

Memory Verse; Luke 5:28

“So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.”

Lesson: Matthew was one of the 12 apostles, but he stands out as a man who went from being a sinner to being one of the highest servants of God. He taught us so many things. He left everything he had (which was a lot of riches) in order to follow Jesus. He never turned back to his riches.

Matthew was a tax collector for the Romans who took over Israel by force. The Romans were the “bad guys.” Matthew was friends with the bad guys for money. Not only that, but Matthew’s job was to collect taxes from his own people who could barely afford to live. Tax collectors of that time lied and cheated. They would say, “Mr. Smith, you owe \$200,” when Mr. Smith really only owed \$100. They would save \$100 for the Romans. Then they would keep the extra money that Mr. Smith had to give them. Mr. Smith knew something was wrong with the amount owed, but he had no choice. It was pay or get thrown in jail. So tax collectors were hated. Really hated. Matthew changed his life around when He heard Jesus say, “Come, follow Me.” He just left his job at once! He didn’t care about anything. He knew he would lose all his money, his house, and his rich comfortable living. For Jesus, Matthew chose to sleep outside, to be hungry at times, to walk long distances, and to miss his family and friends. He was poor!! But he was rich in spirit because he was happy, accepted, and loved by Jesus.

Let’s say our memory verse:

Memory Verse; Luke 5:28

“So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.”

Matthew watched Jesus go up to heaven. After that he wrote the Book of Matthew. Let’s take a look at what Matthew wrote.

He gave us some information that is not in Mark, Luke, or John. Matthew was the only disciple who wrote about the wise men, Jesus’s true brother’s, and Jonah. Yes in Matthew 12:40 Jesus said that the pharisees should not look for a sign or miracle from Jesus. The sign has already been given: It was Jonah. Jesus said, “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” This writing was very important because it helps us to know that Jonah’s story is a true story. Many have wondered. Did Jonah really get swallowed by a whale? How

did he survive three days in the belly of the whale? But Jesus refers to Jonah's whale event as true fact. And so we believe it is true that our God who can do anything chose to miraculously preserve Jonah.

How many people here have memorized a Bible verse???

Well it is good if you have. It is especially good to memorize Bible promises. Well, in the Book of Matthew, he records Jesus telling the devil, "It is written..." Jesus defeated the devil with those words. Wouldn't you like to use powerful words like that? You can use "It is written..." to claim Bible promises. Here is an example:

Let's say you had a nightmare at night, or perhaps you were afraid of the dark and couldn't fall asleep. Have you ever been afraid of the dark? You may have heard a little sound and were feeling anxious. You could say, It is written, "When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet." Proverbs 3:24

This is so powerful! Do you think God will give you a good night's sleep after you say that? I think so!

Let's have a song and we will come back and finish the lesson about Matthew.

<https://youtu.be/llcsmEs6vfk>

God is so Good

Matthew wrote also about Jesus's sermon on the mountain in chapter 5, where he preached the beatitudes. Have you ever heard the beatitudes? That is the greatest sermon Jesus ever gave.

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed *are* those who mourn,

For they shall be comforted.

Blessed *are* the meek,

For they shall inherit the [a]earth.

Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

For they shall be filled.

Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.
Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Amen!!!!

Matthew also recorded Jesus teaching His disciples to pray. Do you know the Lord's prayer from chapter 6? Let's say it together.

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

Matthew was there when Jesus went up to heaven in the sky. Before He went, Jesus gave the great commission for all Christians. Commission means job. We were all given the great and mighty job of telling the whole world about Jesus. It's a super big job because it is as big as the whole world!!!! It's going to take a long time to do this.

So let's see. What did Matthew write about??? (Jonah, it is written, the beatitudes, the Lord's prayer, and the great commission.) These are all great and awesome writings that Matthew gave the world. And he started out with a different job. What did he used to do when Jesus called him? (tax collector.) Then he was a disciple. Then he was a writer. He died

almost 2000 years ago, but his book is still being printed every day throughout the world. Millions have been brought to God through Matthew's writings about Jesus. Wouldn't you love to be like Matthew???

You can be! Do you have a pen? Do you have paper? Do you have an idea of what to write about Jesus? Great!!! Did you ever hear there's been a saying about the pen? "The pen mightier than sword," someone once said. That means your pen can defeat the devil! Your pen can help people in need. AND it can bring people's hearts closer to God. AMAZING!!!

Wouldn't you just love to be a writer like Matthew? May God bless you and your pen!!!