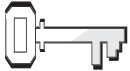


The Parable of the Great Feast



References

Luke 14:15-24;
Christ's Object Lessons,
pp. 219-237



Memory Verse

"Blessed is the man
who will eat at the
feast in the kingdom
of God" (Luke 14:15, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that Jesus
invites everyone to
His "banquet," His gift
of salvation.

Feel grateful for the invita-
tion to Jesus' banquet.

Respond by saying yes to
Jesus, and accepting His invitation.



The Message

Jesus invites us to be
with Him in heaven.

Monthly Theme

God's love is a gift; we don't earn or buy it.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus tells a story about a rich man who prepares a banquet. The man sends his servant to bring the invited guests, but many make excuses and say they can't come. So the man invites poor and crippled people to come. These people accept. When told there is still room, the man has his servants go into the streets and bring more people to the banquet.

This is a lesson about grace.

The banquet represents the free gift of salvation, made available to all. The invitation to the banquet is for all people on earth. But many make excuses. People don't accept God's gift because money, responsibilities, and relationships often stand in the way. Jesus wants us to know that while the invitation is for everyone, we have to accept the invitation to be with Him at the banquet.

Teacher Enrichment

"In Oriental lands even today it is customary to dispatch a messenger a short time before the feast actually begins to remind the guests of their invitation" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 808).

"Those who declined the invitation to the gospel feast placed more value on temporal interests than on eternal things" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 808).

"Some feel that this man [recently married] was probably basing his refusal on the fact that certain exemptions from some of the ordinary military and civil duties were accorded a man during the first year of his married life (see on Deut. 24:5). . . . But this law did not exempt him from normal social relationships" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 809).

"The highways and hedges" refers primarily to the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles following the Jews' final rejection, as a nation, of the gospel invitation" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 810).

"Jesus does not teach by this parable that earthly possessions are necessarily incompatible with the kingdom of heaven, but rather that inordinate affection for the things of earth disqualifies a person from entering heaven—in fact, it leaves him with no

desire for heavenly things” (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 811).

“By the great supper, Christ represents the blessings offered through the gospel. The provision is nothing less than Christ Himself. . . . In the feast He had provided, God offered to them the greatest gift that Heaven can bestow—a gift that is beyond computation. The love of God had furnished the costly banquet, and had provided inexhaustible resources. ‘If any man eat of this bread,’ Christ said, ‘he shall live for ever.’ John 6:51.

“But in order to accept the invitation to the gospel feast, they must make their worldly interests subordinate to the one purpose of receiving Christ and His righteousness. . . . The heart that is absorbed in earthly affections cannot be given up to God” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 222, 223).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5. Add a long table set as a banquet table.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Heavenly Party</i> B. <i>Party Planning</i>	party decorations, fresh fruit, paper plates, napkins, small wrapped gifts large felt cutout or picture of Jesus
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children’s Mission</i> gift box none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	none paper plates, marker Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Charades</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>God’s Invitation</i>	invitation pattern (see p. 87), paper, art supplies, scissors

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- party decorations
- fresh fruit
- paper plates
- napkins
- small wrapped gifts

A. Heavenly Party

When the children come into the room, have it decorated for a party: balloons, streamers, flowers, fresh fruit to eat (if appropriate in your Sabbath School). You will compare this feast to a feast in heaven.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What do you think is going to happen here today? Do you think it will be fun? What do you think about having a party at church? Why? Can you imagine Jesus coming to a party like this and having a good time?**

Tell me about some parties Jesus attended when He lived here on earth. (wedding at Cana, Simon’s feast) Did you know that Jesus never once turned down an invitation to go to someone’s home? What do you think would happen if we could invite Him to eat at our homes?

The Bible story today is a parable Jesus told about a big feast. Do you know that we’re going to have a great big feast in heaven when we get there? The Bible says “Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God” (Luke 14:15, NIV). The message today is:



JESUS INVITES US TO BE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- large felt cutout or picture of Jesus

B. Party Planning

If you have a life-size felt cutout of Jesus or another large picture of Him, stand it up in the middle of the room or put it in a prominent place on the wall. Say: **We’re going to pretend that this is our house, and we’re having a party—a party where everyone can see that Jesus is present. Please turn to the person on your right or someone ahead of you and talk about your answers to my questions about this party.** Allow about 30 seconds between questions for the students to talk together.

Ask: **What kinds of games would you play? What could you do besides play games? What would you eat? How would you talk to each other? Whom would you invite? What would the invitations say? Would laughing and playing be OK, or would you have to be quiet?**

Debriefing

Have the children report their answers to your questions. Allow response time as you ask: **How could you better remember that Jesus is always with us? Can you imagine playing jump rope or swinging with Jesus when you get to heaven? I can! Did you know that Jesus never turned down an invitation to go to someone's home? What would happen if we could invite Him to eat in our homes?**

The Bible story today is a parable that Jesus told about a man having a feast. Do you know that we will have a great big feast in heaven when we get there? The Bible says: "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:15, NIV). Today's message tells us that . . .



JESUS INVITES US TO BE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Amigos de Cristo" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 69)

"Seek Ye First" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 67)

"His Banner Over Me Is Love" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 25)

"God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 13)

"I Want to Be Ready" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 127)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize that God invites everyone to join Him in heaven.



Offering

Continue collecting the offering in a gift box. Talk about how God gives us the wonderful gift of salvation for free, and how when we give our offerings, we help tell others about His gift.

You Need:

• gift box



Prayer

Thank God for His gift to us—Jesus. Thank Him that we can help tell others of His love.

2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

Characters: host, servant, two guests, other guests (rest of children)

Ask the four main characters to mime their parts as the story is read.

Read or tell the story.

"Have you finished inviting our guests?" asked the host of the party.

"Yes, sir, I have," replied his servant.

"Thank you, my friend. I can always trust you to do a good job for me." The master smiled, thinking of the party he had planned.

The master had planned a great feast for his friends. They had been invited long ago. When the banquet was ready, the servant personally went to let the guests know that it was time to come.

After knocking on the first door, the servant waited. And waited. And then waited some more. Finally, he knocked again. After several minutes, the door opened and an impatient man said, "Yes? What is it? What do you want?"

Courteously, the servant reminded the man of his invitation to the banquet. "Please, sir, do come right away! My master has everything prepared and is looking forward to visiting with you!"

With a sigh, the man said, "Oh, of course! I wish I could, but I just bought a field, and I need to go look at it. I'm terribly sorry. I do hope you understand." And with that, he closed the door quickly.

Shaking his head, the servant went to the next address on his list. *Surely I'll have a better response here*, he thought to himself. However, when the homeowner came to the door, he said, "I've just

bought five yoke of oxen. I need to try them out! Please ask your master to excuse me!"

A third time the servant knocked on a door. This time a man stuck his head outside and listened to the servant. "I just got married!" he announced. "I can't come!"

The servant went to house after house, with the same result. Everyone who had been invited to the party seemed to have a reason for not attending! He finally returned to his master's home and explained how each of the guests had responded with excuses.

For a moment, a look of sadness crossed the face of the host. "That's certainly too bad," he said, "but we can invite others! Go out to the streets and alleys and bring in anyone who looks like they could use a good meal! Hurry!"

After inviting everyone he could find, the servant went home, exhausted. Soon the dinner party guests arrived and were welcomed. The faithful servant watched as they came in. A good group, but there was still room at the banquet table.

"Master, we still have room for more," the servant reported.

"Quick, my friend! Go out to the country roads! Go everywhere you can think of! Let's fill this place! Everyone who accepts my invitation will enjoy the feast with me!"

Today, Jesus has a wonderful party planned, and He's giving you an invitation! Many people in the story had excuses for not coming to the party. They let other things become more important than being with their friend. And because they were too busy with things, they turned down the invitation and missed the great feast!

In this parable, the "party" is the gift of salvation and eternal life that Jesus

offers to us. We have a choice. We can decide to accept His invitation or to let other things become more important to us. How about you? Right now, will you say yes to the invitation Jesus has given you? Do you want to be with Him in heaven? Or will you miss out on the great party He is preparing for us there?

Debriefing

Say: **Jesus told this story to help us understand His invitation to be saved and live with Him in heaven.**

Allow response time as you ask:

Who did the man who prepared the banquet represent? (Jesus)

Why did the three guests make excuses for not going to the banquet? (They didn't really want to go. Their lives were busy with other things.) **What excuses did they give?** (just bought land, just bought oxen, just got married)

What are people's real excuses for not accepting Jesus' invitation of eternal life with Him? (too busy; more interested in other people; too interested in worldly things or money)

What about you? Do you want to enjoy the feast Jesus is preparing for you? Do you want to live with Him in heaven?

Remember our message. Let's say it together:



JESUS INVITES US TO BE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

Memory Verse

In advance, write each word of the memory verse on a different paper plate.

Mix up the plates and place them on a table. In groups of three or four, have the

You Need:

- paper plates
- marker

children come to the table and put the words in order. (Large group: use several sets of plates.) Repeat the memory verse several times.

The memory verse is: “ **Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God’** ” (Luke 14:15, NIV).

Bible Study

Say: **Today's Bible lesson is about a parable Jesus told when He was having dinner with an important Pharisee and his guests.**

The Bible also tells about another feast Jesus talked about, a wedding banquet. It is called The Parable of the Wedding Banquet. Let's read about it in Matthew 22:1-14. Allow time to find the text, then ask for volunteers to read it. Adults assist as needed.

Debriefing

Ask: **How is this parable like the one in our lesson today?**

Who does the servant represent? The king? The people who refused to come to the feast? The ones who treated the servants badly?

What happened to the people who didn't come?

What will happen to those who do not accept Jesus as their Saviour?

Do you want to attend the great feast in heaven with Jesus?

Do you want to be one of His servants and tell others about Him? Let's say our memory verse again:

“ **Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God’** ” (Luke 14:15, NIV).

Now let's say our message:



JESUS INVITES US TO BE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

You Need:

- Bibles

Applying the Lesson

Charades

Ask the children to take turns acting out things that could get in their way of accepting Jesus' invitation to heaven, while the other children guess what it is.

Ideas: school or learning, sports, earning money, becoming popular or famous, negative influence of friends, seeking only fun and entertainment, accumulating things, etc.

Now ask them to take turns telling about things that could help them understand and accept Jesus' invitation to come to Him and live with Him in heaven.

Ideas: praying; reading the Bible; listening to pastor, teachers, parents; reading about Jesus in storybooks; studying the Sabbath School lesson; accepting Jesus as their Saviour; sharing Jesus' love with others, etc.

If the children talk about doing good deeds or obeying rules and laws, remind them that obedience is not the root of our salvation, it is the fruit (or result) of our salvation. We obey and do good works in response to God's love for us. Avoid emphasis on works as a way of earning salvation.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

What will you do this week to help you understand Jesus' invitation to be with Him in heaven?

Our story today helps us know how to be ready to enjoy the great feast Jesus is preparing for us in heaven. Who will be there? (whoever accepts Jesus as their Saviour; whoever accepts His invitation to be saved; those who put Jesus first in every part of their lives, etc.)

How much do you have to pay to attend Jesus' party? (nothing, it's free)

Raise your hand if you are glad that God has given us such a wonderful gift, and if you accept His invitation to live and eat with Him in heaven. Do not take these indications lightly. Talk with and encourage individual children as they respond.

Let's say our memory verse together again: "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:15, NIV).

Remember today's message? Let's say it together:



JESUS INVITES US TO BE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

Sharing the Lesson

God's Invitation

Make a copy of the invitation pattern (below) for each child. Have the children decorate them. On the inside they can write "Let's plan to meet there" and sign it. Then they can cut it out.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

What does the front of the invitation say? With whom will you share it this week? Be sure to help them know that Jesus' invitation to be with Him in heaven is for them.

Tell them about the Bible story of the banquet, and also about the banquet God has prepared for them in heaven.

Tell them that God wants everyone to accept His invitation and be there with Him. Let's remember ...



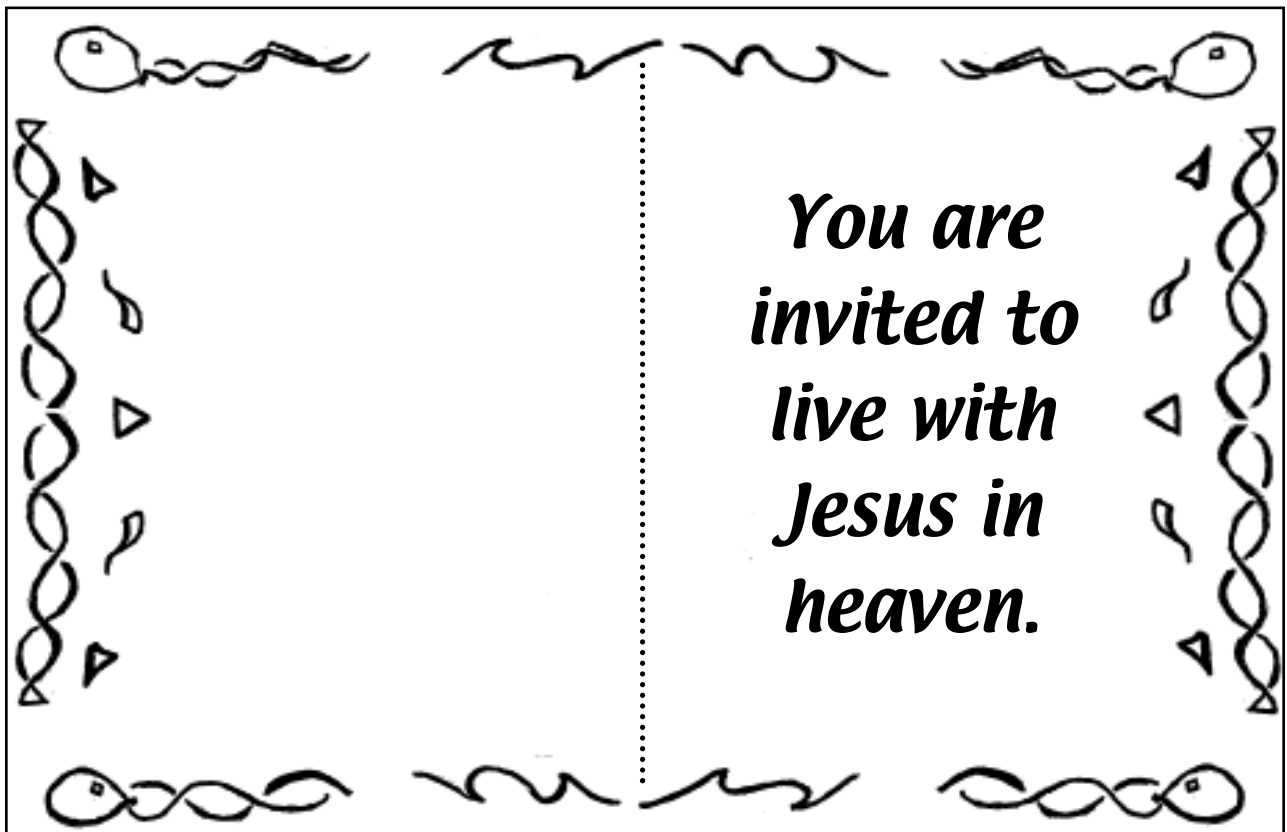
JESUS INVITES US TO BE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

You Need:

- invitation pattern (below)
- paper
- art supplies
- scissors

Closing

In a short prayer, thank God for His gift of salvation and His promise that if we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we will live with Him in heaven one day.



The Parable of the Great Feast

References

Luke 14:15-24;
Christ's Object Lessons,
 pp. 219–237

Have you ever been invited to a party? Were you excited about it? Did you look forward to going? Jesus is planning a great feast, a party for all who love Him. Would you like to be there?

Memory Verse

“Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God” (Luke 14:15, NIV).

The Message

Jesus invites us to be with Him in heaven.

“Have you finished inviting our guests?” asked the host of the party.

“Yes, sir, I have,” replied his servant.

“Thank you, my friend. I can always trust you to do a good job for me.” The master smiled, thinking of the party he had planned. Invitations had gone out. And his friends said they would come. They would have a wonderful time together.

When the banquet was ready, the servant had another job to do. He personally went to let the guests know that it was time to come.

After knocking on the first door, the servant waited. And waited. And then waited some more. Finally, he knocked again. After several minutes, the door opened and an impatient man said, “Yes? What is it? What do you want?”

Courteously, the servant reminded the man of his invitation to the banquet.

“Please, sir, do come right away! My master has everything prepared. He is looking forward to visiting with you!”

With a sigh, the man said, “Oh, of course! I wish I could, but I just bought a

field, and I need to go look at it. I’m terribly sorry. I do hope you understand.” And with that, he closed the door quickly.

Shaking his head, the servant went to the next address on his list. *Surely I’ll have a better response here*, he thought to himself. However, when the homeowner came to the door, he said, “I’ve just bought five yoke of oxen. I need to try them out!”

A third time the servant knocked on a door. This time a man stuck his head outside and listened to the servant. “I just got married!” he announced. “I can’t come! Please excuse me!”

The servant went to house after house, with the same results. Everybody who had been invited to the party seemed to have a reason they couldn’t come! Disappointed, he finally returned to his master’s home. There he explained how each of the guests had responded with excuses.

For a moment, a look of sadness crossed the face of the host. “That’s certainly too bad,” he said, “but we can invite others! Go out to the city streets and alleys and bring in anyone who wants to come! Hurry!”

After inviting everyone he could find in the city, the servant returned, exhausted. Soon those dinner party guests arrived and were welcomed. A good group, but there was still room at the banquet table.

“Master, we still have room,” the servant reported.

“Quick, my friend! Go out to the country roads! Go everywhere you can think of! Let’s fill this place! Everyone who accepts my invitation will enjoy the party with me!”

Today, Jesus has a wonderful party planned, and He’s giving you an invitation! Many people in the story had excuses for not coming to the party. They let other things become more important than being



with their friend. They weren't really true friends at all. Because they were too busy with things, they turned down the invitation and missed the great feast!

In this parable, the invitation to the "party" is Jesus' invitation for us to live with Him forever. We have a choice. We can decide to accept His invitation or to let other things become more important in our lives. How about you? Right now, will you say yes to the invitation Jesus has given you? Do you want to be with Him in heaven? Or will you miss out on the great party He is preparing for us there?

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go with your family to a place where fruit grows. Find a quiet spot and read your lesson story together. Then read Revelation 22:1, 2 to find out about a special fruit tree in heaven. Who will enjoy the great feast in heaven? Who will eat from the special tree?
- Teach your family the memory verse.

Sunday

- Give the invitation you made in Sabbath School to someone and tell them the Bible story. Let them know that God's invitation is for them too. (Or make an invitation now. Write the memory verse and message on the front. Inside write "Let's plan to meet at the party.")
- Write your memory verse on a paper plate. Use it to review the verse with your family this week.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Luke 14:1-15. Where was Jesus at this time? What was He doing there? Why do you think He talked about inviting people to dinner?
- Luke 14:1-15 tells what happened before Jesus told The Parable of the Great Feast. Have someone help you find the word *parable* in a dictionary. Talk about its meaning. Why did Jesus use parables to teach lessons?
- Thank Jesus for His parables that help us understand His Word.

Tuesday

- During worship read and discuss Luke 14:15-24. Who does the servant represent? Who does the master represent? Who are the people who refuse to come to the feast? Who are those who come? How is the invitation to the great feast like Jesus' invitation to us today?

- Sing about Jesus' coming to earth again. Then thank Him for His promise to do so. Ask Him to help you and your family to be ready when He comes.

Wednesday

- For worship today read Matthew 22:1-14 with your family. How is this story similar to the one in your lesson this week? Now read Revelation 19:6-9. Who is the Lamb? Who is the Lamb's bride? When will this wedding supper take place?
- Draw a picture of the Lamb's wedding supper. Put yourself and your family at the table. Show it to your family. Keep the picture to remind you to pray for your family.

Thursday

- With your family, read Revelation 19:6-9. Ask your parents or grandparents about their wedding. Did they have a wedding feast? If possible, look at their wedding pictures. Compare their wedding to the wedding feast of the Lamb in heaven. What might keep you from the Lamb's wedding supper? How can you get ready to be there?
- Sing songs about heaven, then thank God for His promises. Ask Jesus to help you and your family be ready to live with Him forever.

Friday

- Share some fruit as you act out your lesson story with your family. Be the servant who invites and then reminds people to come to the great feast.
- Ask someone to read Revelation 21 and Revelation 22:1-5. How is heaven different from where you live? What will you eat at Jesus' great feast in heaven?
- Before prayer, sing "I Want to Be Ready" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 127). Ask Jesus to help you and your family to be ready when He comes.