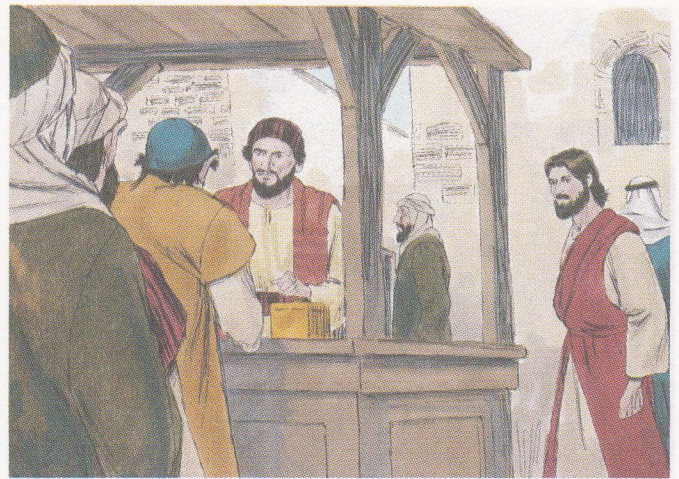


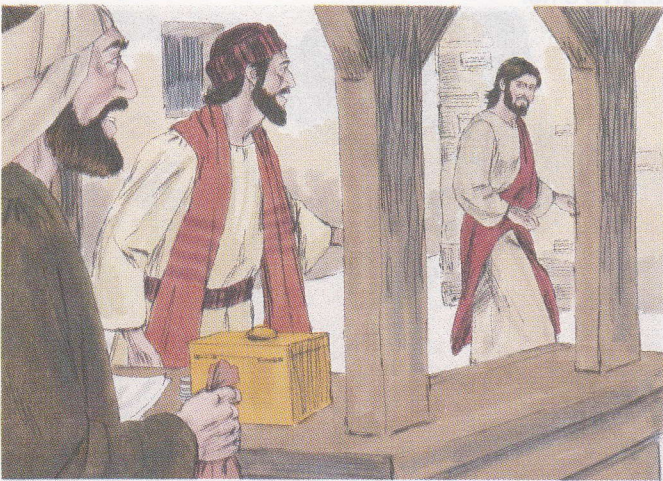
Jesus Chooses the Twelve



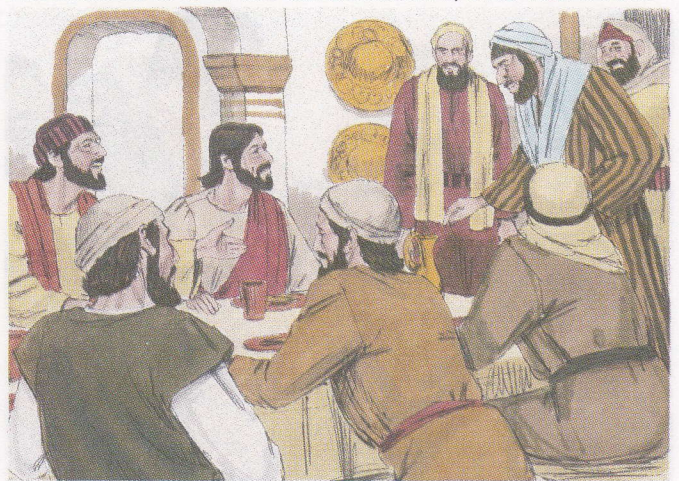
1 Already Jesus had called six men to follow him. Their names were Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, and Nathanael. These were his first disciples.



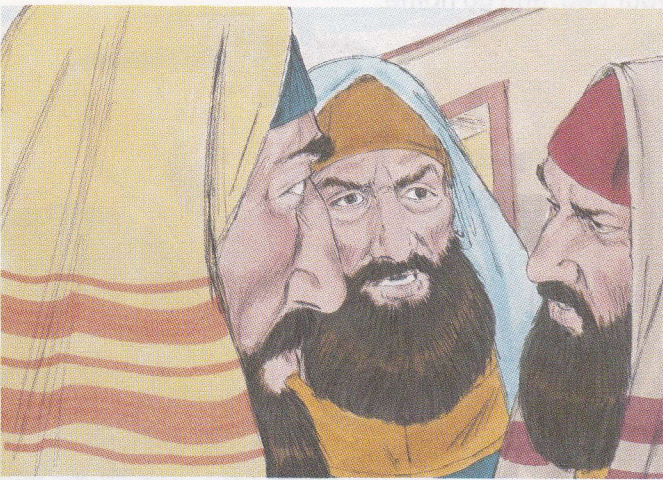
2 One day, after Jesus finished teaching beside the Sea of Galilee, he passed by a collection booth where the Jews paid their taxes to the Romans. He noticed one of the tax collectors, who was a Jew.



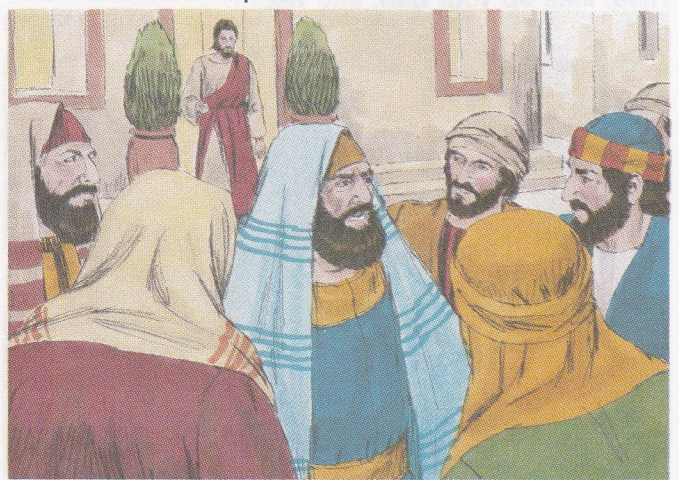
3 Jesus spoke to this man, saying, "Follow me." The man got up and followed Jesus, leaving everything there behind him. This tax collector's name was Levi. He is also known as Matthew.



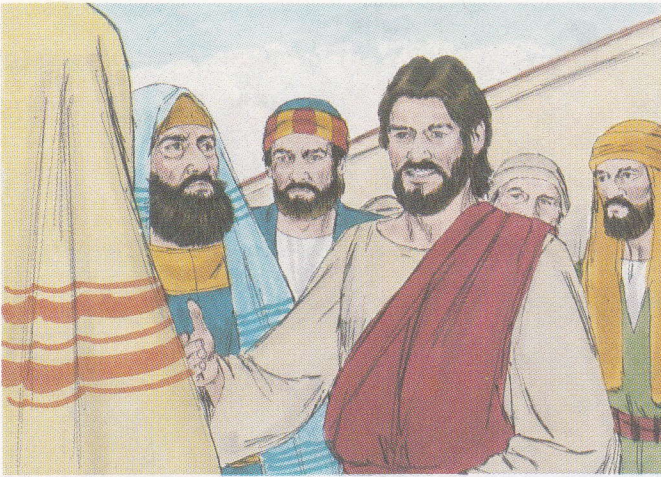
4 Levi held a feast for Jesus at his house. While they were eating, some of Levi's friends came in. They sat down and began to eat and visit with Jesus and his disciples.



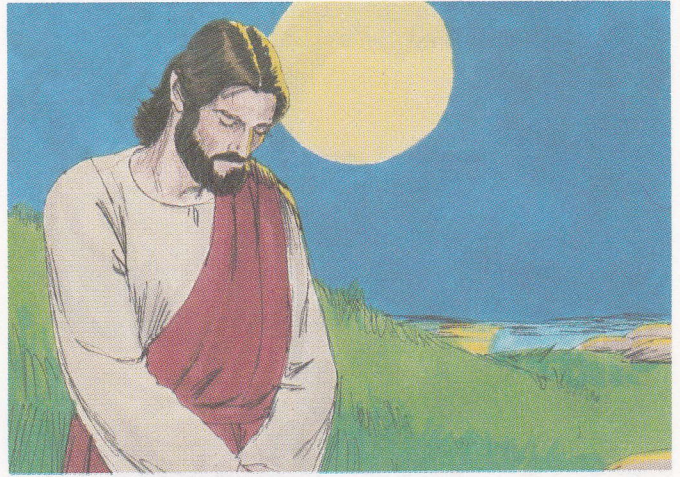
5 Now Levi's friends were also tax collectors and people who did not carefully keep the Jewish laws. The Pharisees, who thought such people were sinners, heard that Jesus was eating with them.



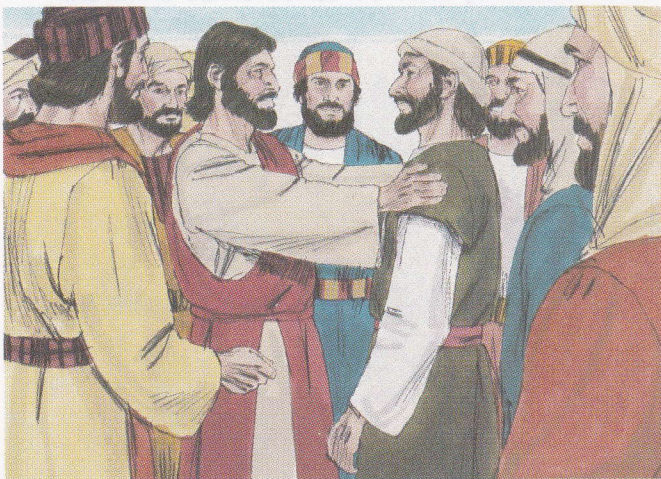
6 This angered the Pharisees greatly. They said to Jesus' disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"



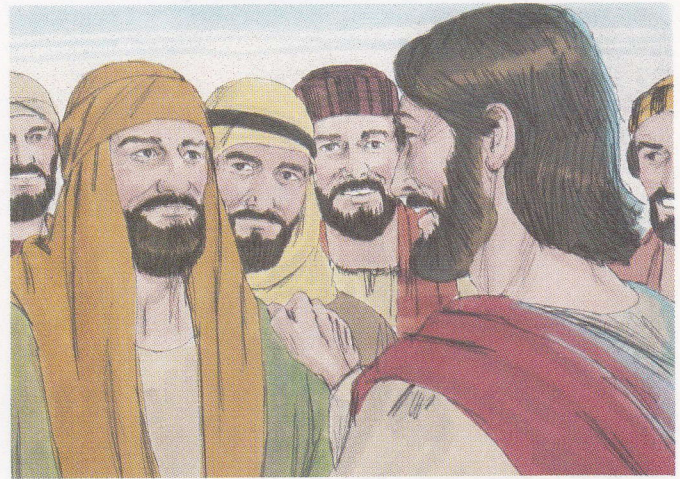
7 Jesus heard their question. He said, "People who are well don't need a doctor, but those who are sick do. I didn't come to call those who are already doing right, but those who are sinning."



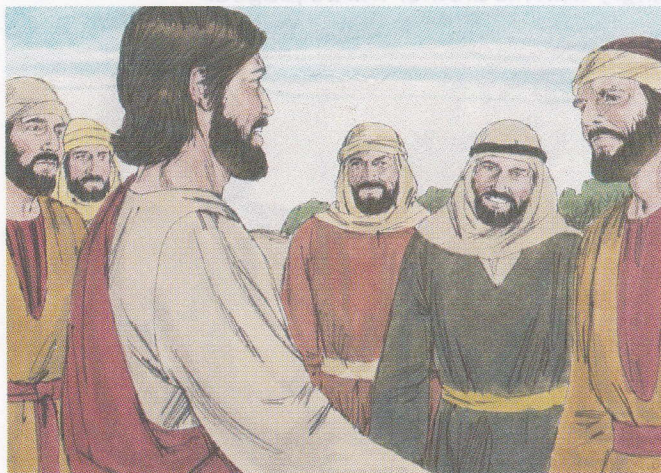
8 One day after Jesus had preached and healed for quite a while, he went up into the hills. He spent the night there praying. The next day he called certain of his followers to him.



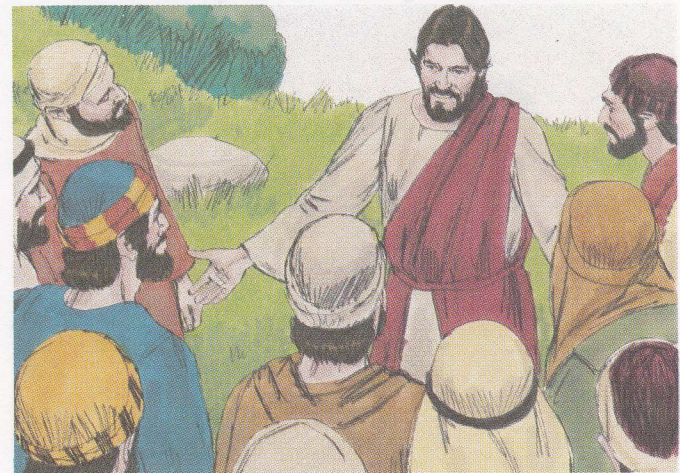
9 Jesus appointed these twelve disciples to be his apostles (or special messengers): Peter and his brother, Andrew; James and his brother, John (Jesus called these two the Sons of Thunder);



10 Philip and Bartholomew (perhaps another name for Nathanael); Matthew (the tax collector also known as Levi); Thomas (also called the Twin); another James (the son of Alphaeus);



11 Thaddaeus (also known as Judas, the son of James); and another Simon (also called the Zealot). There was another Judas, too — Judas Iscariot. This is the man who later betrayed Jesus.



12 Jesus chose these twelve men to be with him and to go out and preach. He gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and the power to heal the sick. He trained them to carry on his work.