

James Jacobs, Taxman

Key Words: **Healing**

Key Verse: "Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter, your faith has made you well.'" *Matthew 9:22*

James Jacobs hated the story of Matthew the tax collector. He felt that story was responsible for half of the problems he had. Whenever people asked what his work was, James would mumble, "I work for the government," and try to look like he was in Intelligence. When he started work in the tax office, James had been very proud and told everyone about it, but he noticed some odd reactions. As soon as he spoke the words, "Internal Revenue," people glared at him and walked away. Some became very angry because they resented paying their income tax. James often wondered how they thought the country would run without income tax, but he stopped asking that question.

The problem, he thought, probably stemmed from the New Testament, where tax collectors were given a bad name. In the story of Zacchaeus, the tax collector was made out to be some sort of thief until he met Jesus and repented. That was the story everyone remembered. It sometimes felt like the whole world regarded tax collectors as public enemy number one. At least the story of the calling of Matthew the tax collector very quickly moved on to the healing of two people and when those

stories were read, most people concentrated on the healings and forgot the calling. That made James happier.

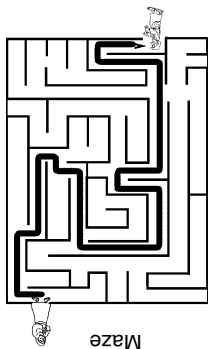
He wondered why Jesus had called a tax collector. He felt glad that at least Matthew had been a good, solid, reliable disciple, unlike Judas, the treasurer and traitor.

Perhaps money is always dangerous because with money we can have anything we want. Maybe that New Testament story wasn't about one calling and two healings, but about three healings. Perhaps after meeting Jesus, Matthew the tax collector was healed from the terrible desire for money. James realized that he wasn't too interested in always wanting more money, and he found himself thanking Jesus for giving him that freedom. He thought about all those people who became angry whenever tax was mentioned, and realized that they had no freedom at all, they were slaves to money. He resolved that the next time anyone asked him what he did for a living he would proudly say, "I am a tax collector."

Questions

Do you hear people talking badly about paying taxes?

Can you tell about you or someone else being healed?



Maze

For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.
Fallen Letter Puzzle

Answers

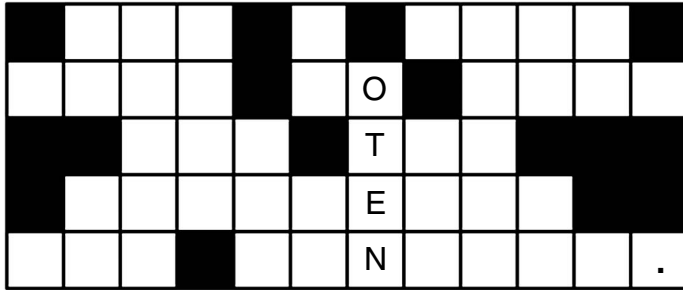
Gospel Grans

Today's Gospel Story
is from
Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26



Fallen Letter Puzzle

Place one letter from each column into the spaces above to rebuild the words.
The phrase is a verse in today's Gospel story, Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26. One column has been done for you!



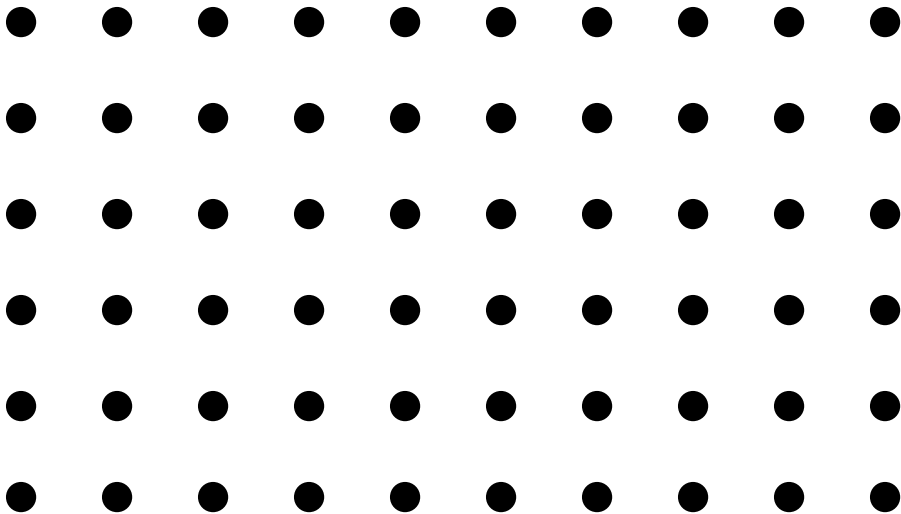
M

A

F I G I ~~N~~ N E R
U T O S T ~~O~~ O C V L
C O N R H T ~~E~~ H E A E
B R O E T I ~~O~~ H U S S L

Square O Dots

Play this fun game with a friend. Each of you takes turns connecting two dots together. When your line completes a square, you win that square. When you win a square, either write your initial in it or color it your color. Then you get another turn! The one with the most squares wins!



Maze

Today's Gospel story is about how Jesus came to help the people who need it most. Help the lady find her way through the crowd so that she can find Jesus and be healed.

