

Small Group Discussion Guide

Jesus Is _____



JESUS IS MY FRIEND

BIG IDEA

In Jesus we are accepted and loved.

OPENING QUESTIONS

1. Who did you sit with at lunch in High School? Why did you sit with them?
2. What does it mean to consider Jesus as a friend?



SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION

Read Matthew 9:9-13 out loud

3. What stands out to you about this passage? What questions do you have about this passage?
4. In Jesus' day, eating with someone meant that you have a strong relational connection with him or her. Why is it significant that Jesus chose to share a table with Matthew, a tax collector?
5. Jesus says, *"I desire mercy, not sacrifice."* He wanted the Pharisees (the religious leaders of the day) to be merciful to others, that was more important to Jesus than any sacrifices they were making. What does it look like for us to offer mercy to others instead of religious rules?
6. 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"*? What do these verses tell you about the heart of God?

LIFE APPLICATION

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

NEXT STEPS

Who is God asking you to welcome to your table?