



GROUP ACTIVITY

Dinner with Sinners

BIG IDEA: Jesus heals us from our sins, so we can follow Him even though we're sinners.

BIBLE BASIS: Matthew 9:9-13

KEY VERSE: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23 (NIV)

Hot Lava

Supplies: Tape (1 roll)

Set-Up: Create a tape line on the floor in a zigzag pattern. The line should be about 10-15 feet long.

Say: In our story today, the Pharisees couldn't believe that Jesus was hanging out with sinners. And the crazy thing is that we're just like the sinners at the dinner party. As much as we try to follow God and obey His commandments, we all mess-up sometimes. What's it called when we mess-up? (*Take answers.*) That's right...sin! Sin causes a spiritual death—forever separation from God. But here's the great news...Jesus came to save us from our sins. And there is no sin big enough or ugly enough to scare Jesus away. Even though we're sinners, Jesus wants to be with us! Let's do an activity that will help us remember that we all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23 (NIV)

Directions: Practice the verse together until everyone can remember it. When ready, tell the kids that the floor has turned to hot lava and the only safe passage across is on the tape line. Challenge the children to walk the line one at a time while reciting the verse aloud. If they step off the line, they must begin again. After everyone completes one trip across the hot lava, play additional rounds using different methods for crossing the lava such as walking backwards, closing their eyes, or hopping on one foot. Make one round hard enough that everyone struggles to make it across.

Question: What do you think it means to "fall short of the glory of God?"

Say: Did you have a hard time not falling into the lava? That is often like our walk with the Lord, we try really hard not to fall or sin, but we all mess-up at times or "fall short of the glory of God."

Question: In what ways have you "fallen short of the glory of God" recently? Did you ask God for forgiveness?