

March 29 Lesson



Bible Passage: Luke 14:12–24
(Parable of the Great Banquet)

Jesus Is Salvation

Remember Verse

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 1 John 4:9

Items to gather (if you have them)

- Paper (4 sheets)
- Marker
- Tape
- Ball (medium-sized)
- Bible
- Tablecloth or sheet (large)
- paper (1 sheet per person)
- Paper plates (1 per person) or regular plates and small pieces of paper to draw on (note card size)
- Crayons or markers
- spoons (1 per person)
- cups (1 per person)
- Optional: snacks, water or juice
- Table and chairs (enough space for every person)
- table covering that can be drawn on with markers (butcher paper, papers taped together, news paper etc)
- Cones (2) (you could use boots if you don't have cones)
- Large plastic hoop (a laundry basket will work too)
- 10 items in doubles (for example 2 spoons, 2 hats, 2 blocks, 2 stuffed animals, 2 tupperwares, 2 balls, 2 coins, 2 remotes, 2 shoes, 2 pillows etc)

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find a list of resources along with encouraging articles that help you prepare your heart to present the lesson.

Inspire *Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

I love throwing parties. When I've thrown parties in the past, I would often pick a theme—sophistication, vintage, Christmas, summer—and go all out. I'd decorate my home and pick foods that matched the feel of the party. I would invite everyone from different social circles—work, church, old friends, new friends—and encourage everyone to come and bring friends. I would work hard to make people feel welcome and at ease in my home. Something about having a party and seeing people come together is fun and exciting!

From reading *The Big God Story*, it seems as though God takes joy in “having people over.” In the beginning, He invites Adam and Eve to live in this gorgeous place He created for them. In the end, we see that God invites those who have believed to the wedding feast of the Lamb!

I put effort into my parties and am so pleased when people show up and enjoy themselves. God constantly pursues and invites, hoping that we accept His invitation and come to His great banquet in celebration of the One who sacrificed all in order to be our salvation.

Denise Snyder
Crossroads Church

Equip *Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

In Luke 14:15, a man attending a feast with Jesus comments on how blessed it will be for those who will feast in the kingdom of God. In response, Jesus tells a parable. Despite popular opinion that parables are simple teaching tools used by Jesus to make His meanings more clear, the purpose of parables are actually to hide information from those who “do not have ears to hear.”

When Jesus begins His ministry, He offers God's people (Israel) the kingdom they have been waiting for. But then Israel formally rejects the offer of the kingdom by attributing God's work to Satan (Matthew 12:24, 31).

Following this rejection of Him in Matthew 12, Jesus speaks to the people only in parables (Mark 4:33–34). In Matthew 13:10–15, His disciples ask Jesus why He speaks in parables. He answers, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.” In response to the man who made the comment and to the Jews who arrogantly saw themselves in a privileged position, Jesus warns them that their having been invited to the feast means nothing if they reject the One who invited them.

Jesus is correcting their notion that only Jews would be a part of the kingdom. He says that many of these others, whom the Jews considered “unclean,” will be sitting at the table—while the Jews who rejected Him will be left outside. Jesus is saying that while the Jews remain the people of God, salvation is open to Jew and Gentile alike. But it is only available by faith. Though they weren't able to fully grasp the meaning of the parable, these self-righteous men knew enough to be offended at Jesus' claim that He is salvation.

Support *Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

We say it all the time—Jesus is salvation. We know that He came to die for our sins and to rescue us from death and separation from God. We think about the cross and are reminded of this great salvation. But sometimes, the longer we have been Christians, the easier it is to skim over the deep, amazing meaning of a God who sent His Son to die in our place. What a huge sacrifice it took for Jesus—fully God and fully man—to suffer beatings and crucifixion, all for a world that often rejects Him.

The salvation we've been invited into is costly, painful, tragic, and achingly beautiful. Take a moment to think back to the time you recognized your need for Jesus' salvation in your life. What caused you to see Him? What feelings did you experience? What relief did you feel as you realized your sins were forgiven?

Salvation is an amazing thing that we can begin to take for granted. So, this week, take some time to remember your salvation. Thank God for it. Sing your favorite songs of praise. Read the Scriptures that remind you of what God has done for you. And pray for your kids—that as they hear about Jesus as salvation, the Holy Spirit will be working in their lives to draw them to Him.

CONNECT//10 minutes



We always start each Sunday with a “Connect” activity that gets the ball rolling through simple activities and conversation starters.

Picking Corners

In this CONNECT, kids will run to the corner of the room that expresses their answer to a question.

SUPPLIES

- Paper (4 sheets)
- Marker
- Tape

RELATE

Ask your family to help you use the marker to number the sheets of paper from one to four and then have them help you hang them in different corners of the room. Ask everyone this question and have them share their answers: **What is the best party you've ever been to?**

Say: **It's fun to hear about the neat parties we've been to. Let's continue hearing more about each other! To start, each of us can choose a corner of the room to go to. Then I'll call out a corner. Like “corner 1” When I call out that corner, everyone in the corner will answer the question that I ask. Then, everyone will run to a different corner. Next, I'll call out another corner, Like “corner 2” and everyone in that corner will answer a new question.**

Continue for several rounds. Feel free to add your own questions

Suggested questions:

1. What is your favorite meal?
2. If you could attend a party anywhere, where would you choose?
3. What is your least favorite food to eat?
4. What would be your dream party?



*Children experience and learn more about God through prayer, storytelling from **The Big God Story**, an investigation into God's Word, and creative ways to memorize Scripture.*

Remember Verse

Each week children will spend time memorizing a portion of Scripture together. The Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of **The Big God Story**.

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 1 John 4:9 (week 2 with this verse)

Game: Hot Potato

SUPPLIES

- Ball (medium-sized)

RELATE

Review the Remember Verse with your family a few times so they become familiar with it. Then, invite your family to sit together in a circle. Give one person a ball and have him say the first word of the Remember Verse and roll the ball to any other person in the circle. The person who receives the ball will say the second word of the verse and roll it to another person. This continues until the entire verse has been said. Play several rounds.

Storytelling

Bible Passage: Luke 14:12–24

Storytelling Technique: Setting a Scene

Jesus Is Salvation

SUPPLIES

- Bibles
- Tablecloth or sheet (large)
- paper (1 sheet per person)
- Paper plates (1 per person) or regular plates and small pieces of paper to draw on (note card size)
- Crayons (various colors)
- spoons (1 per person)
- cups (1 per person)
- Optional: snacks, water or juice

SET UP

Place the tablecloth on the floor. Put the paper, plates, spoons, and cups at the head of the "table." Invite your family to each take a seat on the floor around the tablecloth. Choose one person to sit at the head of the tablecloth and to distribute the materials when you ask for assistance.

RELATE

We've been learning about **The Big God Story and how God has been working throughout it to restore our relationship with Him. In fact, God loves us so much that He sent His Son to earth to show us what He's like. And, most importantly, Jesus came to die for our sins and fix our relationship with God. Because of Jesus, we can have salvation and follow in God's way! Let's take a moment to stop and thank Jesus for being our salvation and inviting us to know Him.** Lead your family in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy

Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

Invite the kids to turn to **Luke 14** in their Bibles. **Jesus spent lots of time getting to know people and sharing the truth about God with them. He would go to dinner at people's homes and they would eat together and talk about important things. Sometimes people didn't approve of everyone Jesus ate with. Sometimes the religious leaders didn't like that Jesus was willing to eat with people who were sinners or worked for the people of Rome. But Jesus came to share the good news—that He is salvation—with everyone! So, Jesus told a parable, or a story, about how God invites everyone to know Him.**

Read **Luke 14:12–14** aloud. Ask the child at the head of the table to pass around the construction paper, and have everyone take a sheet and put it in front of them like a place mat. **Jesus knew that it's easy for us to spend time with and hang out with our friends and those who are like us. That's what the religious leaders did. But Jesus is salvation, and He offers it to everyone! He invites the poor and those who might not be popular. Everyone is invited to know Jesus and spend eternity with Him in heaven.**

Jesus told a parable about a man who was going to give a great banquet, or party. Read **Luke 14:16–18** aloud. Ask the child at the head of the table to distribute the plates. Everyone can place their plates on top of their place mats. **A man was going to give a big party for all of his friends. If you were going to have a banquet, what kind of food would you have?** Invite the kids to respond, and encourage them to use their crayons to draw a favorite food on their paper plate or on their small piece of paper set on a real plate.

The man told his guests that the banquet was ready, but they all started to make excuses for why they couldn't come! One said he had a new field he had to go look at. Another said he had new oxen he had to try out. And another said he had just gotten married and wouldn't be able to make it. Why do you think the people suddenly made excuses not to come to the banquet? Invite the kids to respond. **Great thoughts! Suddenly the people were too busy to go to this amazing party the man had planned. So, he came up with a new idea!**

Read **Luke 14:21** aloud. Have the child at the head of the table pass out the spoons. **The man was still going to have his banquet no matter what! So, he told his servant to begin inviting people who hadn't been invited before. Suddenly the poor and the lame were invited to this amazing banquet! How do you think they felt when they were invited to the party?** Invite responses. **Yes! They were probably so happy to be invited to this party!**

Read **Luke 14:22–24** aloud. Have the child at the head of the table pass out the cups, and have the kids set them on their place mats. **There was still room at the banquet, so the man started inviting anyone and everyone. No person was left out from being invited to this banquet. And those who were first invited and made excuses were not allowed in. The man had prepared a beautiful party, and anyone who wanted could come in to enjoy it.**

Jesus told this parable so people could understand that He is salvation and that everyone is invited to know Him and accept His gift! The banquet represented the kingdom and how amazing it will be to one day be with God. Up until this point in The Big God Story, the Jewish people had been invited to know God in a special way. But when Jesus came to earth, everyone was invited to know God, including us! Because of Jesus, everyone is invited to spend eternity with Him in heaven. We can accept Jesus' gift of salvation, and we can walk in God's way and share this amazing news with all of our family and friends. Because of Jesus, everyone is invited to the banquet, and no one is left out. But like we saw in Jesus' story, not everyone who is invited will come. Some people reject Jesus and His salvation. They will be separated from God. But, everyone has a chance to know Him because all are invited. What an amazing God we serve—He invites us to know Him and sent Jesus to be our salvation.

You and I are all invited to know Jesus. Some of us may have accepted His gift of salvation and some of us might not have yet. When we do become His followers, He sends His Holy Spirit to live in us and teach us His ways. Jesus is salvation, and He invites us all to know Him. Consider telling your kids about the time you accepted Jesus' gift of salvation. Be sensitive to those who may want to know more about what it means to follow Jesus. If you have snacks or drinks, pass them out and invite everyone to eat at the banquet table!

Discussion Questions

- **What did the man invite everyone to come to?** Luke 14:16
- **Which people did the man end up inviting to the banquet?** Luke 14:21, 23
- **What is salvation?**
- **How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is your salvation?**

RESPOND//15 minutes



Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond to God through creative activities and games.

Craft: Decorating a Banquet of Thanksgiving

Have a party with your kids to celebrate that Jesus is your salvation!

SUPPLIES

- Table (enough space for every person)
- Chairs (1 per person)
- table covering that can be drawn on with markers
- Masking tape
- Snacks
- Markers

SET UP

Cover the table with butcher paper/newspaper/disposable table cloth, small pieces of paper taped together, whatever you have to make a tablecloth that can be decorated. Secure using tape. Set out the snacks.

RELATE

Jesus told the parable of the great banquet to tell His disciples that salvation is for everyone, not just the Jews. That means each person has the opportunity to spend eternity in heaven with Jesus because He died to take the punishment for our sins. He is our salvation. What was your favorite part of The Big God Story today? Invite answers. **Those are great thoughts. Today we're going to have a party to celebrate that Jesus is our salvation!** Invite children to use the markers to write words and draw pictures of thanksgiving and praise to Jesus on the butcher paper tablecloths. As they work, they can enjoy the snacks.

Game: Gather the People

In this competition, kids see who can get to the hoop first with an item.

SUPPLIES

- Cones (2) (you could use boots if you don't have cones)
- Large plastic hoop (a laundry basket will work too)
- 10 items in doubles (for example 2 spoons, 2 hats, 2 blocks, 2 stuffed animals, 2 tupperwares, 2 balls, 2 coin, 2 remotes, 2 shoes, 2 pillows etc)

SET UP

Clear an open space in the middle of your room. Place the large plastic hoop in the center of the open area. Place the cones on opposite sides of the hoop, each 10 feet from the hoop (or as far as your room will allow). Slit the items so that

each team gets one of each item.

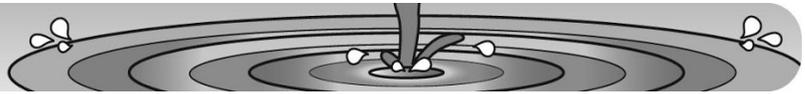
RELATE

Jesus used the parable of the great banquet to show His disciples that He came for all people: the poor, the lame, the crippled. Everyone was invited to the banquet!

Today we're going to have a competition to see who can get to the hoop first with an item. I'll call out an item, and an action and you'll send at least one person from your team to the hoop doing that action while bringing the item. To begin, divide your family into two teams. Have each team sit behind a cone. Call out the items and actions for the people from each team to run to the center of the hoop. The first team to get to the hoop wins that round. Use the following items and actions or feel free to come up with your own.

jumping with the spoon
crab crawling wearing the hat backwards
walking backwards balancing the block on your head
hopping with the stuffed animal between your knees
running holding the tupperware without using your hands
army crawling pushing the ball with your head only
heeling walking balancing the coin on the top of your foot
walking with your eyes closed holding the remote
crawling with the shoe on your back
rolling while hugging the pillow

BLESS// 5 minutes



Children receive a blessing from their parents. A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 9 (see Resources)
- Bible

RELATE

Encourage the children to stand together as you read them the blessing from John 14:6:

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Now invite the kids to spend some time blessing one another. Have one child go to another child and say, "(Child's name), may you know that Jesus alone is the way and the truth and the life."

End by saying a blessing over your family:

May you call on the name of Jesus with confidence and faith. May you receive His invitation to be in relationship with Him. May you have hope for your future because Jesus is salvation.