

HOUSEGROUP NOTES: Week Beginning 6th November 2016

RSVP - 'AN INVITATION TO CELEBRATE'

Read: (Luke 14:15-24)

WARM UP:

EITHER ask each person to SHARE one of their best and worst celebration events and WHAT made it so good or so bad for them OR have one member start a celebration story by saying something innocuous such as "*I laid the table for the party*" and then going clockwise around the room let each one see if they can add something to it like "*and that was just the start for the food was now arriving.*" and see if you can turn it in to the best party ever.

Conversely you could go the other way and start with "*I almost overslept.*" To which the next person might say, "*Making me late for the train I had to catch.*" And then the next person tries to find something worse than that leading to a celebration event that turned out to be your worst nightmare. HAVE FUN!

WISE UP:

Thankfully in this story that Jesus told Salvation is pictured as a feast not a famine, a fun time not a funeral.

Q. WHY do so many people think that giving your life to Christ is the end of life in all its fullness for them rather than the start of it?

Q. WHAT clues are there in this story that this is wrong perception?

Jesus frequently used a celebratory Banquet to illustrate the gospel call.

Q. WHAT insights about the invitation of Jesus do the following Bible verses provide? (Matthew 8:11, 22:8-10, 25:10, Luke 15:7, 15:21-24 & Revelation 19:9)

Read (John 1:11) and DISCUSS how this parable is a commentary on that verse. HINT: Who do the invited guests in the parable represent?

Q. WHAT did the pious guest in (14:15) believe about the feast in the Kingdom of God?

Q. HOW credible are the invited guests' excuses for not coming? (14:18-20)

Q. HOW can we know if an excuse for not coming to Christ is genuine or a Smokescreen?

Q. WHY is the host angry? (14:21)

The host commands his servant to invite the poor and outcast both inside the town and outside in the rural areas.

Q. Who do these two groups probably represent?

A PERSONAL THOUGHT:

The lost are Compelled to Come and the saints are Commanded to Go.

Q. WHY is the host urgent about his invitation in (14:21-23)?

Q. WHAT is the fine line between “making them come in” (compelling people to come to the Lord) and gently leading them, fully respecting their own free will?
Consider (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Q. HOW can we have both urgency and respect at the same time?

Q. HOW is the Holy Spirit leading you to apply this to your own life?

Q. How does this parable illustrate the Father's judgment and his mercy?

WRAP UP:

As we enter into the season of parties and celebrations...

Q. HOW is a follower of Jesus Christ both a host and a guest?

Q. HOW can we put first things first and not make excuses for what God may be called us to do to make Him and His invitation known?

Q. DOES this parable have an impact on our practice of hospitality?

Q. DOES this parable teach us anything about how to celebrate?

WHAT'S UP?

PRAY every day that God would give you good opportunities and power to commend Christ, and that He will be preparing others to be open. (Rom 10:1)

PORTRAY Christ by the way you love others and by the humble integrity of your work. (Matthew 5:16)

PERSUADE those who are willing to talk and who have questions. (2 Cor 5:11)

PLEAD with those for whom God gives you a special affection and longing.
(Acts 26:29)

SHORT PRAYER TO CLOSE:

Father, please make us truly thankful to have been invited into an intimate relationship with you. We pray for those that still make excuses and hesitate to come to you that their sins may be forgiven and cleansed. Please hold their hands and lead them to the Saviour. Amen.

Shaun