

BIG IDEA

In order to BLESS our neighbor, Jesus invites us to share meals together.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 9:9-13

ICEBREAKER & OPENING THOUGHT

Begin with a lighthearted discussion about food and people's favorite meal. Discuss how sharing a meal with people is a great way to get to know one another. We often are not intentional with our meal planning. What if we view our eating as an opportunity to bless someone and be intentional about it? What a difference we could make in the lives of others!

BIBLE STUDY

As you read the passage in Matthew, discuss what Matthew might have been thinking about Jesus' invitation to follow him. Why did he follow him? Discuss what the conversation may have been like at Matthew's house with Jesus and the "sinners." How would it compare to the Pharisees and their interactions with sinners? Jesus is calling them out – memorizing passages, following rituals and shunning who we think of as sinners, or the equivalent of tax collectors in today's society, is not what we are called to do. Jesus lives out the principals he preaches and encourages his followers to do the same.

LIFE APPLICATION

Begin the discussion sharing with one another memories from a special meal. Are there commonalities amongst group members that made the meals special? Can we replicate that to BLESS someone else? Use that discussion to begin to brainstorm what is currently holding us back from inviting others to share a meal. How can we overcome these barriers so that we can help people find their way back to God and not just hope they do!

CHALLENGE

Challenge the group to invite someone that God is calling them to Bless to share in a meal together. Have them share their experiences next week.