

Invite Them to Come In
A Bible Study for HISability Sunday

Luke 14:15-24 -- The Parable of the Great Banquet

INTRODUCTION:

What does it mean to be invited to someone's home? Who do we usually invite? Have there been times when you have invited guests but they were not able to accept your invitation? What is an acceptable reason for refusing an invitation?

INTO THE WORD:

1. Review the first portion of Luke 14. Where is Jesus when he tells this parable? What lessons has he just finished teaching his listeners?
2. Read Luke 14:15-24.
 - Who does the master represent in this parable?
 - Who does the servant represent?
 - What does the banquet table represent?
3. In verses 18-20. How does the response of the first invited guests show their priorities in life? What message were they sending to the Master who had invited them?
4. In verses 21-23. Why do you think the Master reacted the way he did when he was told that the first invitations had been rejected?

How many times does the master send his servants out to invite guests to the banquet?

Why does he send so many invitations?

5. Think about the second of the two groups of people being invited to the banquet table. Who are they? Where do the servants find them? What is required of them to join the Master at his table?

The Master does not discriminate when he sends out his invitations. He simply wants his guests to come and not delay. What does this tell us about God? Who does God want at his banquet table?

6. What does this parable teach us about who we are to include in our churches today? How do we show that we have this same urgency to invite people to God's table?

How about people who may appear to us to be on the "fringes" of our society? How do we help them know that they have an invitation?

Once they come, how so we make them feel welcomed at our churches?

8. In a recent survey commissioned by the National Organization on Disabilities (NOD)*, it was found that 47% of individuals with disabilities attend church at least once a month in comparison to 65% of individuals without disabilities.

While there are many reasons for this discrepancy, there are two issues that a church can address:

- Make sure **their church building is accessible**.
- Make sure that **their hearts are accessible**, that is that they are truly committed to welcoming and including individuals with disabilities.

9. On a scale of 1 to 5, (1 for not welcoming and 5 for very welcoming), how would you rate your church at welcoming and including people with disabilities?

1 2 3 4 5

Using the same scale, how do you think people with disabilities would rate your church?

Think about some specific ways that your church might do to invite and welcome people with disabilities into your midst.

CONCLUSION:

It is purely by God's grace, that we are invited to join him at his banquet table. There is nothing we do to earn a place at his table; we only need to come when he invites us. He has room around his table for ALL of us.

Through we sometimes cause others to feel unwelcome, or neglect the urgent task of inviting them to the banquet table, God continues to love us and forgive us. Through the death of his Son, Jesus Christ we have forgiveness for all of our sins. (Romans 5:8) May the Good News of Jesus Christ empower us to lovingly invite, welcome and make room around the "banquet table" for ALL people in our community.

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for inviting us to Your banquet feast. Help us to tell others the wonderful news that they are invited too. Help us to welcome and "make room around the table" for all those who accept Your gracious invitation. Forgive us when we fail. In Jesus' name. AMEN

* SOURCE: www.nod.org NOD/Harris 2000 Survey of Americans with Disabilities

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Revised: August 21, 2002