

**WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION**  
**YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL**  
**PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE**  
**Jesus Calls Levi (Matthew)**

*Use this guide to help as you journey through this week's Sunday school group discussion.*

**ICEBREAKER:** Where would you go on vacation if you had to walk there?

**OPENING PRAYER:** Psalm 131 (NLT)

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

**THE JESUS TRAIL**

The Jesus Trail is a 65-kilometer hiking trail in the Galilee region of Israel which connects important sites from the life of Jesus as well as other historical and religious sites. The Jesus Trail offers an alternative for travelers and pilgrims to experience the steps of Jesus in a way that is authentic, adventurous and educational by hiking through the rugged and beautiful landscape of the Galilee in Israel. It takes on average four days to journey this trail. (jesustrail.org)

- Why do you think people hike the Jesus trail?
- How could this hike strengthen a person's faith?
- How could this experience bring new life to the stories of Jesus in the New Testament?
- Do you think you would want to hike the Jesus Trail? Why or why not?

**JESUS CALLS LEVI:**

- Why would Jesus inviting a tax collector to be a disciple be controversial?
- Why do you think a person would become a tax collector? How are they expecting to find happiness in life?

**READ MATTHEW 9: 9-13**

9 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So, Matthew got up and followed him.

10 Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. 11 But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?"

12 When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do." 13 Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

- Before Jesus called Matthew, do you think he was happy? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Matthew leaves everything behind to follow Jesus?
- Who are the people that Matthew invites to a party? Did that seem strange?
- Why were people so offended that Jesus was spending time with Matthew and his friends?
- What is Jesus response to the opposition? Why?
- How does Matthew's journey with Jesus provide him purpose and meaning?

**VIDEO:** Matthew the Taxman

- Did this video provide any insight in the heart of Matthew?
- How does his job as the Taxman not provide happiness for his soul?
- Why is Matthew amazed that Jesus wants him to be a disciple?

**READ PSALM 128:1-2** (from the Message)

All you who fear God, how blessed you are! How happily you walk on his smooth straight road! You worked hard and deserve all you've got coming. Enjoy the blessing! Revel in the goodness!

- How did walking with Jesus bring Matthew happiness? How did it bless his life?
- How does walking with Jesus bring us happiness and blessing? How is that different than happiness and blessing that the world offers?

**MAKE IT PERSONAL:**

- What things are you leaning on to make yourself happy?
- How do those things only provide limited happiness?
- How can a life walking with Jesus bring happiness, even during difficult times?

*"The road we travel in the well-traveled road of discipleship. It is not a way of boredom or despair or confusion. It is not a miserable groping but a way of blessing."<sup>23</sup> – Eugene Peterson*

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Psalm 131 (NLT)

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

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<sup>23</sup> Peterson, Eugene. A Long obedience in the Same Direction. Pg. 113