

FOLLOW ME: A SERIES IN MATTHEW

**Matthew 9:1-13 | Forgiveness of Sins****A Note to the Parents/Teachers**

This story tells of a paralyzed man and Matthew the tax collector both having an interaction with Jesus. One is called to go and show people how his life has changed and the other is called to leave it all behind to follow Jesus. Both were sinners in need of healing and forgiveness. Pray for the same healing in your own heart and for the hearts of our kids as they hear this lesson.

- **Big Idea:** Jesus calls people who are far from God to come be near to Him.

Starter**Evidences of Grace**

- Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything good, big or small, is from God. Take time to thank God together.
- **Ask:** What does it mean to forgive someone? Have you ever needed to ask someone for forgiveness? Have you ever needed to offer forgiveness to someone else? Is it hard?

Sing Together

Story — from Matthew 9:1-13

Jesus had been performing miracles and teaching in many towns. One town, after seeing his power, actually begged him to leave because they were afraid of what they could not understand. So Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. There, some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, *“Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.”*

Hearing this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, *“This fellow is blaspheming!”* because they knew only God could forgive sins.

Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, *“Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.”*

So he said to the paralyzed man, *“Get up, take your mat and go home.”* Then the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. *“Follow me,”* he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, *“Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”*

On hearing this, Jesus said, *“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*

Dialogue Questions: [you may use some or all]

- ▶ The religious leaders thought God alone could forgive sins. If this is true, how was Jesus able to offer forgiveness to people? What authority did he have to do that?
- ▶ Do you think the same power and authority that allowed him to heal was the same power and authority he forgave sins with?
- ▶ The paralyzed man needed physical healing, but more importantly, he needed forgiveness — a healing of the heart. Jesus gave both. How do you think this man’s life was changed? How must he have felt?
- ▶ Jesus called Matthew to follow him just as he called the fishermen (Simon, Andrew, James, and John) to follow him. How was Matthew’s job as a tax collector different from the fishermen?
- ▶ Do you think Matthew needed forgiveness too? Why would Jesus call such a sinner to be one of his closest followers?
- ▶ The Matthew in this story is the same one who wrote this story down in the Gospel of Matthew. How do you think his life was changed by Jesus?
- ▶ Do you think Jesus can change your life too?

Breakout Time

Pray:

God, thank you that you have sent Jesus to come and call sinners, to rescue us from our rebellious ways, and to make us into your people. Please do that work in my life. Amen!

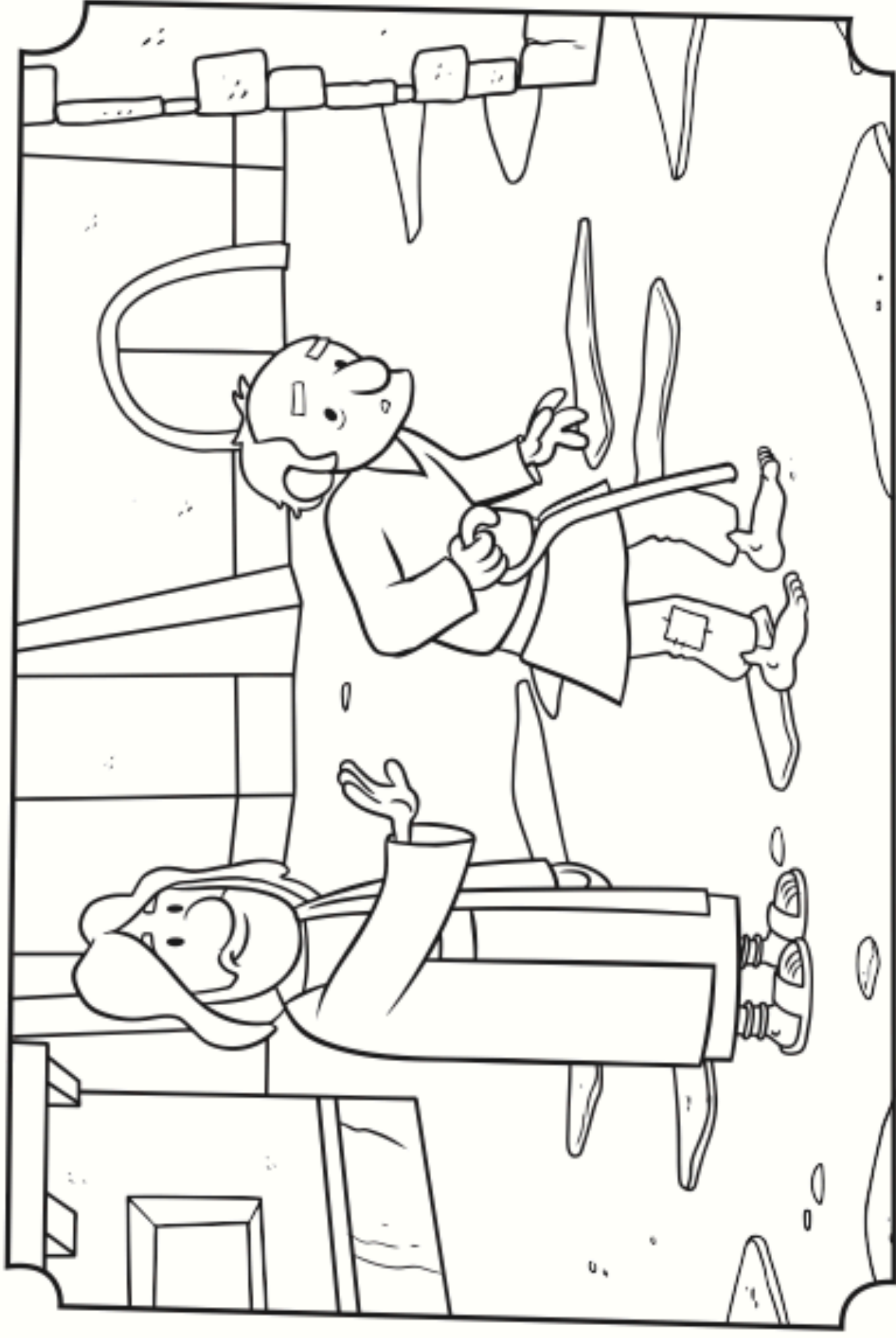
Craft:

- There are two coloring sheet options attached

BLESS Activity

This week, ask your family how you can practice the **Speak** rhythm.

Jesus spoke good news and words of blessing and forgiveness to people who didn't deserve it. Is there someone in your life who you feel does not deserve good things spoken to them? How can you pray for the Spirit to help you speak blessing to them this week?



Jesus performed many miracles, including healing a paralyzed man. Matthew 9

