

Alley SG—October 10th-11th, 2021

Today's Bible Story: Change Your Mind (Matthew) • Matthew 9:9-13

Today's Key Question: How would you describe yourself?

Today's Bottom Line: Knowing Jesus changes how you see yourself.

Monthly Memory Verse: I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (Psalm 139:14 NIV)

1. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bibles, a sand bucket (1 per group), sticky notes (1 pad per group), Ephesians cards (1 per kid), ping pong balls (3 per kid), pens

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Give kids a Bible.
- Look up Psalm 139:14 and read the verse together.
- Say:
 - How we are made is amazing and wonderful!
 - Last week we talked about how God made us. What is special about humans that is different from any of God's other creations?
- Write the words, "Wonderful," "Amazing," and "Made in God's Image" on sticky notes and attach them to the sand bucket.
- *Give each kid an "Ephesians Card."*
- Read one of the translations together.
- After reading the verse, ask kids to underline the word(s) that describe them.
- Repeat this with each of the translations.
- Discuss the words kids underlined in the verses. What do they have in common?
- Write the underlined words on some sticky notes and attach to the bucket, too.
- Divide kids up into two to four teams and assign each team a color.
- Give each kid 3-5 ping pong balls (depending on your group size).
- Line kids up about 5-10 ft from the bucket.
- Challenge kids to throw their ping pong balls into the bucket.
- *Declare the winner the team with the most ping pong balls in the bucket.*
- Use the following to engage kids in a wrap up conversation:
 - Just like some of our ping pong balls "missed the mark," we all sometimes feel like we miss the mark or don't measure up. We don't always feel like God's masterpieces.
 - ***[Make It Personal] (In an age-appropriate way, share about times when you feel like you've missed the mark. Maybe when your words aren't kind or when you feel like you're not doing enough "good stuff.")***
 - Are there times you feel like that too? *(Gently prompt kids to share times they felt like they "missed the mark." Be prepared to share an age-appropriate time you didn't feel amazing or wonderful. Maybe you didn't do well on a work assignment or you made plans to eat lunch with a friend for lunch and you forgot about it and didn't show up.)*
 - Even when we don't feel amazing or wonderful, what do we know is true about how God created us? *(review the words on the bucket)*
 - Even when we don't feel like God's masterpiece, how do we know we matter to Jesus? How do we know we are valuable to Jesus? *(Emphasize that Jesus*

knows we will “miss the mark.” He knows we are messy, but no matter what, Jesus looks past the mess and sees how God created each of us; no matter what, you are valuable to Him, too.)

- What can we do to remember, no matter what, we are valuable to Jesus?
- **[Make it Personal] (Share with the group what you do to remember you matter to Jesus. Maybe you thank Jesus for what He did for you, for making a way to be with God forever. Maybe share with the group a verse you say when you are feeling like you don't matter, when you aren't feeling wonderful or amazing.)**

2. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Plastic Tablecloth (1 per group, per Service), Colorful Example Image Paper (1 per kid), Bibles, Q-Tips (5 per student), ½ sheet of White Cardstock Paper, Paper Plates (3 per group, per service) and Tempera Paint (3 primary colors per Group)

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Place the plastic tablecloth down over your table/area.
 - **NOTE: This is to cover your area from any paint spills and use to roll up used q-tips and plates and dispose of after each service.**
- Give each kid 5 Q-Tips and a ½ sheet of blank card stock paper.
- Squirt each paint color onto paper plates and place in the middle of your group.
- Handout the Colorful Example Image Printout to each kid.
- Allow kids to paint their own interpretation of the Colorful Example Image.
- After a few minutes...
- Give kids a Bible and look up Matthew 9:9-11.
- Read the verses aloud.
- Ask:
 - What do we learn about Matthew in these verses? How would you describe him?
 - What is a tax collector?
 - How do you think the Pharisees and people would describe tax collectors? Why do you think the Pharisees asked why Jesus ate with tax collectors? (*people couldn't see past the fact Matthew was a tax collector; the Pharisees and the people looked down on Matthew and didn't want anything to do with him so they couldn't understand why Jesus would want to eat with him.*)
 - Jesus knew Matthew was tax collector, but Jesus saw Matthew as valuable. What did Jesus do or say in the story to show Matthew he was valuable to Jesus? (*Jesus ate dinner with Matthew, went to Matthew's house, asked Matthew to be a disciple, etc.*)
 - What do you know about Jesus that shows you that you are valuable to Him? (*This is an opportunity to briefly review the gospel message—You are so important to Jesus that He provided a way so you could be with Him now and forever.*)
 - *Close by allowing kids to show their paintings. Remind them that even though the paintings may look messy, they are all unique and colorful and made especially by them. That's the way God feels about us. Sure, we can be a little messy sometimes, but God loves us and made us uniquely special for Him!*

3. Discussion Questions

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

Ask:

- How would your friends describe you? How would you describe yourself?
- Would you describe yourself as valuable? Why or why not?
- How do you know Jesus sees you as valuable? Especially when you don't feel valuable, how can you remember you matter to Jesus?
- How does it feel to know that Jesus sees you as valuable? How does it change the way you think about yourself?

4. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: "Ephesians Cards" from the Verses to Take with You Activity, pens

What You Do:

- Encourage kids to write a prayer on the back of their "Ephesians Card."
- Prompt them to thank God for how He made them and to thank Jesus for showing us we are important to Him no matter what.
- Gather the group together and let them share their prayers with the group.