



## Imagination Station

### Hey Matthew, Follow Me!

**BIG IDEA:** Jesus wants me to follow Him.

**BIBLE BASIS:** Matthew 9:1–13

**KEY VERSE:** “‘Come and follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘I will send you out to fish for people.’” Matthew 4:19

## ★ PLAY TIME ACTIVITY

### PLAYDOUGH DINNER PARTY

**Supplies:** Playdough, plastic knife (1 per group)

**Directions:** Tell the children that you’re inviting them to a playdough dinner party, but they have to bring their own food. Tell them to think of their favorite food, then have them create that food out of playdough. When finished, allow the children to show and tell everyone what they made, then have a pretend dinner party. Ask the children if they would like to share their “food” with anyone. For anyone who would like to share, use the plastic knife to cut the playdough into pieces.

**Say:** In today’s true Bible story, Jesus has a dinner party with some special friends. But you might be surprised by who his friends are. During our story, we’re going to learn that **Jesus wants me to follow Him.**

**Question:** When you make a bad choice or do something mean, do you think Jesus still wants you to follow Him? Why or why not?

## ★ LARGE GROUP LESSON



## ★ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

### TAX COLLECTOR

**Supplies:** Coins (3 per child), “Tax Collector” printout (2–3 per group), bucket (1 per group)

**Directions:** Give each child 3 coins and have them stand in a circle. Place a bucket in the middle of the circle. Tape the tax collector signs to the floor beneath 2 or 3 of the children in the circle. As you say the tax collector rhyme below, have the children walk in a circle. When the rhyme is finished, have the children stop. Any child standing on the tax collector sign must put one of their coins in the bucket. Continue playing rounds until most of the children are out of money. When finished, sit down and ask the question below.

#### Tax Collector Rhyme:

Round and round the room we go  
The tax collector says “You owe.”  
If you stop upon his sign  
The tax collector says “It’s mine!”

**Question:** How did it feel when the tax collector took your coins?

**Say:** In today’s true Bible story, Matthew was a tax collector. Most people didn’t like tax collectors because they took money from them. Sometimes they would even take more money than they were supposed to. But Jesus still loved Matthew and asked Matthew to follow Him.

**Jesus wants everyone to follow Him.**

### OFF-BALANCE BEAM (Application Activity)

**Supplies:** Tape (1 roll)

**Directions:** Place a line of tape on the floor approximately 10 feet long. Tell the children that the object of the game is to follow you across the balance beam without stepping off. For the first round, walk across the balance beam like normal. When finished, ask the children if any of them stepped off of the line. If anyone says “yes,” tell them, “Even if you messed up, I still want you to follow me,” then move to the next round. For round two, have all of the children spin around two times before crossing, then repeat the above instructions. For each additional round, have the children spin around two more times than the previous round so that they get more and more dizzy and are more likely to step off when crossing.

**Say:** During our balance beam game, I still wanted you to follow me, even when you messed up. That’s kind of like Jesus. Even when we mess up and do bad things, Jesus still loves us and wants us to follow Him.

**Question:** Tell us about the last time you got into trouble from your parents. What did you do?

**Note:** After each answer to the above question, say, “Even though you [fill in action], Jesus still loves you and wants you to follow Him.”

# Jan 15-16

## Small Group Lesson | Preschool



### **TOSS ACROSS** (Bible Memorization Activity)

**Supplies:** Beach ball

#### **Today's Bible verse:**

"Come (*motion to come with one hand, then the other*) and follow me (*march in place*)," Jesus said. "I will send you out (*pretend to cast with fishing pole*) to fish for people (*pretend to reel in with fishing pole*)." Matthew 4:19 (*extend hands like you're holding a book*).

**Directions:** Have the children sit in a circle. Practice the verse together until the children can remember it. When ready, pass the beach ball to a child across the circle. As you pass the ball, have the entire group recite the first word of the verse. Have the group continue passing the ball to different children. Each time the ball is passed, say the next word from the verse. Continue until the entire verse has been recited. Challenge the children to say the entire verse without dropping the ball. You can also challenge the children to go faster and faster each round.

### **WHAT'S NEXT?** (Bible Story Review Activity)

**Supplies:** None

**Directions:** The following activity is designed to help children remember the sequence of events in a story. Ask the children, "What happened first in today's Bible story?" Allow the children to answer. Then, ask the children to come up with one motion or action that represents that part of the story. For example, if the answer is, "Jesus walked to the boat on the sea," the children could stand and march in place. Next, ask the children what happened next in the story. Then, just like before, have them come up with a corresponding action. After each new action is created, have the children perform all of the actions from the very beginning. In the end, the children will have created a series of actions that will help them remember the entire story from beginning to end.

### **COLORING SHEET AND SNACK TIME** (GO! Deeper Activity)

**Directions:** Give each child a Bible story coloring sheet and some crayons or markers. While the children are coloring, give them a snack to eat and ask the following questions to help them go deeper into the story:

**Question:** What did today's story teach you about Jesus?

**Question:** Is there anything you could do that is so bad that Jesus would stop loving you? (Answer: No! Jesus doesn't want us to do bad things, but He still loves us when we do.)

**Say:** Even when we get into trouble for doing something bad, Jesus still loves us and wants us to follow Him. Let's say a prayer to Jesus and tell Him "sorry" for the bad thing that we did.

**Prayer:** Begin by asking if any of the children would like to pray. Allow any children who want to pray the opportunity to do so. When they're finished, close the prayer by asking Jesus to forgive each child.