

# Jesus – a role model for inclusion



## Why use this Bible study?

This Bible study helps us to explore how Jesus acted towards those who were rejected by their community as being outcasts.



## ‘Eating with “sinners”’

**Read Mark 2:13-17**

Jesus calls a tax collector to be his disciple. Jewish tax collectors were regarded as outcasts. They were excluded from the synagogue and were seen as a disgrace. Jesus ate with tax collectors and also ‘sinners’. To eat with a person was a sign of friendship. Jesus offers friendship, identity and love to those others have rejected and excluded.



## Key points

- Jesus went out of his way to include and show love towards those in society who were excluded and looked down upon.
- The radical, inclusive love of Jesus is an example for us all to follow.



## Questions for discussion

- What is happening in the story?
- Why were the tax collectors and ‘sinners’ treated as outcasts?
- Was the behaviour of the Pharisees justified and why?
- What does the response of Jesus teach us about inclusion?
- In what ways is the church showing love towards, and including, those who are outcast like Jesus did?
- What are the benefits of including those who are outcast in the church and community?
- How can the church embrace and demonstrate inclusion as championed by Jesus in today’s world?

## Reflection

Reflect on how this encounter with Jesus might have changed the tax collector's life and how he saw himself. Reflect on how the love of Jesus has changed you.

When Jesus looks at a person what does he see? Do we look at people in the same way that Jesus does?

Sometimes we make assumptions and judgements about others. However, God calls us to love, embrace and include people, as we have been loved, embraced and included by Jesus. God's love is greater than our sins, and God continues to reach out to mankind in love. We are called to do the same, seeing others as equal and made in God's image.