

Lesson: The Parable of the Great Banquet

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This Sunday School lesson plan is based on the parable Jesus taught about the Great Banquet. This lesson was prepared for older elementary students. It could also be used as a Children's Church lesson or adapted for younger students. At the end of the lesson there are additional resources to help you individualize for the needs of your students. For another approach to teaching this parable, check out our related [lesson plan "Jesus and the Great Feast."](#)

Bible Story: Jesus' Parable of the Great Banquet

Scripture: [Luke 14:1-24](#); [Isaiah 25:6-9](#); [Revelation 19:7-9](#)

Target Age Group: Age 9 – 12 (U.S. 3rd – 6th Grade)

Learning Context: Sunday School

Printer Friendly Bible Lesson: [[print_link](#)] this lesson plan

You Can Help: Please leave your feedback and suggestions for this lesson plan. Others will benefit from your ideas. [Click here to respond](#)

Learning Objective(s):

Students unfamiliar with the Bible will be introduced to a brief history of God's promise to send a Savior through His people. Students will learn from the parable:

- God's invitation to be saved is for all people.
- Believers need to be sharing the Good News so others can come to Jesus.
- Only those who have put their faith in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection can attend the Wedding Supper of the Lamb (Great Banquet).

Memory Verse: [Revelation 3:20](#) "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me."

Bible Lesson "Parable of the Great Banquet"

Give Bibles to students who did not bring one with them to class. (It is a good idea to keep extra Bibles in your classroom so that each student can have a copy of God's Word in their own hands as the lesson is being taught.)

As an activity before the Bible Lesson:

Brainstorm with the students of having the greatest party. Have the students come up with someone that they all would like to receive an invitation from. Next have them decide where the party will take place, the activities and kind of food that will be there. Now that we have planned what we believe would be the perfect party, how many of you would call

the person who invited you and tell them you will be coming to the party? We would all be pretty excited to be invited to this party and would make every effort to attend this event. This was just a made up event that we planned in just a few minutes. If we really could go to this party it would be exciting wouldn't it? This morning I want to turn our attention to the greatest event planner in the world. God our creator has a plan for all men, women, boys and girls. He has had a plan from the very beginning of creation. When He created the very first man and woman He wanted to have a close relationship with them and never be separated from them. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's only command they brought sin into the perfect world God had created. The punishment for their disobedience was to be separated from God. Because they sinned every person born after them was born with sin in their heart.

When Adam and Eve sinned God had a plan. He promised them that He would send a Savior that would rescue every man, woman, boy and girl from their sins. God later promised Abraham that one of his descendants would be the Savior of the World. In the Old Testament the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were chosen by God to be set apart as His people. God's people are also known as Israelites, Hebrews and the Jews. God gave His laws and promises to His people. God's plan was to use His people to show the world that He is the One True God and they would point others to the Promised Savior when He came to the earth.

It's hard to keep God's History brief but it is important for you to understand the history of God's people so you can understand better the lesson we are going to learn this morning. If you can picture this in your mind, God had invited His people to be a part of the greatest event that would ever take place. Hundreds of years passed and His people were still waiting for His promise to be fulfilled. Unfortunately the Jews became very prideful of being God's chosen ones. They didn't always obey Him. In fact, many of them worshiped other gods and rebelled against Him. For many Jewish people it was as though the invitation God had sent them was put in the bottom of a drawer never to be remembered again.

God continued to show love and forgiveness to His people. God always keeps His Word and He would send the Promised Savior whether many of His people were still waiting for it to happen or not.

Now let's open our Bibles and turn to Luke 14. Let's read verse 1. Jesus has been invited to the house of a Pharisee to eat. Who remembers who the Pharisees are? Pharisees are the religious leaders of Jesus' day. They tried to obey all God's laws to please Him. They not only obeyed the laws God made, but they made up over 700 extra ones to make sure they were obeying God's laws. These weren't God's laws but they added them to help them not to disobey God's laws. These leaders taught God's people the laws and expected everyone to obey all the laws even the ones they had made up. The Pharisees became so obsessed with laws that they forgot that the one thing God wanted from them was for them to love Him and have a relationship with Him.

The Pharisees are Jews. They are leaders for God's Chosen people. It was a great honor

for them to be a part of His family. As we discussed earlier it wasn't because of any great thing that the Jews did that made them God's chosen people. (Deuteronomy 7:6-8) It was God's plan to choose them to reveal Himself to the world and to send a Savior through them.

Because the Pharisees had turned their focus on their own obedience to laws they didn't see God's promise of a Savior right in front of their own eyes. Instead of seeing Jesus as the amazing fulfillment to God's promise they saw Him as their enemy. Instead of working with Jesus to help others come into God's Kingdom, the Pharisees spent their time fighting against Him trying to trick Jesus and prove that He really wasn't God's Son.

Here's God's promised Savior finally in front of the Pharisees who should have recognized that God's promise had been fulfilled but they didn't believe in Him. They were stubborn and hard-hearted. They liked being part of God's chosen but they didn't like Jesus' message in how they were to come to God. They didn't want to come to God through believing in Jesus. They wanted to come by their own righteousness, which was keeping all kinds of laws.

Jesus knew their hearts and on the day He was in the home of the Pharisee He told them a parable. Who remembers what a parable is? A parable is a story to help the people understand the truth about God and His kingdom.

Listen to the parable Jesus told. There once was a man who was making plans for a Great Banquet. He wanted to share his food and have a great time of celebration. He sent out invitations to those he wanted to come to his banquet. He sent his servants out with the invitations and the guests said they would come to this man's Great Banquet.

The man began preparations for his banquet. He made sure he had enough food prepared for all the guests who said they were coming. When all the preparations for the banquet were complete, he sent out his servant to tell the invited guests it was time to come and celebrate at his Great Banquet.

The servant must have been excited to go and tell each invited guest it was time to come to the banquet. He had smelled the food that was being prepared. He saw the table with many place settings waiting for each guest to come and take his/her seat. He even saw the joy and excitement on his master's face as he was looking forward to sharing this Great Banquet with his invited guests.

When the servant reached the homes of the invited guests he was met with many excuses why they could not come to the Great Banquet. One invited guest said, "I have just purchased some land and I must go check it out. Please excuse me from attending the banquet." Another invited guest said, "I have just bought ten oxen. I have to see if they will work well in my fields. Please excuse me from attending the banquet." Still another invited guest said, "I just got married so I cannot come."

How disappointing this news was to the servant. He knew how generous his master was by inviting them and preparing a great feast for them to enjoy together. None of the invited guests were planning to come to the Great Banquet.

When the servant told his master about all the excuses and how none of the invited guests

were going to come to his banquet, he was very angry! These invited guests were rude. They told him they were coming; he made plans and had all the food ready and prepared. Now who would eat all the food that was prepared?

The master told his servant to go out into the streets and alleys and invite the poor, handicapped, blind and lame to come to his banquet.

The servant did as he was told and returned to his master. He said, "I have done what you have told me and there is still room for more guests to sit at your Banquet."

The man said, "Go outside the city, go up and down the roads in the country and invite all to come to my banquet so that my house will be full. All those who were originally invited and made excuses not to come, they will not get to eat any of my food."

In Jesus parables the audience He was speaking to would be represented in His parable. Since Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees let's see if you can identify what characters they play in the parable of the Great Banquet.

In this parable who do you think represents the Pharisees? The invited guests are the Jewish leaders who would not accept Jesus as the way to God. God was inviting them to be saved through His promised Savior but they made all kinds of excuses why they wouldn't believe Jesus was the Son of God and would not accept Him as their Savior. They thought Jesus was Beelzebub (the devil). Matthew 12:24 They wanted Jesus to perform some great miraculous sign (Luke 11:16) (He had already healed many people that they knew about) and then they would believe. Their excuses about why they didn't accept Jesus kept them from being saved and part of God's eternal kingdom. John 10:22-39 By making excuses they were rejecting God's invitation to them to spend eternity with Him. In Jesus' parable of the Great Banquet, the excuses in the first two examples in the parables are outright lies. In Bible times no one bought land without checking it out first. To us that would be like going on the computer and buying a piece of property someone was selling on e-bay and we never actually went to the property we were buying. No one bought oxen and then tried them out. It would be like buying a car and then driving it to see if you like it.

The third excuse is a true responsibility. The man who was married had a responsibility to his wife but he had previously said he would come. His priority was to his responsibility and he chose to ignore his invitation.

People make the same excuses today. We can be more interested in making more money and having more things than to accept the invitation to follow Jesus and become fishers of men. We also can become so busy doing many things (sports, activities, friends, video games) that we don't have time or won't make time for Jesus to be our Lord and Savior. Many of us have responsibilities like school, work etc. but responsibilities should never be an excuse to say no to God. When He invites us to follow Him and serve Him our answer should be yes. He will enable us to do the things we need to do and to be obedient to serve Him in the area He has called us to.

In Jesus' day people who were crippled, blind or lame were considered outcasts. People looked down on them and they were not treated well. In the parable Jesus told the

Pharisees the crippled, blind and lame represented those people that the Pharisees didn't think could ever be righteous in God's eyes. (Pharisee/tax collector [Luke 18:9-14](#)) Since those who were invited to the banquet made excuses not to come, the master invited the outcasts to be a part of his banquet.

To understand the final group who were invited to the Great Banquet we need to know that God promised in His word that He would send His Savior to the Jews first and then to all the Gentiles. ([Isaiah 65:1](#), [Deuteronomy 32:21](#), [Romans 15:8-12](#)) A Gentile is anyone who is not a Jew. You and I are Gentiles if we have no Jewish family members. The Gentiles are represented in Jesus' parable as the ones invited from the roads and country lanes.

The parable that Jesus told the Pharisees would not have made them feel prideful at all. Jesus basically told them that because of their rejection of Him they were going to miss out on God's Great Gift of Salvation.

As we study this parable together Jesus has something for us to learn too. Earlier we came up with what we thought would be a great party that we would want to be invited to.

This parable teaches us that we all have been invited to the Greatest Event ever! Jesus is teaching us that God has sent out His invitation for salvation to all. (John 3:16) He kept His promise to send a Savior to Jews and Gentiles. Jesus says, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away." [John 6:37](#)

Have you accepted God's invitation to be saved through faith in His Son Jesus? If so you have been cleansed of your sin and will enjoy a personal relationship with Jesus on this earth and one day will spend eternity with Him in Heaven. In [Revelation 19:7-9](#) (have a student read if you have time) we are told that one day all who accepted the invitation to be saved will celebrate a wedding supper with Jesus.

Are you like the Pharisees and the religious leaders who thought they were good enough by keeping God's laws and didn't believe they needed to put their faith in Jesus to spend eternity with God? Do you think because your parents are Christians and because you attend church, you are good enough to go to heaven? In this parable Jesus taught that those who were invited and made excuses not to come would not be able to taste the food that had been prepared for them. If you think that your good works are the way you will get to heaven you have not accepted God's invitation which is to come by faith in His Son Jesus you can not experience eternal life with Him.

If you have accepted God's invitation to be saved are you enjoying a close relationship with Jesus while you are living on this earth? Do you spend time with Him every day by reading your Bible and praying? Do you show your love to Him by obeying His Word? The life you live here is preparing you for the Great Banquet (Wedding Dinner) when you will live forever and ever in God's presence.

If you have accepted God's invitation to be saved, are you inviting others to join you at the Great Banquet? Do you tell them of King Jesus' great love and how He has prepared a way for them to live forever in heaven one day? You can invite them to the Great Banquet by sharing the Good News that Jesus died for their sins and rose again the third day. It is up to those you invite to say yes or no to God. Jesus teaches us in this parable that there is still

room for more to come. Will you pray about who God wants you to share Jesus with this week? Will you obey and share?

Review Questions:

- Who were God's chosen people?
- What promise did God make to His people?
- What is a parable?
- Where was Jesus in our story today?
- Who does the master represent in this parable?
- Who do you think the servants represent?
- Who do the invited guests represent?
- What were some of the excuses that the invited guests made?
- What happened when the invited guests made excuses not to come?
- Who filled the master's banquet hall where he had his feast?
- What new fact about God's Word did you learn from this lesson?
- What are you going to do the next time you start making excuses why you shouldn't pray, read your Bible or memorize Scripture?

Additional Resources for Teaching

- [Danielle's Place](#)
- [Mission Arlington \(Matthew 22:1-10 Parable of Wedding Banquet Lesson Ideas\)](#)
- [Activity Ideas for this lesson](#)
- [Calvary Williamsport Coloring Page for Revelation 3:20](#)

Need More Ideas? Then discover [three ways to motivate kids to learn](#) or check out some [game ideas of Sunday School](#).

“You’re Invited” Bible Craft Ideas on the Parable of the Wedding Feast



The parable of the marriage feast is a great opportunity to include party-like elements in craft and story-telling. The message we hope to convey to kids with this story is that God invites and accepts all people to be part of His family, and all we have to do is choose His gift of salvation. With these crafts, celebrate that fact with a decorative “invitation,” a “pinata,” and a reminder that we are clothed not with wedding garments, but with the blood of Jesus.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
-Romans 6:23*

To him (Jesus) all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” -Acts 10:43

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. -Romans 8:16-17

Clothed with Christ...part of His family!

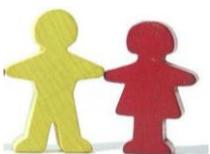
All are invited...to God’s Heavenly party!

You are invited into God’s family! Just believe!

No excuses...accept God’s free invitation!

More Teaching Ideas for the Parable of the Wedding Feast

- Watch the [video version of this children’s sermon](#) on our [YouTube channel](#)
- See the [related craft ideas](#) and more [Sunday School Crafts](#) on YouTube channel
- Compare our full [Sunday School lesson on Matthew 22:1-14](#)



Craft one: Party Pinata

You will need:

- Scissors
- Paper bags
- Markers or crayons
- Verse caption or extra decoration (optional)
- Small treats or toys
- Pipe cleaners, glitter, or other extra decorations.



Procedure:

1. Decorate the paper bag with pictures, verse captions, or stickers.
2. Add small toys, trinkets, or verses inside the bag.
3. Tie a ribbon or pipe cleaner around one end of the bag to secure.
4. Hang the pinata...use it as a decoration or whack at it with a stick to open it up for the treats!



Craft Two: “Clothed with Christ” decoration

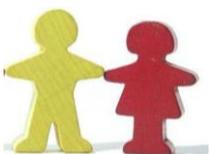
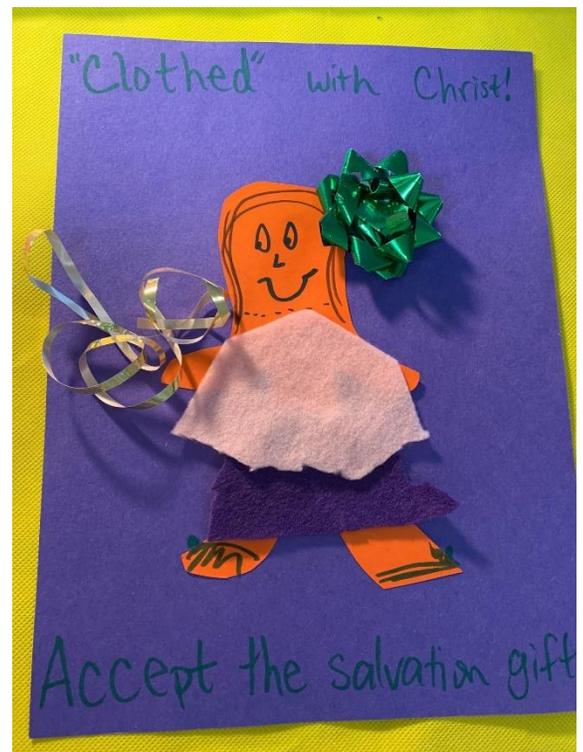
You will need:

- Glue and/or tape
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- Caption or verse (Optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Felt or foam
- Additional decorations as desired



Procedure:

1. Draw a person-shaped figure on construction paper or card stock.
2. Decorate your “person” and cut it out.
3. Attach the person to another piece of construction paper.
4. Add decorations: felt or foam “clothing,” bows and ribbons, etc.
5. If desired, attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang as decoration.



Craft Three: “Invitation to God’s Party”

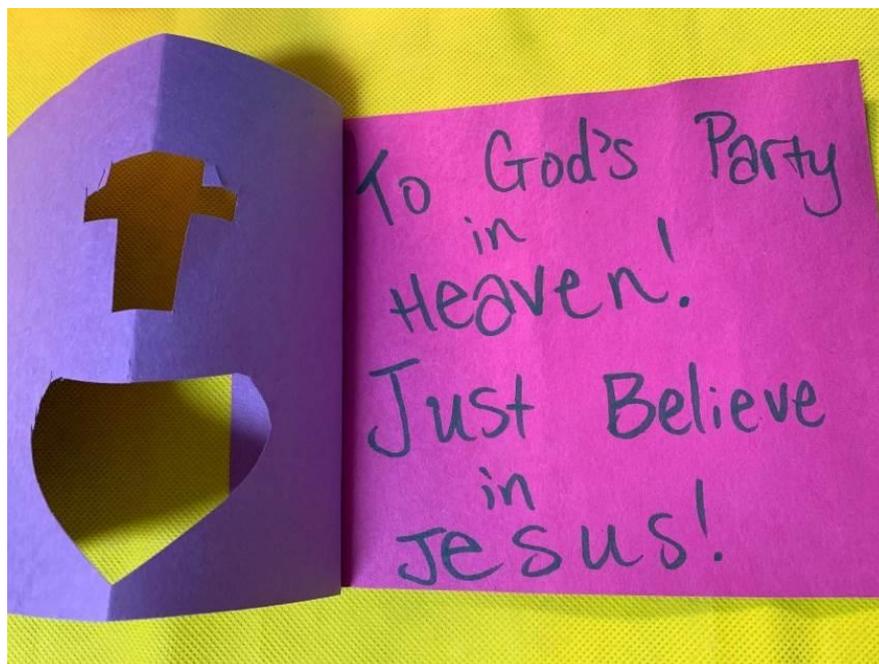
You will need:

- Construction paper/cardstock
- Cardboard tube (Optional)
- Balloons (optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Glue or tape



Procedure:

1. Choose one or two pieces of construction paper, and attach together with staples or glue.
2. If desired, cut shapes out of the top sheet for added decoration.
3. Decorate the paper like a party invitation. Add stickers, pictures, balloons, ribbons, and more.
4. Add captions and verses. Hang for decoration or use as a prayer request reminder.





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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