

Do you recognise your sin?

Luke 5:27-32 – Leaders version

Check in – with the group sitting in a semi-circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

What does the passage say and mean?

30 minutes

1. What has Jesus just shown his authority to do in Luke 5:17-26?

To forgive sin. (If you haven't studied this passage recently, recap it for your group).

Read Luke 5:27-32

2. How do you think people felt about tax collectors in Jesus' time?

Exactly the same as they do now! Tax collectors were Jews, collecting money from Jews, for the Romans, so they were really despised – they were working for the opposition.

3. If you had been one of Jesus's disciples that day, how would you have felt about him picking up a tax collector and inviting him to join the group?

The group of 12 isn't fully formed yet – Jesus is still recruiting. So far, Peter, James and John have joined in Luke's account with Andrew, Nathanael and Philip in John's account.

4 What did Levi do in v28, and what does this tell us about him?

He got up, left everything and followed Jesus. Presumably he left his accounting books, his booth and most importantly his money, in order to follow Jesus! We can assume that this isn't the first time Levi had heard of Jesus – perhaps Levi has heard Jesus teach before, or has heard about Jesus' teaching.

5. What does Levi do for Jesus and who else is there? Why do you think Jesus agrees to go, when he knows what people will think of him?

Levi holds a big banquet for Jesus and invites a load more tax collectors! It's a room full of people who are hated by society! Think about why Jesus is there – He says that he has come to call sinners to repentance. He's not judging people, although people are judging Him.

6. What do the religious people say to Jesus' disciples, and why do you think they have an issue with this party?

They ask why the disciples, and by implication Jesus, eats with tax collectors and sinners? They are criticising the company Jesus keeps and the possibility of these people being welcomed by God / one of God's children (they recognise Jesus as a rabbi (teacher) but not as the Christ).

7. **SHOUT-OUT** Why do you think Jesus keeps company with 'sinners' rather than religious people?

Write their answers on the flip-chart

8. What does Jesus say to this challenge, v31-32, and what does he mean?

He means that he's come for those who recognise that they are sinners and need help. Those who don't know they are sick don't go to the doctor, and those who don't recognise that they are sinners don't repent or seek forgiveness from God. He's saying that the 'tax collectors and sinners' recognise their need for him, but the religious people don't. It's a real slap in the face for the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Jesus has authority to forgive sin and all who repent and believe will be forgiven. If you haven't already outlined the gospel today, do so now.

Explain that Levi the tax-collector is probably the same man as Matthew, who wrote Matthew's gospel.

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Is your attitude to the outcasts in your society like that of Jesus or that of the Pharisees?

Is your attitude to Jesus like that of Levi or the Pharisees?

Check out – with the group sitting in a semi-circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.



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