

Today's Bible Story: Jesus Chooses Matthew • Luke 5:27-32 (Supporting: Romans 12:1)

Today's Bottom Line: Practice living for God.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come.* • 1 Timothy 4:8 NIV

1. Opening Activity

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to give kids a curiosity for what's in the Bible, that they would read it and interact with it. Pray that you would be able to be a source of help for kids when they don't understand Scripture and that they would come to you with their questions. Pray that what kids learn through the Bible would help them make wise choices.

What You Need:

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ New facial tissue for each kid

What You Do:

- Welcome the kids with a high-five or fist bump.
- Invite kids who have brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Give each kid a new, single tissue.
- Show them how to place the tissue on their head.
- Explain that you are going to call out some ninja warrior moves, and they have to try to do them without the tissue falling off their head.
- Call out simple moves one at a time:
 - "Ninja warrior, walk in a circle!"
 - "Ninja warrior, touch your toes!"
 - "Ninja warrior, turn around!"
 - "Ninja warrior, hop on one foot!"
- If a kid's tissue falls, invite them to just pick it up and keep playing.
- Celebrate everyone for trying their best.

What You Say:

"Great job, ninja warriors! It was tricky to follow the plan and keep that tissue on your head at the same time! **[Transition]** In our Bible Story today, we're going to meet a man named Matthew who made a big move to follow Jesus' plan for his life. Let's go find out what he did!"

Inclusive Pro-Tips

- *Carefully select movements so all kids can participate.*

[Lead group to do worship and watch today's video lesson]

2. Matthew Maze

What You Need:

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ “Matthew Maze” Activity Page
- ☐ Pencils

What You Do:

- Open the Bible and read Luke 5:27-32.
- Give each kid a “Matthew Maze” Activity Page and a pencil.
- Review the story of Jesus choosing Matthew. Remind the kids that when Jesus said, “Follow me,” Matthew stopped what he was doing and followed Jesus right away. Then Matthew hosted a banquet to introduce all his friends to Jesus.
- Tell the kids that their job is to help Matthew and Jesus get to Matthew’s house for the party.
- Instruct them to use their pencil to draw a line through the maze, starting with Jesus and Matthew and ending at the house.

What You Say:

“Great job helping Matthew and Jesus get to the party! Matthew made a wise choice to follow Jesus. He left his old life behind to start a new life living for God. When we choose to follow Jesus, we get to **[Bottom Line] practice living for God** every day too.”

3. What Does It Look Like?

What You Need:

- ☐ White paper (one per child)
- ☐ Crayons or markers

What You Do:

- Give each child a piece of paper and crayons or markers.
- Say, “We’re going to make *art* that shows what it looks like to live for God!”
- Talk briefly about what that means — doing the things Jesus would do.
- Give prompts to inspire their drawings:
 - o “Draw yourself being kind to someone.”
 - o “Draw yourself helping at home.”
 - o “Draw yourself being a good friend at school.”
 - o “Draw yourself showing love to someone.”
- As they draw, walk around and ask kids to tell you about their pictures.
- When everyone is done, invite a few to share what they drew.
- Display the drawings together to celebrate all the ways we can live for God!

What You Say:

“Wow! Look at all these amazing pictures! You showed so many ways to live for God—by being kind, helping others, and showing love. Matthew showed people what living for God looked like, and we can too! Every day, we can [Bottom Line] practice living for God.”

4. Pray

“God, thank You for making each of us unique. Thank You for the talents and gifts You’ve given us. Help us to see the opportunities You give us this week to use those gifts to show people what You are like. Help us to be brave like Matthew and follow You. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”