

Multiplying Small Groups



1

Helping our Friends Encounter God

Hospitality and invitation are important themes in scripture. These are distinguishing marks of those who follow Jesus. We all are invited by God to be good hosts, welcoming others to experience love and grace. Luke 14 is a powerful story about hospitality and invitation. Some of you may remember this story from our Encounters with Jesus series. Let's take another look as you prepare to send others out to host new small groups Bible studies.

In this story, Jesus illustrates his kingdom in Luke 14. Jesus was at dinner party, hosted by a religious leader, when he told this story. He was conveying to his hosts and others how much God loves people. His hope was to encourage those at the party to go and invite others to come know God.

Read

15When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God." 16Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' 18"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' 19Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' 20Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

21The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' 22Sir, the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' 23Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. 24I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

Luke 14:15-24

Discuss

1. Describe the task assigned to the servants.
2. How would you describe what matters most to the Master who is hosting the party?
3. What is Jesus trying to illustrate to you about what's important to God? What is your role in helping others experience his goodness?

Apply

God wants us to go out and continue inviting people to know and understand him. Sometimes there will be rejection; he longs for us to continue inviting, because His love for those who are far from him is persistent. God desires to express His love for your friends through you and your willingness to keep inviting them to hear and know Him.

One way to do that is to host a small group Bible study. You may either take this 5-week simple Bible study series and lead it yourself or be a host and bring your friends and partner with someone else to lead the study.

Would you be willing to give more of your friends or those around you an opportunity to hear about Jesus and grow in their faith?

2

Plan

You can find the Encounters with Jesus Bible study series at <https://intervarsity.org/adopt-a-campus/gather-encounters-jesus>

First, checkout the website yourself. Read through the guide that accompanies each simple Bible study. Read through the Bible passage and discussion questions and brainstorm how you might answer the questions.

At the Bible study:

1. Choose a location that is easy to find and in public, like a popular spot in the student union.
2. Spend 10-20 minutes inviting students who are near by to join you.
3. Take time in the beginning to gather your group, introduce new people, and bond together as a group.
4. Read the Bible passage out loud together and go through the discussion questions.
5. Follow the leaders guide for other leadership tips.

In the next few days:

- Decide a time and location for the Bible study.
- Decide when you are going to prep.
- Text your friends today. (see box 3)

4

Pray

Thank God for giving you the privilege of reaching others with His love and good news.

Ask God to move in the hearts of those you are inviting.

Ask God to lead you to People of Peace who will join you as partners in reaching the campus. (*People of Peace are people who are receptive to God, relationally networked on campus, and who respond with action.*)

3

Invite

Make a network map of the people you want to invite to your small group.

Start by writing your name in the middle. Circle it.

1. Where do you primarily spend your time? Write and connect your name to any networks and social groups you're a part of. Write the names of people you are connected to in each of these networks.
2. ★ Star anyone who is spiritually curious and has trust with you.
3. Underline the names of any Christians you know who could partner with you.

Take some time today to invite everyone from your network map. Start with the 5 friends you most want to be there. Here are a couple templates you could use to text your friends:

1. "Hey _____ - I'm getting some friends together next week to talk about spirituality and the Bible. I wanted to invite you! I want it to be a fun and supportive place to ask questions and learn together. I'd love it if you came."
2. "Hey _____ - I want to create a supportive place for my friends to ask their questions about spirituality and the Bible. I'm going to host an honest conversation where there are no bad questions. We're starting next week. Wanna come?"