (1 per 2 children), black, grey and silver duct tape, marker pen, scissors and printed pictures of lightsaber handles.

Set up: Set up the table with the duct tape, scissors and pictures for the children to work at. Cut the pool noodles in half.

- The aim is to make a lightsaber from a pool noodle and duct tape.
- Give each child half a pool noodle.
- Children cut and stick different colours of duct tape to the one end of the noodle to look like the handle of a lightsaber. Let them copy designs from the pictures if they need some inspiration. Write names on the lightsabers so children can take them home at the end of the club.
- If you have time then have a sword fighting lesson and teach them a few lightsaber moves - look online for ideas or make them up!

- If you have a very large group and buying pool noodles for each child is not an option then make enough lightsabers so the groups can have a lightsaber fighting lesson instead.

Scoring: Give an overall group score for participation, creativity and neatness of work for decorating the lightsabers (and/or points for participation and skill during lightsaber fighting lessons).

Safety: Supervise use of scissors. Children will want to fight each other with their lightsabers - teach them moves to practise against each other so that duels are safe and controlled. No hitting of the head or face. 





Avengers Infinity War

You will need: Plastic jugs and cycle helmets (enough for half the team to have 1 of each), duct tape, ball pit balls (or any other lightweight balls) and masking tape.

Set up: Tape the jugs to the cycle helmets with the duct tape. Use the masking tape to make a line on the floor - this is the throwing line that children will stand at. The children wearing the jug helmets stand a metre away from this line. The balls need to be scattered across the floor on the other side of this line.

- The aim is to win the battle by getting the bad guys (balls) out by catching them in a jug.
- Play the game in two halves so all the children get a chance to be throwers and catchers.
- Half the team put on the jug helmets and then stand 1 metre away from the masking tape line. Leave a space between each child.

- The balls are the bad guys. The rest of the team must grab a ball, run to the line and then throw it into a jug. The catcher can move to try to catch the ball once it has been thrown. Missed balls must be thrown back into the playing space.
- A leader collects the caught balls to give a score at the end.
- If all the balls are caught before the end of the playing time, add them back into the playing space so the children can keep going.
- At half time, the children swap places so that throwers become catchers.

Scoring: Give points for the number of balls caught.

Safety: Only use lightweight balls so children are not hurt if they are hit in the face or body when balls are thrown.



Hulk Balloon Smash

You will need: Balloons and balloon pumps.

Set up: Inflate the balloons.

- The aim is to pop a balloon by squashing it between the hands of two children until it pops.
- Divide the children into pairs. Give each pair a balloon.
- The pairs of children stand opposite each other with their arms outstretched in front of them, parallel to the floor, and hands bent upwards. They place the balloon between their hands.
- The children push their hands together to pop the balloon.
- Have 2-3 balloons per pair to pop.

- You could also let them inflate the balloons as part of the activity.

Scoring: Points for number of balloons popped (and inflated).

Safety: Some children are very fearful of popping balloons/loud sudden noises - check with each group before starting the activity. Arms must be outstretched in front of the children so the popping balloon is away from their faces. Eyes must be closed while squashing the balloons.





Hero vs Villain

Grand Finale Game Suggestion

You will need: 2 types of clothes pegs (plastic and wooden) and masking tape.

Set up: Use the masking tape to make a rectangular court with a line down the middle.

- Give one team the plastic pegs - they are the 'heroes'. The other team get the wooden pegs and are the 'villains'.
- Attach a peg to the back of each child.
- Both teams line up back to back along the masking tape line in the middle of the court.
- A leader calls out either 'hero' or 'villain'. The team that was called must chase the other team and grab as many pegs from their backs as possible. Only the peg can be grabbed - not the child's clothing.
- The team being chased run in a straight line towards the far end of the court. Their peg can't be taken once they step outside the court.

- Have a practice round. Check the teams know if they are 'heroes' or 'villains' before you start.
- After each round, count the pegs. Reattach pegs to each child and have them line up again for another round.
- The same team can be called more than once in a row. Give the teams equal numbers of turns so the scores can be compared fairly at the end.

Scoring: Count the number of pegs won in each round. The team with the highest number at the end is the winner.

Safety: Only the peg can be grabbed. No other contact allowed. If children are getting rough then have a half time when you swap over the pegs and have the teams swap court sides to give them a moment to cool down.



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