

## LESSON

**MEMORY VERSE: “I didn’t come to call righteous people but sinners to change their hearts and lives.”  
Luke 5:32**

Have you ever heard someone say, “Let’s face it.”? When someone says “Let’s face it”, they mean ‘let’s be honest here’. For example, ‘Let’s face it, it’s hot outside!’ Means? It’s **really** hot outside! Or ‘Let’s face it, Joe is being unkind today!’ Means? Joe is **really** being unkind today and being unkind is a sin. Remember sin is anything that we think, say or do that is displeasing to God. The Bible tells us that we are all sinners and the Bible is true. The Bible also tells us that Jesus came to forgive our sin and give us a new life. Today we are going to be honest about sin and the power of Jesus to forgive and change lives.

Imagine with me that you take a sip of nice cool water on a hot day. Ahhh! So refreshing! How long do you think you could go without water? Most people can only go for about three days without water. Now let’s take a bite of a delicious cookie. How long do you think you could go without eating? Scientists tell us that people can go for as long as forty days without food! Take a deep breath and hold it ... 1 – 2 – 3! Let it out. How long can you go without breathing? Not very long, right? You can only hold your breath for a couple minutes at the most. One more question. How long can you go without sinning? A day? A week? Forever? In today’s Bible story we will meet some people who thought they were so good they never sinned. But the Bible tells us that all of us are sinners and that none of us are truly good all the time.

## BIBLE STORY

Today we are in the New Testament in the Gospel of Luke. At this point in our Bibles, Jesus has been baptized by John the Baptist and has begun teaching people about God and healing the sick. He has invited some of His disciples, Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him. After Jesus finished teaching the people one afternoon he walked past a tax booth where a tax collector named Matthew was sitting collecting taxes. Yuck! A tax collector! That’s what most Jewish people would have said when they saw a tax collector. People didn’t like the tax collectors because they collected money from them to give to the Roman government. Worse than that, though, many times the tax collectors would tell the people they owed more money than they really did. If someone owed \$5.00 the tax collector would tell them they needed to pay \$10.00 and keep the extra \$5.00 for themselves. It’s called cheating and stealing! Is that a sin? Yes. Does this sound like the kind of person that Jesus would want to hang out with? You might not think so but, when Jesus saw Matthew the tax collector, He said, “Follow Me.” And that’s exactly what Matthew did. He left his tax booth and began to follow Jesus. Luke 5:28 says, “Levi (Matthew) got up, left everything behind and followed Him (Jesus).”

Later that evening Jesus and His disciples were at a dinner party at Matthew’s house. Not only was Matthew there but he had invited a bunch of his tax collecting buddies to come along with other people who were sinners. As they were eating the food and visiting together and laughing, a group of Pharisees walked by. Pharisees were a group of men who were religious leaders in the community. They studied God’s law and knew it really well. They dressed in fancy robes so they would stand out among the people. The Pharisees thought they were really cool – but – they had terrible attitudes and were very unkind to people. They thought that knowing the Bible and keeping all the rules – even the extra ones they made up – was enough. When they walked by Matthew’s house and saw Jesus eating dinner with Matthew and his friends they pulled some of Jesus’ disciples aside and asked them a question. “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus heard their question and He stood up and walked over to them. And this is what Jesus said. **(Read Luke 5:31-32)** “Jesus answered, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor, but sick people do. I didn’t come to call righteous people but sinners to change their hearts and lives.”

## **BIBLE STORY CONTINUED**

Have you ever woke up in the morning and felt really sick? Imagine with me that you woke up one morning and dragged yourself out of bed. When you stumble into the bathroom and look in the mirror, you discover you have some terrible looking spots on your face! Oh no! What kind of face are you going to make if you see spots on your face?! You're clearly sick! So who do you go to for help when you're sick? That's right – sick people go to the doctor. And when the doctor sees your spots, he or she will probably give you some medicine to make the spots go away.

Now imagine with me that the spots on your face aren't from some illness that medicine will help. The spots on your face are from sin. What kinds of sin might kids like you do? Sin is kind of like a sickness and it does leave a mark on us. So, who do we go to when we have sinned? That's right – we go to Jesus. Jesus is the only One who can heal us from our sin. He forgives us when we ask Him to. He washes away our sin when He forgives us.

Jesus does not want us to be like the Pharisees who thought they were better than other people. Were they better? No! Were they sinners too? Yes! Jesus love us in spite of our sin and He wants us to love and obey Him too. He wants us to tell everyone about Him so they can know forgiveness too.

Matthew wanted his friends and coworkers to know that Jesus loves and forgives them. So Matthew invited them to come meet Jesus at his house. How can we show Jesus love to the people we know?

This week we will celebrate Thanksgiving with our families. The origins of this holiday go all the way back to the Pilgrims. One of the resources available to you this week is the Legend of the 5 Kernels. If you have some candy corn (or any type of treat) at your house this is a great activity to do around the Thanksgiving table. Share the things that you are thankful for this Thanksgiving season. And remember to be thankful that Jesus loves us and wants us to be His followers!

## **COLORING PAGES**

We would love to see pictures or video of you working on today's lesson. Please feel free to post them to the First Light Kids page on Facebook.