

# Levi, a Tax Collector, Gathered Sinners to Meet Jesus

**Anchor command.** “Do the work of an evangelist.” *2 Timothy 4:5* (a vital part of Jesus’ command to make disciples).

**Anchor promise.** “And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.” *Matthew 13:23*

**Anchor story.** Jesus meets with sinners in Levi’s home. *Mark 2:14–17*.

**Anchor verse.** “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” *Mark 2:17*

**Learning goal.** Grasp how Jesus sought and saved even the worst of sinners.

**Growth goal.** Gain a strong desire to befriend and evangelize those whom others reject.

**Skill goal.** Meet and converse with folk from any social class, especially if they need Jesus.

**Outcome goal.** Win many to Christ by following his example of going to the lost.

## Basic Study

**Pray.** Lord Jesus, you prepare persons and families everywhere to become your followers. Please help us to find such persons and to meet with them in their own groups.



**Learn from Mark 2:14–17** how Jesus met with sinners in their homes. Find:

- What Jesus thought about tax collectors [*verse 14*].
- Who invited Jesus to dine at his house [*verse 15*].
- Whom else Levi invited to his house [*verse 15*].
- What Jesus and those sinners were doing together [*verse 16*]
- What kinds of people Jesus called to repent. [*verse 17*].

**Plan** with your co-workers activities for the coming week.

- If unbelievers want to learn, then visit them and ask them to arrange to have others come to their home to hear about Jesus.
- If there are new believers in the congregation, visit them and ask them to arrange to have unbelieving friends and relatives come to their home to hear about Jesus.

### Advanced Study

1. **Learn from Acts 10: 24–33** how Peter met with seekers in a home. Find:
  - What kinds of people Cornelius had invited to his house [verse 24].
  - What Peter's new attitude about non-believers was [verse 28].
  - Why Cornelius had sent for Peter to come to his house {verses 30-32}.
  - What Cornelius asked Peter to tell to him, his relatives and his friends [verse 33].
2. **Find in Acts 28:30–31** how Paul received callers at his house and taught them there.
  - How long did Paul stayed in his rented house in Rome.
  - What he talked about with people who came to him there.
3. **Find in 1 Corinthians 14:24–26** how to behave when unbelievers visit the group.
  - How many people in the groups should be allowed to talk and share with the others?
  - What kinds of things should the believers say?

Note: To prophesy in such a group is something that all believers can do. Simply speak words of comfort and encouragement, to edify others (1 Corinthians 14:3).

- What will God do in the hearts of unbelievers who hear the believers talking to the group?
4. Those who **teach children** should read study #45 for children.
  5. Believers can do two important things more easily in **small groups**:
    - 1) New believers easily bring their non-believing friends and relatives together in small groups to learn about Jesus, as Zacheus, Matthew and Cornelius did, in *Luke 19:1-10*, *Matthew 9:9-13* and *Acts 10:22-24*.
    - 2) Mature believers easily practice the interactive 'one-another' commands by serving one another in a loving body that is small enough for everyone in it to be heard and to participate actively. New believers may be shy, so do not force them to speak before they are ready.

Meeting in a small group or a house church does not, by itself, ensure that a group will do these two activities. Sometimes, believers who have been passive 'hearers only' in a traditional church, or who know only a traditional form of classroom instruction that neglects interaction, bring those errors with them into a small group.

6. **Plan with co-workers** activities for the coming week.

- If unbelievers want to learn, then visit them and ask them to arrange to have others come to their home to hear about Jesus.
- If there are new believers in the congregation, visit them and ask them to arrange to have unbelieving friends and relatives come to their home to hear about Jesus.
- Arrange with host to welcome the people who attend, to have them sit facing one another and to have fellowship in a culturally appropriate way. In a small group, arrange chairs, or other seating, for people to talk easily to one other.

Which is better, to put chairs in rows, so people see the backs of the others' heads, or to let people face each other? *[Answer: Folk can listen and talk to one another far better when they face each other.]*



7. **Plan with co-workers** additional activities that fit needs of the group for the upcoming worship. Suggestions:

- Have the children present the drama and questions that they have prepared.
- Pray during the worship for all evangelistic home meetings that have been planned.
- Ask for testimonies and reports from recent evangelistic home meetings.
- To introduce the Lord's Supper, read Acts 2:43 and explain that the first congregations celebrated the Lord's Supper in homes.
- Form groups of two and three, to pray, confirm plans and encourage one another.
- Memorize together 1 Corinthians 14:24-25.
- If there is much idolatry in the area, it can help to tell the groups an Old Testament story that helps them to understand that the one true and holy God hears our prayers and is more powerful than all spirits. Examples include the flood (*Genesis 6:5-22*), the destruction of Sodom (*Genesis 18:20 through 19:29*) and the idolatrous priests of Baal (*1 Kings chapter 18*).