

[HOMEPAGE]

For families of junior soldiers

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC:

Matthew The Tax Collector

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 4:17 (NIV)

"From that time on Jesus began to preach. 'Turn away from your sins!' he said. 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'"

The memory verse for the week is included on each HOMEPAGE. Help your child review it during the week.

PARENT POINT:

Read over the story of Matthew found in Matthew 9:9-13 NIV. Talk to your child about the importance of listening to Jesus.



TODAY IN JUNIOR SOLDIERS, the children began a four-week unit about people from the New Testament. Continuing with the theme, "People of Faith," this unit will help junior soldiers understand what it means to have faith, and be faithful, by looking to other Christians.

The calling of Matthew as a disciple of Jesus is recorded in Matthew 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; and Luke 5:27-32 (NIV). Matthew was a tax collector for the Roman government. Working as a tax collector, Matthew was responsible for collecting money from the Jewish people to give to the Roman government. Many tax collectors charged people more than was required and kept the difference. Most tax collectors participated in this practice.

One day when Matthew was collecting taxes, Jesus called him by name. Jesus knew what Matthew was doing. When Matthew heard Jesus call his name, he got up left everything behind, and followed Jesus. Matthew reconsidered his devious activities after meeting Jesus; he became one of the twelve disciples.

Matthew held a feast in his home, with Jesus as the honored guest. The Pharisees criticized Jesus for eating with Matthew and the other tax collectors. They asked the disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" (Matthew 9:11 NIV). "Jesus heard that. So he said, 'Those who are healthy don't need a doctor. Sick people do. Go and learn what this means, 'I want mercy and not sacrifice.' I have not come to get those who think they are right with God to follow me. I have come to get sinners to follow me'" (Matthew 9:12-13 NIV).

Matthew was a changed person because of Jesus. He left his old lifestyle to follow Jesus. Jesus used Matthew's strengths and abilities to reach out to others. Matthew gives his eyewitness account of Jesus' ministry in the New Testament book that bears his name.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOME

This lesson showed junior soldiers the drastic change that happened in Matthew's life because of Jesus Christ. By learning about the change in Matthew's life, junior soldiers better understand the power of Jesus in their lives.