



JESUS IS _____.

WEEK 1- JESUS IS YOUR FRIEND

SERIES BIG IDEA

Jesus is unlike anyone you've ever known. In Jesus, you'll discover a new way of living.

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

Jesus is your friend. In Jesus, you are accepted and loved.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 9:9-13; 1 Sam 15:22; Ps 69:30-31; Prov. 21:3; Hosea 6:6

ICE BREAKER AND OPENING THOUGHT

1. Who sat together in your high school cafeteria (jocks, nerds, etc.)? Which table did you sit at?
2. As we think about Jesus being a friend, what does it take to be a friend?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

3. Read Matthew 9:9-13. In Jesus' day, eating with a person communicated a personal message: we have strong relational connection. It also communicated a religious message: you are part of God's kingdom. Why is it significant that Jesus chose to share a table with Matthew, a tax collector?
4. What does Jesus mean by, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice"?
5. Read 1 Sam 15:22; Ps 69:30-31; Prov. 21:3; Hosea 6:6. How do these verses compare to "I desire mercy, not sacrifice"?

LIFE APPLICATION

6. If Jesus came to 21st century America who would he invite over for dinner?
7. How might you live differently if you truly believed that Jesus was your friend?
8. Have you made the decision to receive God's friendship and be baptized? If yes, how has your life been changed since then? If no, what holds you back from making this decision?

CHALLENGE

This story speaks to the way you and I are accepted by Jesus. It is also a strong warning to not compare ourselves to others in order to feel superior to them. We must first learn to see ourselves as the sinners in the story and then learn to extend the grace of Jesus to other sinners and even Pharisees. We mustn't dismiss either group. It was the pattern of his life to choose to sit at tables and befriend people that others would never accept. Who do you need to welcome to your table?