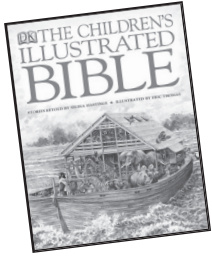


Ordinary Time, Proper 5



The Children's Illustrated Bible
pages 210–211

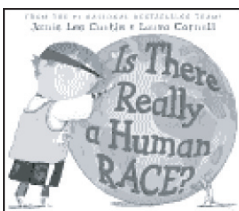
As Jesus was walking along, he saw Matthew sitting at the tax booth and called to him, "Follow me." Matthew got up and followed him. Jesus ate dinner in Matthew's house, and many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a doctor, only those who are sick."

—Matthew 9:9–13 adapted

Accept All

Read an enjoyable book about the great human race. Share *Is There Really a Human Race?* by Jamie Lee Curtis, illustrated by Laura Cornell. Discuss:

1. What is the "human race"?
2. What is meant by "everybody is different; everyone is the same"?
3. How did this book make you feel?



Jesus Invites All

Tell the story of Jesus calling Matthew, a tax collector, and eating at his home from *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, pages 210–211 (starting with the last sentence on page 210) and Matthew 9:9–13. Set up a table and chairs, or let kids lounge on the floor, leaning on one arm to eat as they did in Jesus' day (see drawing on page 249).

Assign kids to be the different characters and dramatize the action as you narrate the story from Matthew 9:9–13.

After the drama, discuss how Jesus healed people who were sick, but he also accepted those who weren't accepted by others: taxpayers and sinners. He said he came to invite "sinners" to the table. A sinner is anyone who chooses to do something that hurts themselves or others. We all do that sometimes. But we know that Jesus loves us and forgives us (and would invite us to eat a meal with him) when we make the wrong choice. And we can remember what Jesus did by helping others.

1. Have you ever felt unaccepted?
2. Who would we not invite to our dinner table at home? Why or why not?
3. Do we choose our friends? Do our friends choose us?
4. Who is your most "unlikely" friend, someone you never thought would be a friend?

Table Manners

Communion

The Community of Christ shares Communion on the first Sunday of the month and on other special occasions, by eating bread and drinking grape juice. This is our reminder of Jesus' sacrifice for us.

1. How does it feel to know someone loves you and forgives you no matter what?
2. Have you done something to someone that you apologized for afterward? Did that person forgive you? If so, how did it feel when they forgave you?

It is the same with God. No matter what we do, God is always waiting for us with open arms. In the Community of Christ we believe in "open" Communion, where everyone who believes in Jesus can take Communion whether or not they belong to our church. Everyone is welcome at our table.

Table Game

Play a relay game inviting all people to the table. Tape to the wall a poster with a large table and many chairs drawn on it. Around the room, scatter magazine cutouts of photos of people (they should fit on the chairs in your poster). Also provide markers and tape. When kids first run the relay, they are to pick up a marker and run to the poster and draw themselves sitting on one of the chairs. On the second round of the relay, kids are to look around the room for the magazine pictures of people to invite to their "table." They grab one and tape it onto one of the chairs in the table drawing. After the relay, look at the poster together and talk about who has been invited to the table. Why did we choose who we chose?



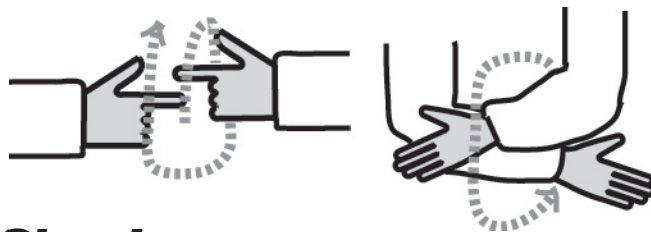
Jesus ate with Matthew, and many tax collectors, sinners, and his disciples. The Pharisees said, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a doctor, only those who are sick."

—Matthew 9:9–13 adapted

Sing this song:

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me, just because
 Just because he's made of love.
 I don't need to earn his love.
 Jesus loves me, just because.
 Yes, Jesus loves me.
 Yes, Jesus loves me.
 Yes, Jesus loves me.
 He loves me just because.



Sign Language

Learn "Come to the table."

Come: Extend index fingers on both hands. Circle fingers around each other toward your body.

Table: Alternate laying hands flat on forearms, as if on tabletop.

From *Sign & Say Bible Verses for Children*, page 7.

Break the Code

Was Matthew the tax collector "sick"? No. Jesus meant he might need help to be closer to God. Who may come to the table?

Use the code breaker to break the code. The first word is done for you.

A	B	C	D	E	I	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W
N	O	P	Q	R	V	Y	Z	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	J

J	R		V	A	I	V	G	R		N	Y	Y		G	B		P	B	Z	Z	H	A	V	B	A
W	E																								

Answer: We invite all to Communion.