



## Talk summary:

### **Love looks like a party invitation [Luke 14:12-24]**

- 1. Everyone eventually gets invited to the party [Luke 14:16-17+21-23]**
  - a. Jesus tells his parable in response to someone who says “What a blessing it will be to attend a banquet in the Kingdom of God!” The Jewish expectations for God’s final act of restoring the world was that it would be like a great big party – a feast where everyone could enjoy the presence of God in abundance forever. But Jesus wanted to challenge who was on the invite list. They thought it would only be the ‘righteous’, those already part of the family of God, who would be invited. But Jesus showed God’s heart for the socially excluded to be included.
- 2. Not everyone responds positively [Luke 14:18-20]**
  - a. The story shows people making excuses to the invitation because of worldly concerns (also see Luke 8:1-15). How often do we think we’ll say yes to God or follow more wholeheartedly only when: we’ve got our lives more sorted; we’ve got this better job; we’ve got more time or less pressure on our lives. We cannot presume to have an invitation to God’s party: we are only invited because God’s grace that has extended beyond his chosen people through Jesus’s life, death and resurrection.
- 3. How we respond matters [Luke 14:21-24 + Luke 14:12-14]**
  - a. Jesus wants everyone to know and experience the flourishing fullness of life that is only found in God – where the party guests become the party hosts and inviters (that’s us!) and there are eternal consequences to how we respond. We all act out of some form of motivation and Jesus wants our motivation to invite others, especially those on the margins, to be from his eternal love and compassion for others.

### **Conversation Starter**

*Have we had a conversation about Jesus/faith in the last month with someone who is not yet a believer – if so how did it go? Do we find it easy to have conversations about faith with those around us? Do we feel confident extending God’s invitation? How do Jesus’ challenge to who is on our ‘party invite list’ connect with us? Have we wanted to share our faith with someone we know but haven’t been sure how to go about it? Are there any open questions from overpage that we might want to try out this week?*

**What might God be saying to me about this theme/situation?**

**What have I learnt that I want to hold on to?**

**How am I going to put it into practice?**

## Do's and don'ts of 'Inviting conversations'

*(these are just suggestions – I'm sure you have plenty of your own ideas to discuss too)*

### Before

**Do** pray for opportunities

**Do** each pray God will give you a sense of someone to initiate a conversation with

**Don't** worry if you feel nervous, it's normal

**Don't** be anxious if you don't feel close to God, we live in His Grace not our own strength

### Initiating a conversation

**Do** try and make a conversation feel as 'normal' as possible even if you're feeling scared!

**Do** look out for openings

**Do** anticipate conversations you have with someone each week. Think how you would respond to 'how was your weekend?' 'what do you enjoy doing?' 'I'm feeling unwell today' etc. Look out for openings

### In conversation

**Do** ask open questions. e.g. if someone asks you about church you could say:

- *Where would you say you were on your spiritual journey? Where would you think of going to take that interest further?*
- *Do you ever pray? and if so who do you pray to?*
- *Do you think there is more to life than what you can feel or touch?*
- *Do you think there is a spiritual dimension to life? Could you describe that? What does that mean to you?*
- *At our church love to offer prayer to people who are unwell. Could*

*you pray for you/them now? It will be quick and not weird!*

- *Could I pray a blessing for you today? For work, family, health?*

**Don't** worry if someone is not interested or dismissive (you still left a seed)

**Do** share your story if appropriate

**Do** offer to pray at the end of a conversation

**Don't** feel you have to though

**Do** offer to pray for them to have a revelation of Jesus if appropriate (you might be surprised how open people are to this)

**Do** offer a gospel book if they seem interested to know more

**Don't** feel the need to push anything on anyone - you're sowing seeds not ramming down plants

### After

**Do** share with your small group or prayer triplet to celebrate stepping out, even if it didn't go as you'd expect

**Don't** worry if you didn't see a prayer answered straight away - it may well happen later on

**Do** pray and trust that God will continue to water the seed you planted

**Do** share your experience after to encourage one another

We each carried out our servant assignment. *I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plants, but God made you grow.* It's not the one who plants or the one who waters who is at the centre of this process but *God, who makes things grow.* **1 Corinthians 3:6-9 The Message (MSG)**