



# Dinner with Sinners

**Matthew 9:9-13;  
12:9-14**

## EXPLORE

As a family, read *The Action Bible* story on pages 563–565 or the Action Bible New Testament on pages 53–55. Read this true Bible story found in Matthew 9:9–13; 12:9–14.

Here is what the story is about:

As Jesus was travelling through Capernaum, He met a tax collector named Matthew. The Jews hated tax collectors because they were often dishonest and took money that was not owed. However, Jesus loved the tax collectors in the same way He loves all people. He asked Matthew to leave his job and become a disciple. Matthew trusted Jesus and began to follow Him. Later, Jesus had dinner at Matthew's house, and many other tax collectors came to meet Jesus. The Jewish religious leaders were angry that Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors. Jesus told them that it was sinners He came to save.

Later, Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, which was the day God had set aside for rest. This made the Pharisees angry because they believed Jesus was breaking God's rules. Jesus explained God always wants people to do good things, even on the Sabbath.

## REMEMBER

Answer each question with information you learned from the story:

- › **Why did the Jews hate tax collectors?** The tax collectors often cheated people out of money and took more than was owed.
- › **Who did Jesus ask to come follow him in this story?** Jesus asked Matthew, the tax collector, to follow him. Matthew becomes one of Jesus' twelve disciples.
- › **Why were the Pharisees upset with Jesus when He had dinner at Matthew's house?** They did not think it was right for Jesus to spend time with tax collectors and sinners.

## DISCUSS

When people wondered why He was eating at the home of a tax collector, Jesus responded, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2:17).

- › What similarities are there between someone who is sick and someone who has sinned?

Just as a sick person requires a doctor for physical healing, a sinner needs Jesus for spiritual healing. A sick person often cannot heal themselves and relies on a doctor for treatment. Similarly, sinners cannot become righteous on their own. We all need Jesus' forgiveness and guidance.

- › How can we show God's love and kindness to those who are left out or judged by others? What are some good things you can do to show God's love to others?

We can show them love like God showed love to us. We can include them and invite them to join us for a meal. We can pray for them.

## BLESS

Read the blessing below aloud or say your own blessing based on Matthew 9:9. May you listen to God's voice and follow Him all the days of your life.

## ACT

Jesus ate dinner and spent time with sinners and tax collectors. Though these types of people were not popular or well-liked, Jesus loved them and treated them with kindness and compassion. Discuss some kinds of people who are unloved or mistreated in your community. What are some ways that you can show these people compassion and love?