



A 6-WEEK SERIES FROM THE GOSPELS AND ACTS ON

THE RESURRECTION

A **EASTER SERIES** FROM GROW'S ANNUAL **TEACHING STRATEGY**

Invited

WITH JESUS, EVERYONE'S INVITED. WE'RE INVITED TO CELEBRATE WHO JESUS IS.
WE'RE INVITED TO REMEMBER WHAT JESUS HAS DONE.
WE'RE INVITED TO LET JESUS MAKE US NEW. WE'RE INVITED TO FOLLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LEAD.
JESUS INVITES US TO INVITE OTHERS.



CREATED WITH . . .

APRIL WAHL, DANNY SUGIMOTO, CHANDLER CORZINE, ERIN JOHNSTON & STEPHANY BREMER

WHAT WE'VE PROVIDED

Invited

STUFF FOR THIS SERIES

PLANNING

- ▶ [Series Guide](#)
- ▶ [Instructions](#)
- ▶ [Shop & Prep List](#)
- ▶ [Scope & Sequence](#)

TEACHING

- ▶ [Middle School Hacks](#)
- ▶ [High School Hacks](#)
- ▶ [Accessibility Hacks](#)
- ▶ [Online Hacks](#)

ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ [Environment Guide](#)
- ▶ [Room Design](#)
- ▶ [Music](#)
- ▶ [Games](#)

DISCIPLESHIP

- ▶ [Discipleship Guide](#)
- ▶ [Student Devotionals](#) and [Devotional Flyers](#)
- ▶ [Memory Verse Graphics](#)
- ▶ [Spiritual Habits App](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

- ▶ [Marketing Checklist](#)
- ▶ [Social Media Posts & Captions](#)
- ▶ [How To Build Your Social Media Calendar](#)

VOLUNTEERS & PARENTS

- ▶ [Emails](#)
- ▶ [Volunteer Devotionals](#)
- ▶ [Parent Devotionals](#)

GRAPHICS & VIDEOS

- ▶ [Graphic, Posters, and Flyers](#)
- ▶ [Bumper & Countdown Videos](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Videos](#)

STUFF FOR EACH WEEK

WEEK 1

- ▶ [Game](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Outline](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Guide](#) and [Lesson Builder](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Video](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide for Middle Schoolers](#)

WEEK 2

- ▶ [Game](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Outline](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Guide](#) and [Lesson Builder](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Video](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide for Middle Schoolers](#)

WEEK 3

- ▶ [Game](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Outline](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Guide](#) and [Lesson Builder](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Video](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide for Middle Schoolers](#)

WEEK 4

- ▶ [Game](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Outline](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Guide](#) and [Lesson Builder](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Video](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide for Middle Schoolers](#)

WEEK 5

- ▶ [Game](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Outline](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Guide](#) and [Lesson Builder](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Video](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide for Middle Schoolers](#)
- ▶ [Handouts](#)

WEEK 6

- ▶ [Game](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Outline](#)
- ▶ [Lesson Guide](#) and [Lesson Builder](#)
- ▶ [One-Minute Sermon Video](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide](#)
- ▶ [Discussion Guide for Middle Schoolers](#)

ABOUT THIS SERIES

There's nothing like throwing a party to celebrate the people you love. Be it for a birthday, an achievement, or a new chapter of life, parties give us a reason to gather, laugh, and create new memories together. And if we really stopped to look around, we'd find so many reasons to celebrate what's happening in our lives that the parties would never stop. In this 6-week series, we'll see what it's like when we celebrate all that God has done through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We'll celebrate that **with Jesus, everyone's invited**, and we'll **celebrate who Jesus is**. Then, we'll see how **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done, let Jesus make us new, follow the Holy Spirit's lead**, and how **Jesus invites us to invite others**.

WEEK 1

This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others.

- **BIG IDEA:** With Jesus, everyone's invited.
- **BIBLE:** Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy 4:29–31

WEEK 2

This week, we'll take a look at how Jesus was celebrated as a king when he entered Jerusalem.

- **BIG IDEA:** We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.
- **BIBLE:** Luke 19:28–40; Psalm 126:2–3; 1 John 1:5

WEEK 3

This week, we'll take a look at the story of Jesus' crucifixion and see why it was such an important event for us all.

- **BIG IDEA:** We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.
- **BIBLE:** Luke 23; Isaiah 53:4–9; John 15:3

WEEK 4

This week, we'll hear what happened when some of Jesus' followers showed up at his tomb after his crucifixion.

- **BIG IDEA:** We're invited to let Jesus make us new.
- **BIBLE:** Luke 24:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–17

WEEK 5

This week, we'll take a look at what Jesus said to his disciples right before he left them to continue his ministry without him.

- **BIG IDEA:** We're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.
- **BIBLE:** John 20:19–23; Acts 2:1–4; John 3:8

WEEK 6

This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a great banquet and the difference an invitation can make.

- **BIG IDEA:** Jesus invites us to invite others.
- **BIBLE:** Luke 14:12–24; Psalm 30:8–12; John 1:39–46

MEMORY VERSE: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ..." — 1 Peter 1:3

HOW TO DISCIPLE DURING THIS SERIES

We all know teenagers don't get disciplined just by sitting through a sermon every week. So here's what else we've provided along with this series to **help teenagers develop more consistent spiritual habits.**

THE 4 SPIRITUAL HABITS

We feature one of Grow's 4 Spiritual Habits every month with a unique activity or experience. But the 4 Spiritual Habits show up year-round! **Here are a few of the places you can spot them in this series:**



SPEND TIME WITH GOD

In Weeks 1 and 2, teenagers are encouraged to participate in spending time with God during this entire series by doing the Bible Journaling Page discipleship activity. In Week 1, they are invited to accept Jesus' invitation to follow him.



SPEND TIME WITH OTHERS

In Week 4, teenagers are asked to consider their community and friends and how they can help invite God's newness into their lives. In Week 6, they are invited to think about where God is working in their closest friendships.



USE YOUR GIFTS

In Week 2, teenagers consider the talents, skills, and gifts they have to celebrate who Jesus is. In Week 6, they are asked to think of unique ways they have been gifted to invite others into what God is doing.

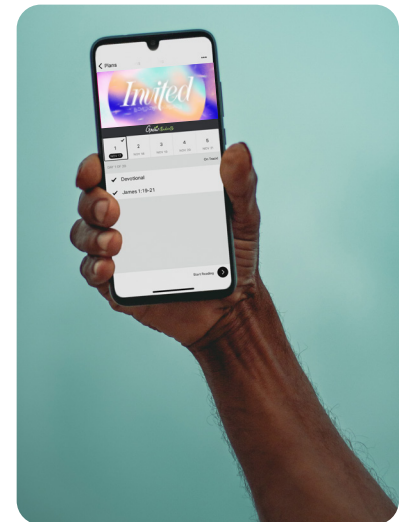


SHARE YOUR STORY

In Week 3, teenagers think about their story and the ways Jesus has set them free from sin and death. In Week 6, they are encouraged to share their stories as a way to invite others to follow Jesus.

DEVOTIONALS

To help students regularly **spend time with God**, every series comes with daily readings and devotionals. You can find them online through [The Bible App](#) or in print [on Amazon](#). Use [the flyers we've provided](#) to share them with students, parents, and volunteers too.



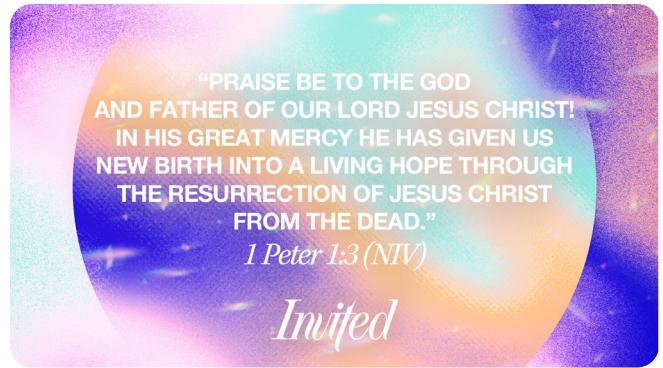
DISCIPLESHIP ACTIVITY

If you're following along with the Grow annual strategy, our discipleship activity this quarter is [Bible Journaling Page](#), an activity to help students **spend time with God**. We also made you some [posters and graphics](#) for this quarter's habit you can print, display, or share online.



MEMORY VERSE

Try challenging students to memorize a verse that corresponds with this series. Here's the verse we chose — and [we made graphics](#) you can post, print, or show on screen too!



SPIRITUAL HABITS APP

The [Grow Habits App](#) is designed to help teenagers (and grown-ups too!) set goals, track their spiritual habits, and share their progress!

ENVIRONMENT

On top of your weekly teaching time, there's a lot that goes into the environment you create. Between your room design, graphics, music, games, and more — there's a lot to do. But here's an easy way to think about your weekly environment so we can put a strategy around it: **determine an engaging theme for each teaching series that complements what you're teaching**. Then create an environment around it!

GAMES

There's more to an environment than what it looks and sounds like. It also matters what it *feels* like. That's why, with every series, we recommend one group game each week — because your environment should feel fun and welcoming! **Since this series is all about celebrations, here are some fun party games to get everyone ready for the fun.** To get the instructions and graphics for each game, just click the images or visit the [Grow Games & Icebreakers app](#).





ROOM DESIGN

How your physical space is structured is an important part of your weekly environment. No matter the size or set-up of your space, here are some ideas to help reinforce what you're teaching through the design of your room.

For this series, you are going to create a backdrop that sets the tone for this series by creating a party on your stage.

To create this, you'll first need a backdrop. There are tons of ways to create a backdrop you can reuse multiple times each year. Check out [this post](#) for a list of ideas. For this series, we recommend using plywood panels.

Once you have your backdrop set up, you'll want to arrange a [series of balloons](#) with this series' colors to outline the top and side of your plywood backdrop. Purchase some crepe streamers in the same color scheme and hang those across the front of your plywood backdrop. If you are having difficulty covering up the

entire plywood backdrop with just streamers, you could start with a shimmering tinsel party curtain [like this](#) in any color as a layer behind the garland.

Finally, to tie this series together, you will create the word "INVITED" in large cardboard letters on the floor directly in front of this backdrop. You can create your own large cardboard letters by following [this tutorial](#) or purchase wooden letters [like these](#).

Throughout this series, specifically in Weeks 2 and 3, there will be an opportunity to attach invitations or photo booth invitations to the streamers hanging from your backdrop. You can find more instructions on those invitations within the series content.



And don't forget — **we provide you with posters for every teaching series and posters for each of Grow's four spiritual habits.** Print them on your own or through the [Grow Print Shop](#). Then hang them up to add visual reminders of what you're teaching.



MUSIC

What students hear (and sing!) is an important part of your weekly environment. That's why we've chosen a few songs to help enhance both the message of this series and the theme too. Play them before, during, or after your weekly program.

WORSHIP SONGS

- **Son of Suffering** (Bethel Music, David Funk, Matt Redman)
- **You Will Be Saved** (Elevation Rhythm)
- **Rip the Roof Off** (Legacy Nashville)
- **This Is the Gospel** (Elevation Rhythm)
- **Good News** (Maverick City Music)
- **Revelation 1** (Jeremy Riddle)
- **Reward** (Aaron McClain)
- **The Dove** (Kari Jobe)
- **By the Savior's Power** (Anchor Hymns, Dee Wilson, Ricky Vasquez)
- **What a Savior, What a King** (Legacy Nashville)

We've added these songs to our [Grow Students Spotify playlist](#) for your personal use only, according to Spotify's [terms and conditions](#). For more information on how to use copyrighted music in your services legally, [read this!](#)

BONUS SONGS

- **Lovely Day** (Bill Withers)
- **Me & You** (feat. nobigdyl.) (DeMario Shaw, theojdavis & nobigdyl.)
- **Party in the U.S.A** (Miley Cyrus)
- **Party** (Demi Lovato)
- **Sunday Best** (Surfaces)



GRAPHICS

Visuals are an important part of your weekly environment. That's why, with every series, we give you tons of **ready-made images** in your [Graphics folder](#), as well as **editable high-resolution files**. Whether you're editing what we've provided or making something brand new . . .

Use [this font!](#)

Kepler STD
Light Italic

And use these colors!

	HEX #E698F3 CMYK: 5/36/0/5		HEX #A7F2E4 CMYK: 29/0/5/5
	HEX #1A14D9 CMYK: 75/77/0/5		HEX #F2B999 CMYK: 0/22/35/5

Once your graphics for this series are finished, you're going to need to print or display them! We've got you covered there too.

With the [Grow Print Shop](#), you can print extra resources for this teaching series, like handouts, posters, flyers, cards, stickers, shirts, and more!

And with [Grow Slides](#), you can create your own presentations (or edit [the presentation we've already built for you](#)). Your pre-built presentation already includes this series' . . .

- Countdown Video
- Bumper Video
- Title Slide
- Background Slide
- One-Minute Sermon Video
- Big Ideas
- Memory Verse
- Discussion Questions

HACKS

Every ministry is different. Whether you're teaching middle schoolers, high schoolers, teenagers with disabilities, or all three, here's how to hack this series to fit your unique and diverse audience.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HACKS

REVISE

To make this week more accessible for middle schoolers, here's what to adjust ...

During the question modules in Weeks 1 and 2, answer the question first before you open up to answers from your group. For emotional and developmental reasons, middle schoolers will be in a better place to share if they hear you share something first.

Shift Week 2's "A Time You Felt Celebrated" story module to make it a panel of high schoolers instead of an adult sharing a story. Middle school students will engage differently in hearing from people closer to their age, and it is a great way to help engage some of your older high school students.

During the "Star Wars Celebration" video module in Week 3, don't assume they know about Star Wars. Not every teenager has seen it, but they will someday, so you can still talk about it.

In Week 3's "Polaroid Memories" object lesson, spend a bit more time explaining the complex ideas of how the crucifixion makes things right with God. Help them see the cross' relevance in their lives by using plenty of examples and avoiding theologically abstract language.

As you teach Luke 24:1–11 in Week 4, focus on Jesus' resurrection, defeating death and sin. While discussing the miracle and mechanics of the resurrection is important, focusing on it may take from the big idea. Consider including it in your small group times if you want to have that conversation.

Consider doing the "A Quiet Spirit" prayer module in Week 5 in groups. If you feel your middle schoolers will have difficulty with silent prayer on their own, help make it more accessible by putting them into small groups and having an adult volunteer guide the experience.

During the Week 6 photo booth experience, keep an eye out for teenagers who don't have anyone to take a picture with them. Encourage leaders to invite a few other teenagers to join them and take a picture.

Since this is a holiday, teenagers may think about painful past moments attached to the Easter season. Consider addressing feelings associated with a lost loved one, family structure changes, or life changes.

REPLACE

And here are the Building Blocks you may want to swap for something else ...

Consider replacing the "I'm Hosting a Party" activity in Week 1 with a more active game. If your group doesn't relate to logic-based activity based on talking, you'll need to tweak it using a different game like ["Fly Birdie Fly."](#)

REMEMBER

Remember that during middle school, it's crucial to help students understand Easter holds greater significance beyond superficial elements like candy, rabbits, and plastic grass. Encourage reflection and education among middle schoolers, guiding them to contemplate the personal importance of the resurrection. Supplying journals or creative outlets can aid in expressing their thoughts and emotions regarding the resurrection. They can grasp Easter's impact beyond cultural symbols like eggs and candy by emphasizing its deeper spiritual meaning and real-world implications.

HIGH SCHOOL HACKS

REVISE

To make this week more accessible for high schoolers, here's what to adjust ...

During Week 3, look for teenagers who may have big feelings about what Jesus did on the cross. Have adult volunteers ready to think and pray with teenagers who are processing that reality.

In Week 3, lead a more pointed conversation about how and why Jesus' cross makes things right with God. If you feel prepared and equipped for this conversation, go for it! Be ready for anything and have a strategy to table the discussion for later.

In Week 4, let your high schoolers ask questions about the resurrection. Your group is full of great questions that can help them keep the conversation going. Give them space to ask questions in a safe environment and help them see how the resurrection impacts their life.

In Week 5, invite them to think about how the Holy Spirit can help guide their future. Because you're talking about how the Holy Spirit leads us, your high schoolers may want to talk about their future vocations or callings and how the Holy Spirit fits into their decision. If you think your teenagers may want to explore that subject, create a space for that discussion.

Since this is a holiday, teenagers may be thinking about painful past moments attached to the Easter season. Consider addressing feelings associated with a lost loved one, family structure changes, or difficult life changes.

REPLACE

And here are the Building Blocks you may want to swap for something else ...

Consider shortening or eliminating the opening activities so you have more time for discussion or reflection during the *Now What?* Section. If you want to create extra space for teenagers to connect or in quiet contemplation, this is an easy way to make that happen.

REMEMBER

Remember, high schoolers are reaching the age where they can begin thinking in abstract ways. This is an incredible time to invite them to see the resurrection as more than just an Easter holiday for kids. You could do that by having teenagers read the Bible passage for the teaching every week. To ensure this goes well, invite your readers before your teaching begins. This will allow them to practice reading the passage on their own so they're more confident reading in front of everyone. Also, consider providing resources for personal reflection, such as journals, guided Bible reading plans, or devotionals centered around the Easter story you do as a group. As you prepare, look for opportunities to discuss how the themes of sacrifice, redemption, and new life are relevant to the challenges and choices teenagers face in their daily lives.

ACCESSIBILITY HACKS

REVISE

To make this series more accessible for people with disability barriers, here's what to adjust ...

Before Week 2's "Celebration" response stations, consider obstacles. Look for uneven floors or obstacles that may hinder people from using mobility aids, such as stairs, doorways, uneven floors, and so on.

During the Week 2 response stations, have adults or buddies available to help teenagers with disabilities respond if they ask. Be sure that the volunteers have the chance to make their own choices. Letting them choose from a list of options can empower kids to take control and help them feel in control and safe.

Be aware of loud noises if you decide to do the confetti cannon in Week 4. Environmental triggers, loud noises, bright lights, and hot or cold temperatures can disrupt thinking patterns and cause unnecessary outbursts. Be mindful of these environmental triggers and consider providing noise-canceling headphones to help them cope.

REPLACE

And here are the Building Blocks you may want to swap for something else ...

Replace Week 2's "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Cup" activity if needed. If you feel this will exclude teenagers with physical limitations, you can adjust this by choosing another activity like [Basket of Doom](#) from the Grow Games app.

REMEMBER

Remember that Easter is often when you see many new people at your church. It helps show new families that your group supports teenagers with disabilities. This would be a great time to build in some additional training on disability awareness for volunteers and create spaces where teenagers of all abilities can belong. By proactively training your volunteers, you set them up to help answer families' questions during the Easter season. Still, more importantly, it will help create an environment where teenagers with disabilities feel valued, supported, and included in celebrating the resurrection.

CREDITS

Every teaching series we create for Grow Curriculum is a big team effort! Here's a closer look at some of the people who helped make this one happen...



April Wahl is the middle school director at Century Baptist Church in Bismarck, North Dakota. **Danny Sugimoto** is a former youth pastor from Menifee, California, and content strategist at Stuff You Can Use. **Chandler Corzine** is the young adult pastor at Daybreak Church in Carlsbad, California. **Erin Johnston** has 15 years of youth ministry experience and is currently the co-executive pastor at Canyon Ridge Christian Church in Las Vegas, Nevada. **Stefany Bremer** is the editor-in-chief of Sistema LAM, a publishing company that produces educational material for students K–8.

CURRICULUM TEAM



AND THE REST OF THE STUFF YOU CAN USE TEAM!



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WEEK 1
LESSON OUTLINE

Invited

BIG IDEA

With Jesus,
everyone's invited.

BIBLE

Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy
4:29–31

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Party invitations are exciting because they let us know we're connected, seen, and wanted by the people throwing the party. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others. Through Jesus' parable, we'll discover what it looks like to know that **with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

WHAT?

There are few feelings better than being invited to a party. An invitation can make us feel connected, seen, and wanted. When we're not invited, we might feel disappointment or loneliness. It's a terrible feeling to realize you've been left off an invite list. If God was throwing a party, would there be an exclusive invite list? Do some people have priority based on what they have to offer? If people seem more holy or spiritual, do they have access to a VIP section?

SO WHAT?

In Luke 15, Jesus told the people that God was inviting them to the greatest party they could imagine, and everyone was invited. No matter what you have done in your life, all you need to do is respond with a "yes," and if you do, there will be a huge celebration. If you worry about whether or not you're being invited to God's lavish party, Jesus tells this story to show you that you are invited. You don't need a perfect story to be invited and welcomed in. Jesus says, "I want you here, just as you are."

Long ago, before Jesus walked on Earth, God issued invitations for anyone who was thirsty, not for water, but for a new way of living. God was building a new community and way of living and wanted anyone interested to join. We read about it in Isaiah 55. God was looking for those who were thirsty for justice. God was inviting the poor. God was asking the tired and the hungry for an everlasting promise. God was making a home for people like you and me ages ago. When Jesus showed up on Earth, he reminded everyone of God's open invitation. Because of Jesus, we already know how God feels about us because, **with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

NOW WHAT?

If you're ready to say yes and celebrate with Jesus at the most incredible party ever, here's how you can do that.

- **ACCEPT THE INVITE:** When you receive an RSVP, the first thing you need to do is respond. God wants you to say yes to the party, but God understands a response of "not right now." Our God is patient.
- **GO TO THE PARTY:** Saying yes is only part of your response. Next, you show up! This looks like prioritizing your relationship with God, inviting others to know about God, and focusing on strengthening your relationship with Jesus.

It is never too late to take a step towards Jesus and **celebrate the reality that with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

WEEK 1
LESSON GUIDE

Invited

BIG IDEA

With Jesus,
everyone's invited.

BIBLE

Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy
4:29–31

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Party invitations are exciting because they let us know we're connected, seen, and wanted by the people throwing the party. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others. Through Jesus' parable, we'll discover what it looks like to know that **with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

STORY | The Best Party Ever, And No Invite

- Welcome to our series, *Invited!* This series is going to be one big party! We're celebrating because we're getting closer to the time of year when we remember the most significant event in God's story—events that changed everything. But before you start throwing confetti, I want to tell you about the best party I've ever attended.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story about the best party you've ever seen, but one you weren't invited to. Maybe it was something you saw on social media or in a movie. Describe the party in detail as if you were invited, but wait until the last second to reveal you weren't invited. What made it the best party? Why do you think you still remember it today? Did it change your expectations for all future parties? You could also invite a volunteer or teen to share.*
- That party was bananas. It was hands down the best party I've ever seen, but here is the twist: I wasn't invited to it. Even when we aren't invited, there's a sense of awe and wonder when talking about great parties. Imagine how special it must feel to be invited to the parties of our dreams.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **If you could host a party and invite anyone you wanted to, who would you want on the guest list?**
 - ★ **Why do you think it sometimes makes us feel better to be included in things others aren't?**

ACTIVITY | I'm Hosting A Party

- There are few feelings better than being invited to a get-together. An invitation can make us feel connected, seen, and wanted.

- When we're not invited, we might feel disappointment or loneliness. We might even try to figure out if we can do anything to be invited.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *To play, tell your group that you are hosting a party and that only people who bring the correct item to the party will be invited. Pick a secret rule, like everyone must bring something that begins with the same letter as their name. Get creative by using a pattern or basing your rule on the last letter of a word. Whatever you choose, don't tell anyone your rules! Have the game leader go around the room and ask each person what they're bringing. Respond to each suggestion with a "Yes, you're invited" or "No, you're not invited." Set a time limit and continue until everyone figures out the rule, or you run out of time.*
- Invitations are powerful. The whole time we were playing, you were trying to figure out what it would take to make it to the party. There wasn't a limit to how far you might go to hear those words, "You're invited!"

QUESTION | "What if you were invited, but a friend wasn't?"

- We feel on top of the world when invited to a party. But what if people around you don't get the same invitation?
- **How would it feel to be invited to a party knowing a friend wasn't included?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Ask the previous question and allow teenagers who feel comfortable to share their answers with the group.*
- It's a terrible feeling to realize you've been left off an invite list. When we experience that feeling in other parts of our lives, we may conclude that we're being excluded. Like our relationship with God. Does God have an exclusive invite list? Do some people have priority based on what they have to offer? If people seem more holy or spiritual, do they have access to a VIP section?
- Let's look at a few passages of Scripture that can help us sort through these questions.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Luke 15:11–32

- For a very long time, people have had these same questions about who was allowed to be in a relationship with God. Ultimately, who can be a part of God's community?
- Many felt as if they couldn't be invited because of their abilities, the way they looked, or where they came from.
- At the same time, the people who did feel like they belonged had a sense of entitlement. They treasured this exclusivity and did not want it taken from them. Instead of extending offers to help people feel included, they used it as a weapon to keep people down.
- So when Jesus told a story to help people understand who was invited to God's party, a few were upset by what he was teaching them.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 15:11–32.*
- It may not seem like it now, but in Jesus' time, what he said in this story was scandalous. Jesus told the people that God was inviting them to the greatest party they could imagine. God was doing something new in the world, and everyone was invited. All you needed to do was respond with a "yes," and if you did, there would be a huge celebration.
- Jesus' story of two sons compels us to imagine this new way of living.
 - Imagine you're invited to a party at this huge house. It has everything! They have a chocolate fountain, fancy glasses, and a professional band. You've heard rumors that a few celebrities will drop in throughout the night.
 - Whoever this party is honoring must be incredible. With all these intricate details taken care of, you probably expect this person to be important. Maybe someone who dedicates their time to

making their community better and who has significantly influenced a lot of people.

- Now imagine the party host bringing out the guest of honor and saying they have completely messed up their life and need a place to start over.
- Looking around, you realize this party isn't full of celebrities and religious people, but regular people like teachers, janitors, plumbers, and librarians are there. It's actually everyone. The whole community is invited to celebrate a new beginning and commemorate what happens when someone says "yes" to a new life.
- Jesus described an incredible party to celebrate the son's return home. It stretches and grows our ideas of who's invited to join God, learn from Jesus, and become more like him.
- Just like the party thrown for this returning son, Jesus celebrates when we take a single step in his direction and say yes to his invitation. When Jesus invites us in, it's more than just "You're welcome here." It's "You are wanted here. This party is for you!"
- Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, this amazing party where everyone is celebrating is actually happening here and now. If you worry about whether or not you're being invited to God's lavish party, Jesus tells this story to show you that you are invited. You don't need a perfect story to be invited and welcomed in. Jesus says, "I want you here, just as you are."

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **Who do you relate with the most in the story? Why do you connect with them? How would you have responded if you were them at different places in the story?**
 - ★ **Why, in your opinion, does the older brother have such a hard time with his dad throwing a party for his younger brother?**

VIDEO | A Clip From *The Sandlot*

- In the movie *The Sandlot*, Scotty Smalls is a new kid in town trying to make friends. He attempts to make new friends by playing baseball in an empty neighborhood field called the Sandlot. His first experience playing baseball ends with a black eye and him running back home.
- The rest of the guys on the team want nothing to do with Smalls. They don't want him on the field, and they certainly don't want him on their team. But there's one guy who isn't going to give up on him. Benny "the Jet" Rodriguez, the best guy on the team, wants Smalls back on the field.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, play a clip [like this one](#) (0:00–0:51) of Benny inviting Smalls to play baseball from *The Sandlot*. We always suggest viewing the clip beforehand to make sure you think it's a video that will be a good fit for your context! For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- Benny didn't just invite Smalls. He wanted him there. He went out of his way to find Smalls and bring him in. Benny even brought items Smalls would need to play baseball better.
- His invitation was more than empty words. Actions and resources helped Smalls realize how much Benny wanted him on the team.
- I love this because this is what it looks like when Jesus invites us to be part of God's community. God knows our desire to be loved and invited in. God knows what we need. Jesus invites us in the way Benny did for Smalls.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you*

conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.

- **Why are we never told if the brother goes to the party? What do you think he decides to do? Why? What would you have done?**
- ⊛ **Do you want to be a part of a party where everyone is invited? How does it make you feel that because of Jesus, everyone is invited to the party God is throwing?**

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 55:1–3

- You may think, “Of course, people listened to Jesus. He must have been so charismatic.” The Bible admits that not everyone liked Jesus. People rejected him, betrayed him, and ultimately killed him.
- It may have been people’s greed for power or being upset that Jesus was changing the standards. Whatever it was, they had issues with his message and how he lived, so they did everything they could to get rid of him.
- Here’s the wild thing: The people who most vocally rejected Jesus were the religious leaders who were most familiar with God’s words. It’s tragic that they missed Jesus’ teaching that a loving, welcoming God wasn’t new. He was drawing their attention to how God has always been.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Isaiah 55:1–3.
- Long ago, before Jesus walked on Earth, God issued invitations for anyone who was thirsty, not for water, but for a new way of living. God was building a new community and way of living and wanted anyone interested to join.
- God was looking for those who were thirsty for justice. God was inviting the poor. God was asking the tired and the hungry for an everlasting promise. God was making a home for people like you and me ages ago. When Jesus showed up on Earth, he reminded everyone of God’s open invitation.
- In his life, Jesus was left out, rejected, and overlooked by others. Despite these obstacles, he focused on telling everyone about God’s invitation to new life.
- Because of Jesus, we don’t have to look at God and wonder if we are invited, a VIP, or on the waitlist. Because of Jesus, we already know how God feels about us because **with Jesus, everyone’s invited.**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

OBJECT LESSON | Invited

- No matter who you are, God wants you at the party. All of us have been given an invitation to join God’s kingdom.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this object lesson, you’ll need a paper RSVP card like [this](#) or [this](#), along with a slotted box or [small mailbox](#). Hold up the invitation while you speak. Write your name on the card and place it in the box before you finish this module.
- I picture an exclusive gathering when I think of big, lavish parties. Parties for the elite who can afford tickets or people with status and influence. God’s party isn’t like that. We’re all invited, even if we’re unsure where we’re at in our faith.
- Jesus is inviting you into what God is doing in the world, but it’s up to you if you want to attend. God doesn’t shame you for declining, and God doesn’t ever stop inviting you. The invitation is always there, waiting for you whenever you can say yes.
- If you’re ready to say yes and celebrate with Jesus at the most incredible party ever, here’s how you can do that.
 - **ACCEPT THE INVITE:** When you receive an RSVP, you first need to respond. God wants you to say yes to the party, but God understands a response of “not right now.” Our God is patient. You

are growing in your faith when you continually communicate with God about your questions and hesitations.

- **GO TO THE PARTY:** Saying yes is only part of your response. Next, you show up! This looks like prioritizing your relationship with God, inviting others to know about God, and focusing on strengthening your relationship with Jesus. Nothing can separate you from God's love. You will never be uninvited to the party. God always wants you there. So, how will you respond?

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ★ **What is one thing that holds you back from trusting that Jesus invites everyone to the party? What is one thing you can start doing that will help you trust this reality?**
 - **Read Deuteronomy 4:29–31. What is one way you sense you are being invited to seek God with all your heart? How will you pursue that invitation this week?**
 - **What would it look like for you to live in ways that extend the invitation to God's party to everyone you meet?**

REFLECTION | My Invitation

- Today, God is inviting you to join the party. The God who created everything loves you deeply and wants to have a life-changing friendship with you from now and into eternity.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this response, you'll need paper RSVP cards like [this](#) or [this](#), along with a slotted box or [small mailbox](#), pens, and a few tables. While teenagers arrive at your program, have a team of volunteers write the first name and last initial of everyone who arrives on an RSVP envelope. Stuff the RSVP card inside each envelope and place the invitations and pens on tables around your room. Invite them to find their invitation, then give them time to reflect on how they want to respond to God's invitation.*

RESPONSE | My RSVP

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Place the mailbox or box in a central location or on the stage. Invite the group to consider saying yes to God's invitation by placing their RSVP in the box. Have a few adult volunteers available to talk about their decision. Consider playing some reflective music as they respond.*
- Now that you have spent time thinking about what to do with your invitation, you can do a few things with it.
 - **TALK ABOUT IT:** You might need to talk with a leader about what it looks like to say yes to Jesus' invitation. Your leaders would love to have that conversation with you. They'll be around the room ready to chat and walk you through the next steps if that's what you feel you need right now.
 - **HOLD ON TO IT:** Maybe you're not ready to say yes just yet. That's okay! It's best to feel prepared for big decisions. Instead, hold on to this invitation. Take it home, put it somewhere you look every day. Spend the next few days thinking about what it looks like to respond yes to what Jesus is preparing for you.
 - **RSVP:** For those ready to say yes, you want to jump in and join the party. You want to help others see the way God is inviting them in, also. If that's you, you can check the box, write a little note, and place it in the mailbox.
- Whichever path you choose, God wants you to be at the party. If you're ready to go, still unsure, or are full of questions, God is still offering you an invitation. You're invited to join the party when you are ready.

ACTIVITY | Bible Journaling Pages

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *The Easter season may be one of the best opportunities each year to help teenagers engage*

with God on their own. If you haven't already done so, this would be a great series to encourage teenagers to do the Bible Journaling Pages, [which you can find in your Discipleship folder](#). Check out the discipleship activity for instructions on how to set this up.

- This is an open invitation that will transform your life. It is never too late to take a step towards Jesus and celebrate the reality that **with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

WEEK 1

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

With Jesus,
everyone's invited.

BIBLE

Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy
4:29–31

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Party invitations are exciting because they let us know we're connected, seen, and wanted by the people throwing the party. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others. Through Jesus' parable, we'll discover what it looks like to know that **with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

- **If you could host a party and invite anyone you wanted to, who would you want on the guest list?**
- **Why do you think it sometimes makes us feel better to be included in things others aren't?**
- **How would it feel to be invited to a party knowing a friend wasn't included?**
- **Who do you relate with the most in the story? Why do you connect with them? How would you have responded if you were them at different places in the story?**
- **Why, in your opinion, does the older brother have such a hard time with his dad throwing a party for his younger brother?**
- **Why are we never told if the brother goes to the party? What do you think he decides to do? Why? What would you have done?**
- **Do you want to be a part of a party where everyone is invited? How does it make you feel that because of Jesus, everyone is invited to the party God is throwing?**
- **What is one thing that holds you back from trusting that Jesus invites everyone to the party? What is one thing you can start doing that will help you trust this reality?**
- **Read Deuteronomy 4:29–31. What is one way you sense you are being invited to seek God with all your heart? How will you pursue that invitation this week?**
- **What would it look like for you to live in ways that extend the invitation to God's party to everyone you meet?**

WEEK 1

DISCUSSION GUIDE *for middle schoolers*

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

With Jesus,
everyone's invited.

BIBLE

Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy
4:29–31

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Party invitations are exciting because they let us know we're connected, seen, and wanted by the people throwing the party. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others. Through Jesus' parable, we'll discover what it looks like to know that **with Jesus, everyone's invited.**

- **If you could host a party and invite anyone you wanted to, who would you want on the guest list?**
- **How would it feel to be invited to a party knowing a friend wasn't included?**
- **Who do you relate with the most in the story? Why do you connect with them? How would you have responded if you were them at different places in the story?**
- **Why are we never told if the brother goes to the party? What do you think he decides to do? Why? What would you have done?**
- **Read Deuteronomy 4:29–31. What is one way you sense you are being invited to seek God with all your heart? How will you pursue that invitation this week?**
- **What would it look like for you to live in ways that extend the invitation to God's party to everyone you meet?**

WEEK 2
LESSON OUTLINE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.

BIBLE

Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 126:2-3; 1 John 1:5

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Birthday parties are an annual chance for us to celebrate the people we love and their presence in our lives. This week, we'll take a look at how Jesus was celebrated as a king when he entered Jerusalem. Even though most of these people had not met Jesus yet, they knew he was worth celebrating, and at Easter, **we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.**

WHAT?

There are plenty of opportunities to throw a celebration. We can celebrate the end of school, spring break, or passing a big test. And if someone throws you a party, it feels even more amazing. Even if the reason you're being celebrated is pretty small, it still feels special! But what if an achievement has changed the entire world for the better? What kind of celebration could we throw then? There's a story in the life of Jesus in which we see what a celebration like this looks like.

SO WHAT?

In Luke 19, we see a moment when Jesus is celebrated when he enters the capital city of Jerusalem. People in Jerusalem had heard stories about Jesus and waited for him to show up in their city. When he arrived, people threw a massive homecoming parade for him. The disciples didn't organize this celebration. People recognized Jesus and chose to celebrate him right then and there. At this moment, all but one group of people, the religious leaders called the Pharisees, were all in on Jesus.

Since the beginning, God's people have written about the good things in their lives. Psalm 126 is the lyrics to a song that tells of all the good things God has done. It says that God's people were filled with laughter and joy. They celebrated the work of God because it was a sign of who God was. The early followers of Jesus saw that God was at work in their lives. They saw God in Jesus and knew precisely what God was like. Through Jesus' life on Earth, they saw that God was worth throwing a party for because we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.

NOW WHAT?

We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is, and here are a few ways we can do that this week.

- **WE CELEBRATE JESUS BY THANKING HIM:** Take a moment to think about who Jesus is to you. Start by asking a few questions. What do you know about Jesus? What teaching of his do you most relate to? What changes have you experienced since you started following Jesus?
- **WE CELEBRATE JESUS BY LIVING LIKE HIM:** You can celebrate Jesus through how you live your life. Living like Jesus is about shaping your life to resemble Jesus' nature and character. As you see the parts of Jesus worth celebrating, you can build those habits and characteristics into your life.

Now that we've seen a glimpse of who Jesus is and what he's all about, **we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.**

WEEK 2
LESSON GUIDE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.

BIBLE

Luke 19:28–40; Psalm 126:2–3; 1 John 1:5

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Birthday parties are an annual chance for us to celebrate the people we love and their presence in our lives. This week, we'll take a look at how Jesus was celebrated as a king when he entered Jerusalem. Even though most of these people had not met Jesus yet, they knew he was worth celebrating, and at Easter, **we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Head, Shoulders, Knees, And Cup

- Welcome back to Week Two of *Invited!* Who's ready for another party? We have some awesome stuff planned for you today, so let's start with one of my favorite party games!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this game, you will need several empty cups. Have teenagers find a partner and give each pair a cup. Partners will face each other and place the cup on the floor between them. When you say "head," players must place both hands on their heads. The same goes for "shoulders" and "knees." When you say "cup," players must attempt to grab their cup with either hand before their partner can. If a player loses, they are out. The remaining players must find a new partner and play again until one final winner remains.*
- I love that game because no one can train for it. Sure, if you knew we were playing, you could have prepared yourself by reaching for cups all week, but not much skill is involved. It's a game that takes excellent listening, some focus, and a lot of luck.
- It is fun to celebrate someone when they do something simple like this. What would it look like to celebrate someone who has done something massive that's altered human history?

QUESTION | "What's Your Favorite Celebration?"

- There are plenty of opportunities to throw a celebration. We can celebrate the end of school, spring break, or passing a big test. We can also celebrate holidays, birthdays, and events that matter most to us.
- **What's your favorite occasion to throw a party, and why?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Ask the question above and give a few teenagers the chance to respond.*
- There are so many events we can celebrate throughout life. These parties are a way for us to say, "Look at you! You keep crushing it!" Let's be people who celebrate!

STORY | A Time You Felt Celebrated

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Share about a time you felt celebrated by people. Why were they celebrating you? What did they do for you? How did it make you feel? You can also invite a volunteer or teenager to share their experience.*

- Everyone made me feel incredible because they took the time to celebrate, and we had so much fun. They weren't just celebrating what I had done but honoring me, who I am. That's a different type of celebration. Our celebrations can reflect that we are more than our accomplishments.
- It was awesome being seen and honored for an accomplishment that was pretty small in the grand scheme of history. But what if an achievement has changed the entire world for the better? What kind of celebration could we throw then? There's a story in the life of Jesus where we see what a celebration like this looks like.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **Why do you think it feels so good to be celebrated?**
 - ★ **How would you describe your perfect party?**
 - ★ **Have you ever been around people at a party who were annoyed and ruined the mood of the party? What happened?**

SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

SCRIPTURE | Luke 19:28–40

- Every year, in churches worldwide, there's a celebration called Palm Sunday. It's the day Christians remember when Jesus entered the capital city of Jerusalem. People in Jerusalem had heard stories about Jesus and waited for him to show up in their city. When he arrived, people threw a massive homecoming parade for him.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 19:28–40.*
- Can you imagine walking into Jerusalem the day Jesus showed up? People laid their cloaks on the ground for him to step on. They shouted praises and shared stories they had heard about him. If you walked in on that scenario, you'd immediately recognize that Jesus was incredible.
- The disciples didn't organize this celebration. People recognized who Jesus was and, together, chose to celebrate him right then and there. At this moment, they were all in on Jesus. They wanted to see and celebrate him.
- In some versions, people waved palm branches as Jesus walked by. This was a cultural way to celebrate a king's goodness, triumph, and victory as they entered the city.
- This celebration was a big deal, but not everyone thought Jesus was worth honoring. A powerful group of religious scholars called the Pharisees spent their lives analyzing God's commands. They shaped how God's people lived.
 - They understood the power of a celebration like this and wanted to stop it. They even asked Jesus to demand that his disciples end the party, but Jesus told them that even if his disciples stopped, the rocks would cry out to celebrate who Jesus was!
 - The Pharisees felt threatened by Jesus because he was challenging their power, authority, and influence. They didn't think he was worth celebrating. He was a disruption to their way of life. Jesus gave them the same invitation to celebrate, but they couldn't bring themselves to accept the invitation.

IMAGE | The Largest Party Ever

- We could all use a minor disruption in our lives at times. A change of scenery or schedule can help break up our routines and re-energize us. It's one of the reasons people love parties. You might meet someone

interesting or have a memorable moment. That's especially true if your party looks like this.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, show a picture of one of the largest parties recorded like [this one](#). For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- This is a photo from one of the largest parties ever recorded. It happened in 1971 and was thrown by Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran. They were commemorating the 2,500th anniversary of the Persian empire. The people invited to this party consisted of royalty and heads of state from sixty countries!
 - This party required 120 servers, 40 chefs, and eighteen tons of food. There were 50,000 songbirds flown in from Europe. To accommodate everyone, they needed to build 50 tent suites, including the main banquet tent, which was almost the size of a football field.
 - Does anyone want to try and guess how much this party cost? In today's money, it cost more than 300 million dollars. This was the party of all parties. It was the most lavish celebration anyone had ever seen, a massive disruption to many people, and turned the party scene upside down.
- Even though Jesus' parade into Jerusalem cost nothing, what it accomplished was similar to this over-the-top party. Jesus disrupted daily routines to highlight his purpose.
- Jesus wants to disrupt your day and your life because his invitation to follow him is that important. We can either accept the invitation and join the party or hesitate about the change this celebration could bring.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **Why do you think the people celebrated Jesus as much as they did?**
 - **Why do you think the crowd turns on Jesus, demanding he be crucified so quickly?**
 - ★ **How do you think it felt to Jesus to be celebrated this way one day but then one week later be arrested?**

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 126:2–3

- Since the beginning, God's people wrote about the good things in their lives. In the Bible, there is an incredible collection of songs, poems, and prayers that cover every aspect of what people experience. The book of Psalms addresses human joy, grief, hope, love, and more. These songs celebrate God, who is with us throughout life's ups and downs. Let's look at Psalm 126.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Psalm 126:2–3.*
- Here, the songwriter is reflecting on a past experience. The author wants all the credit for this incredible event to go to God. Their mouths were filled with laughter and joy. They celebrated the work of God because it was a sign of who God was.
- Before Jesus arrived, God's good works were the only way to know God's character. Eventually, when Jesus arrived, how he lived and worked in the world helped clarify God's character.
 - Instead of wondering if God was at work in their lives, they saw God in Jesus and knew precisely what God was like. Through Jesus' life on Earth, they saw that God was worth celebrating.
 - With Jesus in front of them, they felt the comfort of God's presence, helping, leading, and teaching them. So, when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, they threw down their cloaks and waved palm branches as if to welcome royalty.
- In Jesus, they saw the God who healed them, carried them, loved them deeply, and made a place for the outcast. This was God in the human form, here with us. This was someone special, unique, and worth celebrating.
- We're given the same invitation as we consider Jesus' teachings and actions. He invites us into an adventurous, meaningful, and loving relationship. When we thank God for working in the world, **we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?***OBJECT LESSON | Party Throne**

- Who here likes the limelight? Some are uncomfortable when the attention is on them, which is understandable. But God wants people to celebrate the incredible creations we all are! We are meant to encourage and celebrate the unique gifts, passions, and experiences we have all been given.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this object lesson, you'll need one antique chair (if you don't have one, any chair will do) placed in a central area for everyone to see. Have several small, wrapped gifts like gift cards, snacks, ministry-branded shirts, sling bags, and water bottles. Invite one person to sit in the seat and celebrate one thing about them. Maybe they're a great friend or went all-in on the game earlier. As you celebrate them, give them one of the gifts. You can level up this object lesson with confetti poppers, noise makers, and other party accessories.*
- This party throne is a simple, silly way for us to acknowledge each other, our strengths, and the traits that make us who we are. It may be a bit easier for us to see how to celebrate our friends like this, but how do we do this for Jesus?
- Jesus is the most important person in our lives, but how do we honor someone we can't see? **We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is**, and here are a few ways we can do that this week.
 - **WE CELEBRATE JESUS BY THANKING HIM:** Take a moment to think about who Jesus is to you. Start by asking a few questions. What do you know about Jesus? What teaching of his do you most relate to? What changes have you experienced since you started following Jesus? If you're unsure how to answer those questions, maybe start exploring and learning more about Jesus. Our team of leaders would love to discuss your questions and help you see who Jesus is.
 - **WE CELEBRATE JESUS BY LIVING LIKE HIM:** You can celebrate Jesus with how you live your life. Sure, you're going to make mistakes, and that's understandable. Living like Jesus is about shaping your life to resemble Jesus' nature and character. As you see the parts of Jesus worth celebrating, you can build those habits and characteristics into your life. Soon, others will see Jesus through you.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ✪ **What has God done for you personally that you feel like celebrating? How would you write the Psalm in your own words to celebrate this thing God has done for you?**
 - **Read 1 John 1:5. What does this verse tell you about who God is? Based on this, what about God's character can you celebrate?**
 - **What is one thing you can do this coming week that will remind you to celebrate Jesus for who he is and what he has done in your life?**

RESPONSE | Celebration Station

- The Bible tells us many stories about God's work in the world and Jesus' life two thousand years ago. We hear stories about Jesus' miracles and love for others and learn about God through what Jesus did.
- Around this room, we have stations where you'll respond to the world-changing work of Jesus. Each station will help you consider what it looks like to celebrate Jesus today, tomorrow, and the future.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this response, you will need four tables, an assortment of party favors, gift bags, balloons, [blank invitations](#), envelopes, pens, [blank square cards](#), thumbtacks, and a bulletin board with the phrase "Guest List" at the top. Note: If you used the room design from the environment guide, we included*

a space for this on the backdrop. Before your program, set up four tables for each station around the room.

- **GIFTS STATION:** Leave an assortment of party favors and gift bags. Make sure to have enough for everyone in your group. Help teenagers see that God has given them many talents, skills, and gifts they can use to celebrate Jesus. Have them find a few party favors that best represent the gifts they could use to celebrate Jesus and place them in a party bag to take home.
- **CONNECT WITH GOD STATION:** Have an assortment of deflated balloons here. Your group will celebrate by helping create decorations. Help teens see that every great party has a good atmosphere, and decoration is essential. At this station, they can inflate a balloon to represent what it would be like to fill their soul when spending time with God. After they have inflated their balloon, write on it one way God has filled them up this year.
- **SPEND TIME WITH OTHERS:** Have blank invitations, envelopes, and pens here. Help teenagers connect that at parties, they often write meaningful things on the cards they give with their gifts. At this station, they'll write to someone important to them and how they see the creativity of God in who they are. Have teenagers thank their friends for being with them and offer encouragement. Then, seal it in the envelope and write their name on the front. Encourage them to give it to their friend this week.
- **INVITATION STATION:** For this station, you'll need the [square cards](#), thumbtacks, and a bulletin board with the phrase "Guest List" at the top. At this station, students will celebrate Jesus by inviting others. Have them write the name of someone they could have a conversation with about what God is doing in their life. Remind them that they don't have to try to convert this person to Christianity. This is simply telling someone what they've been learning about Jesus or how they've been connecting with God. Once they write down a name, have them hang it on the guest list board. As they hang their card, have them pray and ask God to help them talk with their friends this week.
- Jesus came into the world to show us who God is and what it looks like to grow in a relationship with God. He did incredible, life-changing things for us even before we knew who he was.

ACTIVITY | Bible Journaling Pages

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** The Easter season may be one of the best opportunities each year to help teenagers engage with God on their own. If you haven't already done so, this would be a great series to encourage students to do the Bible Journaling Pages, [which you can find in your Discipleship folder](#). Check out the discipleship activity for instructions on how to set this up.
- Now that we've seen a glimpse of who Jesus is and what he's all about, **we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.**

WEEK 2

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.

BIBLE

Luke 19:28–40; Psalm 126:2–3; 1 John 1:5

ABOUT THIS WEEK

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- **What's your favorite occasion to throw a party, and why?**
- **Why do you think it feels so good to be celebrated?**
- **How would you describe your perfect party?**
- **Have you ever been around people at a party who were annoyed and ruined the mood of the party? What happened?**
- **Why do you think the people celebrated Jesus as much as they did?**
- **Why do you think the crowd turns on Jesus, demanding he be crucified so quickly?**
- **How do you think it felt to Jesus to be celebrated this way one day but then one week later be arrested?**
- **What has God done for you personally that you feel like celebrating? How would you write the Psalm in your own words to celebrate this thing God has done for you?**
- **Read 1 John 1:5. What does this verse tell you about who God is? Based on this, what about God's character can you celebrate?**
- **What is one thing you can do this coming week that will remind you to celebrate Jesus for who he is and what he has done in your life?**

WEEK 2

DISCUSSION GUIDE for middle schoolers

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.

BIBLE

Luke 19:28–40; Psalm 126:2–3; 1 John 1:5

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Birthday parties are an annual chance for us to celebrate the people we love and their presence in our lives. This week, we'll take a look at how Jesus was celebrated as a king when he entered Jerusalem. Even though most of these people had not met Jesus yet, they knew he was worth celebrating, and at Easter, **we're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.**

- **What's your favorite occasion to throw a party, and why??**
- **Why do you think it feels so good to be celebrated?**
- **Why do you think the people celebrated Jesus as much as they did?**
- **Why do you think the crowd turns on Jesus, demanding he be crucified so quickly?**
- **Read 1 John 1:5. What does this verse tell you about who God is? Based on this, what about God's character can you celebrate?**
- **What is one thing you can do this coming week that will remind you to celebrate Jesus for who he is and what he has done in your life?**

WEEK 3
LESSON OUTLINE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.

BIBLE

Luke 23; Isaiah 53:4-9;
John 15:3

ABOUT THIS WEEK

If you've ever been invited to a retirement party, you're familiar with the way parties can help us celebrate achievements in our life and work. This week, we'll take a look at the story of Jesus' crucifixion and see why it was such an important event for us all. Jesus' death changed everything, and at Easter, **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

WHAT?

Why do you think it is that when we go to a party and have a great time, we take pictures? We take pictures of what we want to remember. Photos allow us to preserve memories and hang on to stories from impactful moments in our lives. We know we won't always have the people or the joy we had in that moment, so a picture helps us remember moments we want to look back on and remember. There's one moment in the life of Jesus that the Bible wants us to remember continually.

SO WHAT?

In Luke 23, we remember the most important moment in the life of Jesus. We see that after the big celebration, people's loyalties turned, and Jesus was unjustly arrested. Even though Jesus wasn't a criminal, the crowd convinced the governing authorities to send Jesus to be crucified. He was innocent, but he willingly let the guards lead him to be crucified and die for the sins of the world.

Isaiah 53 was a prophecy about this moment. Jesus didn't fight back when he was on the cross. He didn't call down fire from the sky or invite a host of angels to lift him off the cross. Instead, in humility, Jesus accepted what was happening and trusted God to have a bigger, better story to tell. Jesus died on the cross to rescue us. Through him, we no longer need to be separated from God by evil and death. At Easter time, **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

NOW WHAT?

Here are a few ways to keep Jesus' love and sacrifice as the first thing you focus on this week.

- **REMEMBER, JESUS DID WHAT WE COULDN'T DO:** Jesus came into the world, healed people, gave them hope, and ultimately paved a new path for us. Take a few moments to thank Jesus for how he is transforming your life in ways that only God can do.
- **REMEMBER, YOU CAN FORGIVE OTHERS:** Let's support one another as we take steps towards forgiveness. This week, ask God what forgiving someone who hurt you would look like.
- **REMEMBER, YOU'RE LOVED MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE:** This week, consider what it means to be so loved that Jesus would die for you. Nothing can separate you from God's love. Take time this week to write down a few ways your life would look different if you fully trusted God's love for you.

Easter is an excellent time to slow down, dive deep into Jesus' story, and be thankful. **We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

WEEK 3
LESSON GUIDE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.

BIBLE

Luke 23; Isaiah 53:4-9;
John 15:3

ABOUT THIS WEEK

If you've ever been invited to a retirement party, you're familiar with the way parties can help us celebrate achievements in our life and work. This week, we'll take a look at the story of Jesus' crucifixion and see why it was such an important event for us all. Jesus' death changed everything, and at Easter, **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

POLL | This or That: Bad Party Tricks

- Welcome back to Week Three of *Invited!* Over the past few weeks, we've been exploring what a party the Easter story is, and we're not done yet!
- When you're at a party, you will most likely meet new people. All sorts of party tricks could help you break the ice. You could learn how to fold a dollar into a T-shirt or balance a can of soda on its edge. Can anyone here spin a coin on your knuckles? Has anyone used magic tricks to break the ice?
- Not all party tricks are created equally. Let's take a quick poll to decipher the best party trick.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Poll your teenagers with the following questions. You can ask them to respond by raising their hands or moving to a different part of your meeting room.*
 - **Would you rather make the best shadow puppets or know how to make a flute out of a carrot?**
 - **Would you rather know how to break an apple in half with your hands or know how to tear a phone book in half with your hands?**
 - **Would you rather be able to sound like a cricket or sound like a cat?**
 - **Would you rather be able to guess any smell or any sound accurately?**
- All of these party tricks are pretty memorable.
- We often go through life wondering if anyone really knows us or if anyone sees us for who we are. We fear being overlooked or left out and desire relationships to celebrate who we are and what we can do. We want it so badly we're even willing to choose between two not-so-great options if we have to. We all want to be celebrated!

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **What's a silly human trick you can do? Roll your tongue? Whistle by breathing in? Or maybe**

- you're double-jointed? Something more awesome? Would you mind sharing it with the group?
- Have you ever looked back on your memories and felt the same emotions as when you first experienced it? What are some of your favorite memories to think about?
- ☞ Why do you think it's such a powerful experience to remember things with a group of people?

VIDEO | Star Wars Celebration

- There's an incredible scene at the end of *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*. Spoilers are coming up, but the movie is pretty old, so I'm sorry if you've never seen it.
- At the end of *Return of the Jedi*, people celebrated the defeat of Darth Vader and the Emperor. The Galactic Empire crumbled, and people were excited, so they threw a massive party that spanned the whole galaxy! Check it out.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, play a short clip from a video like [this one](#) (0:41–1:35) of the celebration scene from the end of *Return of the Jedi*. We always suggest viewing the clip beforehand to make sure you think it's a video that will be a good fit for your context! For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- Can you imagine what all of these celebrators were feeling? They were forced to live under the Empire's power. There was rampant abuse of power, which led to immense fear throughout the galaxy. People were moved from their homeland, products were scarce, and the Empire wanted to crush any semblance of resistance to their rule.
- Eventually, a group of brave rebels rose and battled against the Empire. They pushed past their fears to tap into the power of the Force and overcome great dangers. When victory arrived, everyone understood the power of their bravery.
- Every year, we have worldwide celebrations of Jesus' defeat over death. We call it Easter Sunday. We exchange candy, dye hard-boiled eggs, and swing pastel baskets full of fake grass, which is weird when you think about it.
- Underneath the strangeness, there's a chance for us to remember the incredible bravery and power Jesus showed at Calvary. He stepped up to conquer one of the greatest dangers to the world and changed the lives of millions of people.
- Easter is our chance to join multiple cultures and generations in a massive party to celebrate what he accomplished.

SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

SCRIPTURE | Luke 23:13–25

- During the week leading up to Easter, called Holy Week, we focus on the final days of Jesus' life. We see snapshots of Jesus wrapping up his ministry on earth. He knew what was about to happen, but the disciples around him were stunned.
- Remember, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, he was treated like royalty. The people of Jerusalem threw a big homecoming celebration typically reserved for conquering kings. Unfortunately, the people's loyalties turned, and Jesus would end up in a wildly unjust situation. Jesus' disciple, Judas, betrayed him, which led to his arrest and transfer to the most powerful political leader in the area, Pontius Pilate.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 23:13–25.*
- Pilate found Jesus did nothing wrong, but the crowd turned on Jesus. They wanted him to face the most severe punishment a person could face: death by crucifixion.
- This entailed having their wrists and feet nailed to a wooden cross until they died. This was a common way to carry out the death penalty at this time, but it is also one of the most awful, painful ways to die.

SCRIPTURE | Luke 23:33–43

- Even though Jesus wasn't a criminal, the crowd convinced Pilate to send Jesus to be crucified. He was innocent but willingly let the guards lead him to the cross. Jesus didn't seek vengeance, even when he was dying on the cross. Instead, he continued his incredible legacy of love and forgiveness.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 23:33–43.*
- Jesus forgave the people hurting him. They mocked and embarrassed him, but he still forgave them. When a criminal next to him recognized who he was, Jesus sent an invitation to join him in paradise after they died.

SCRIPTURE | Luke 23:44–47

- A few guards expected Jesus to perform a miracle to save himself, but he didn't do that. Jesus called out to God one last time and ultimately died. One Roman soldier spoke up about Jesus' innocence. He understood that this whole execution was wrong.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 23:44–47.*
- Think of these scenes as a grid of photos from a photo booth. There's a trial, an image of Jesus on the cross, and then a tomb. These are intense images depicting a horrific scene. You'd probably be a little concerned if you went to a party and people shared photos of these moments.
- Every picture tells a story. Individually, these pictures might seem heavy and uncomfortable, but when we look at them together, we see God's presence in all of them.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **After hearing the story of Jesus' arrest and death, what parts stick out to you the most? What do you have questions about?**
 - **Why do you think that the last week of Jesus' life and the last day, specifically, take up more space in the Gospels than anything else?**
 - **What would you be thinking if you were in Pilate's position? What about the crowd or Jesus' disciples? How would you have felt in those positions as the scene played out?**

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 53:4–9

- Hundreds of years before Jesus walked the earth, God spoke through a prophet named Isaiah. God told Isaiah about someone who would show up on earth and restore God's people.
- This person would do incredible things on God's behalf. The description given to Isaiah is similar to what eventually happens in Jesus' story.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Isaiah 53:4–9.*
- These similarities exist because the person being described by Isaiah is Jesus. Today, we recognize that Jesus sacrificed his life to save the world. Jesus didn't fight back when he was on the cross. He didn't call down fire from the sky or invite a host of angels to lift him off the cross. Instead, in humility, Jesus accepted what was happening and trusted God to have a bigger, better story to tell.
- There's a distance between us and God, and Jesus came to show the distance we thought separated us didn't need to be that way. Jesus demonstrated that evil could never keep us away from God and then showed us the lengths he would go to to make sure we never lost sight of this great love again. If we ever feel separated, we remember what Jesus did on the cross, demonstrating who God already was—love.

OBJECT LESSON | Polaroid Memories

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this object lesson, you'll need a Polaroid or Fujifilm Instant Camera, a palm leaf, a gavel*

or hammer, and a cross. As you discuss each item, take a picture before moving it away.

- In the week leading up to that faithful Friday on the cross, Jesus interacted with many people. Here, we have a few objects representing Holy Week.
 - We have a palm branch that represents the time Jesus entered Jerusalem. He was celebrated like royalty and with the highest respect when he arrived.
 - But that didn't last long. Soon, Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and placed on trial, represented by this gavel.
 - Finally, Jesus went to the cross even though he was innocent. He took on a punishment he didn't deserve as a way to restore humanity to a right relationship with God.
- We take pictures of what we want to remember. Photos allow us to preserve memories and hang onto stories from impactful events.
- We know we won't always have the people, the environment, and the objects around us, so this helps us capture them.
 - Let's take a picture of what happened to Jesus when he entered Jerusalem. This picture highlights the joy and celebration of the one who would change the world. We remember those who recognized Jesus and wanted to celebrate him for who he was.
 - We snap a picture of what happened at his trial to remember the injustice. This photo helps us remember Jesus' innocence and the humility he showed. He didn't fight back or resist. He trusted God with what was next, even if it didn't make sense.
 - Finally, we snap a picture of Jesus on the cross. It's not the happiest photo, but it helps us remember God's love. Through Jesus, our relationship is right with God again. Nothing stands in the way. God restored the world to himself in Christ, wiping away evil and death once and for all.
- Jesus' death and resurrection changed everything. Jesus went to the furthest extremes to free us from evil and death and back into a relationship with God. Even if these objects, the people, and the places are long gone, these images remind us of all the things Jesus did.
- God never wants us to forget the love Jesus showed us on the cross. If we live in this love, our lives will be changed. It can change how you see yourself and others. When we accept his sacrificial love, we are free from guilt, shame, and fear. We love others because, first, we are loved.
- Jesus died on the cross to rescue us, you and me, so that we will no longer be separated from God by evil and death. At Easter time, **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

STORY | Your Favorite Photo Booth Picture

- Every photo tells a story, but what that photo represents is not always clear. We might see a group of people in a picture and interpret the relationships or the significance of the moment all wrong. Context is everything.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story about your favorite photo booth photo. Maybe it's a photo you took at a wedding, birthday party, or with your volunteers. Share about what makes the image unique. Who's in the picture? What does it represent for you?*
- We may have heard about the Easter story, but I encourage you to dive deeper into what this story means for you personally. **We're invited to remember what Jesus has done** and celebrate how he changed everything for us.
- Here are a few ways to keep Jesus' love and sacrifice, which is the first thing we focus on this week.
 - **REMEMBER, JESUS DID WHAT WE COULDN'T DO:** Jesus came into the world, healed people, gave them hope, and ultimately paved a new path for us. The defining moment of Jesus' life was his choice to die on the cross and open a new way for people to be with God. None of us can do

this for ourselves. Take a few moments to thank Jesus for how he is transforming your life in ways that only God can do.

- **REMEMBER, YOU CAN FORGIVE OTHERS:** Jesus' life shows us how often God forgives us. In the same way, we're invited to offer forgiveness and grace to others. We can forgive and still maintain boundaries, including taking time to heal from our hurts. Let's support one another as we take steps towards forgiveness. This week, ask God what forgiving someone who hurt you would look like.
- **REMEMBER, YOU'RE LOVED MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE:** Through these stories of Jesus, we see how much God loves and cares for us. It can be hard to know and accept love from others because our love only reflects God's pure love. Consider what it means to be so loved this week that Jesus would die for you. Nothing can separate you from God's love. Take time this week to write down a few ways your life would look different if you fully trusted God's love for you.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ✪ **What parts of this story or from another place in Jesus' life do you want to make an effort to remember this Easter season?**
 - ✪ **Who is one person in your life who models the sacrificial love that Jesus demonstrates this week? What is a way they demonstrate love that you could also start to put into practice on your own?**

REFLECTIONS | Signing the Guest Book

- You might find a guest book at a big celebration, like a wedding, graduation, or birthday party. Signing a guest book is one way for the host to remember who was there. Memories from this important occasion are stored and collected for later reminiscing.
- Jesus' grand story is worth remembering and celebrating all year long. It can be challenging for us to remember *exactly* what Jesus did, but that's why we have the Bible and each other to help us remember. Easter is an excellent time to slow down, dive deep into Jesus' story, and be thankful.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this response, you'll need [place cards](#) and a writing utensil under each chair. Encourage teenagers to write down at least one thing God has done for them in their lives and then write their names on the outside.*

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups.*
 - **Read John 15:3. What can you do this week to remind yourself that you are loved by God more than you can imagine?**
 - **As a group, what would it look like for us to remember what Jesus has done for us this week?**

RESPONSE | Photo Booth Guest Book

- We took pictures to remember important moments in Jesus' life. Now, let's take a picture of this moment to remember that Jesus is still transforming our lives here and now.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this response, you'll need a Polaroid or Fujifilm Instant Camera, several packages of instant film, a photo booth backdrop, tape or thumbtacks, pens, and a large board or photo book.*
 - **NOTE:** *If you are using the backdrop from the environment guide, we have included a place for teenagers to put their pictures and place cards. Using the backdrop, they can take pictures in*

groups or by themselves. Once photos are developed, write the date on the corner, then replace the place card from the "Signing the Guest Book" module with the photo.

- Today, you had a chance to put your name in the party guest book and take a picture at this photo booth. All the love and sacrifice we talked about earlier was for you and the people in this room.
- Jesus experienced and accomplished more than any of us could do on our own, and with these photos, we'll remember that Jesus changed everything. **We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

WEEK 3 DISCUSSION GUIDE

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.

BIBLE

Luke 23; Isaiah 53:4–9;
John 15:3

ABOUT THIS WEEK

If you've ever been invited to a retirement party, you're familiar with the way parties can help us celebrate achievements in our life and work. This week, we'll take a look at the story of Jesus' crucifixion and see why it was such an important event for us all. Jesus' death changed everything, and at Easter, **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

- **What's a silly human trick you can do? Roll your tongue? Whistle by breathing in? Or maybe you're double-jointed? Something more awesome? Would you mind sharing it with the group?**
- **Have you ever looked back on your memories and felt the same emotions as when you first experienced it? What are some of your favorite memories to think about?**
- **Why do you think it's such a powerful experience to remember things with a group of people?**
- **After hearing the story of Jesus' arrest and death, what parts stick out to you the most? What do you have questions about?**
- **Why do you think that the last week of Jesus' life and the last day, specifically, take up more space in the Gospels than anything else?**
- **If you were in Pilate's position, what would you be thinking? What about the crowd or Jesus' disciples? How would you have felt in those positions as the scene played out?**
- **What parts of this story or from another place in Jesus' life do you want to make an effort to remember this Easter season?**
- **Who is one person in your life who models the sacrificial love that Jesus demonstrates this week? What is a way they demonstrate love that you could also start to put into practice on your own?**
- **Read John 15:3. What can you do this week to remind yourself that you are loved by God more than you can imagine?**
- **As a group, what would it look like for us to remember what Jesus has done for us this week?**



INSTRUCTIONS: *Plan to invite your friends to Easter by creating party invitations for Easter and work on them during the weeks leading up to Easter. Mail them with confetti a few weeks before Easter. Then make a plan to text the friends you invited to Easter the week before Easter services!*

WEEK 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE for middle schoolers

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.

BIBLE

Luke 23; Isaiah 53:4–9;
John 15:3

ABOUT THIS WEEK

If you've ever been invited to a retirement party, you're familiar with the way parties can help us celebrate achievements in our life and work. This week, we'll take a look at the story of Jesus' crucifixion and see why it was such an important event for us all. Jesus' death changed everything, and at Easter, **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done.**

- **What's a silly human trick you can do? Roll your tongue? Whistle by breathing in? Or maybe you're double-jointed? Something more awesome? Would you mind sharing it with the group?**
- **Have you ever looked back on your memories and felt the same emotions as when you first experienced it? What are some of your favorite memories to think about?**
- **After hearing the story of Jesus' arrest and death, what parts stick out to you the most? What do you have questions about?**
- **Why do you think that the last week of Jesus' life and the last day, specifically, take up more space in the Gospels than anything else?**
- **Read John 15:3. What can you do this week to remind yourself that you are loved by God more than you can imagine?**
- **As a group, what would it look like for us to remember what Jesus has done for us this week?**



INSTRUCTIONS: *Plan to invite your friends to Easter by creating party invitations for Easter and work on them during the weeks leading up to Easter. Mail them with confetti a few weeks before Easter. Then make a plan to text the friends you invited to Easter the week before Easter services!*

WEEK 4
LESSON OUTLINE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to let Jesus make us new.

BIBLE

Luke 24:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–17

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Playing the right music can keep things feeling new and full of life, no matter what kind of party we're throwing. This week, we'll hear what happened when some of Jesus' followers showed up at his tomb after his crucifixion. They discovered Jesus was doing something brand new in the world, and **we're invited to let Jesus make us new.**

WHAT?

Music is mandatory. Music sets the tone for a party. When deep into a party, the right song can bring our energy to the next level. It's like party coffee. Whether it's a classic song or something newer, the energy can refresh us to keep dancing. Like coffee, music can only make us feel new for so long. Eventually, we'll tire, our feet will start to ache, and that sense of being refreshed and full of energy fades. If we want to feel new and refreshed in every part of our lives, we'll need more than music. Thankfully, there's someone we can turn to to help us out.

SO WHAT?

In Luke 24, we see the surprise of two women who wanted to honor and express love for Jesus, so they went to perform Jesus' final burial rituals. Imagine their surprise when they arrived at the tomb and noticed the massive stone in front had been moved. What was more surprising was Jesus' body was gone. They ended up being the first people to learn about Jesus' resurrection. After two men in bright clothes told them Jesus had risen, they told the other disciples that Jesus had risen from the grave!

In 2 Corinthians 5:17–18, Paul wrote to the Early Church about what the resurrection could mean for their lives. He tells about the way Jesus makes us all brand new. Jesus makes the entire world brand new. Jesus' death wasn't the end of hope for those who followed Jesus. It was just the beginning. His resurrection revealed God's invitation for each of us throughout time. Every Easter, the resurrection lets us see we're invited to let Jesus make us new.

NOW WHAT?

Here are some ways to let Jesus give you the hope you need this week.

- **LET JESUS MAKE YOU NEW:** Are there places in your heart, head, or character that Jesus hopes to restore? This week, ask Jesus to start bringing renewal into the places you need light, hope, and joy the most.
- **LET JESUS MAKE YOUR WORLD NEW:** We can do all the right things to change our personal habits, but we're still affected by the brokenness around us. Invite Jesus into your homes, communities, and friendships to change and restore them. This Easter season, look for places where new life is needed. Talk to God about how you can be a part of someone's story.

Letting Jesus make us new does not happen overnight. It's a lifetime process, but you can start right now because every day, we're invited to let Jesus make us new.

WEEK 4
LESSON GUIDE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to let Jesus make us new.

BIBLE

Luke 24:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–17

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Playing the right music can keep things feeling new and full of life, no matter what kind of party we're throwing. This week, we'll hear what happened when some of Jesus' followers showed up at his tomb after his crucifixion. They discovered Jesus was doing something brand new in the world, and **we're invited to let Jesus make us new.**

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Bucket Ball

- Welcome back to Week 4 of *Invited!* We've loved talking about your invitation to the Easter story for the last few weeks. Let's start with another party game.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this game, you will need six [industrial trash cans](#) and four beach balls or dodge balls. Divide your group into two teams, each going to one side of the room with three trash cans. Place the cans in the form of a triangle or pyramid. Select two people from each team to throw one ball into the opposing team's trash cans. If they land a ball in a can, that can is removed. Once both players have thrown a ball, have the other team attempt to score. Then, select two new players from each team and play until one team has no more cans remaining. Level up the fun by pouring water in each trashcan and allowing players who land a ball to pour the water on a player from the opposing team or one of the leaders.*
- What a refreshing game! Nothing wakes you up like water getting dumped on your head!
- Have you ever felt like you needed a refresh, like splashing your face with cold water? Have you ever wanted to start over and go through life with a clean slate? Today, we're talking about what that could look like for all of us, and I promise you it has nothing to do with trash can water on your head.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups.*
 - **What's your favorite song at a party that always gets you hyped?**
 - **What's your favorite part about getting something new? What does it feel like?**

POLL | This or That: Party Song Edition

- Fun party games are optional for a good party, but amazing music is mandatory. Music sets the tone for what a party feels like. So, what's the best party song? I'm curious what you think about each of these party songs.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before your program, create a playlist of songs to use in a poll about the best party song.*

Play snippets of each song have teenagers choose their preferred song by raising their hands, standing up, or moving to a specific part of the room. Choose songs that work for the culture of your group. Here are a few ideas to start.

- “Don’t Stop Believing” by Journey vs. “Single Ladies” by Beyoncé
 - “YMCA” by The Village People vs. “Celebration” by Kool & the Gang
 - “We Found Love” by Rhianna vs. “22” by Taylor Swift
 - “I Wanna Dance with Somebody (Who Loves Me)” by Whitney Houston Vs. “Bohemian Rhapsody” by Queen
- When deep into a party, the right song can bring our energy to the next level. It’s like party coffee. Whether it’s a classic song or something newer, the energy can refresh us to keep dancing.
 - Like coffee, music can only make us feel new for so long. Eventually, we’ll tire, our feet will start to ache, and that sense of being refreshed and full of energy fades.
 - If we want to feel new and refreshed in every part of our lives, we’ll need more than music. Thankfully, there’s someone we can turn to to help us out.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Luke 24:1–3

- If you were with us last week, you might remember we ended up in a pretty serious place. Jesus had been betrayed and sent to be executed even though he did nothing wrong.
- Today, we’ll pick up the story in the final chapters of the book of Luke. These final stories tell first-hand encounters people had with Jesus. But these weren’t regular encounters. This is what happened after Jesus died.
- When they saw Jesus up on the cross, the hope inside of them started to die and fade away. Their teacher, who had inspired them to live differently, was gone. The newness and possibility they saw when he was around seemed lost. Maybe you can relate.
- When it seemed like all hope was lost, a few of Jesus’ followers went to where his body was lying and found themselves at a surprise party.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Luke 24:1–3.
- The women who followed and learned from Jesus performed final burial rituals to honor and express their love for Jesus. They ended up being the first people to learn about Jesus’ resurrection.
- Imagine their surprise when they arrived at the tomb and noticed the massive stone in front had been moved. What was more surprising was Jesus’ body was gone.

SCRIPTURE | Luke 24:4–11

- If this were me, I’d be panicking. I would have so many questions about who moved the stone, why they moved it, and where the body went. Those questions would fade after this next part of the story.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Luke 24:4–11.
- Amid the confusion, two men in clothes brighter than a strobe light appeared. The women dropped to their knees in fear. The men said, “He is not here; he has risen!”
- The women reported to the other disciples about what they saw, but they didn’t understand. I mean, can you blame them? The women suggested that Jesus, who had been dead for three days at this point, was suddenly alive.
- Everyone had seen him die and put into his tomb, which was a little cave with a massive stone rolled in front of it and was guarded by soldiers. Eventually, Peter ran to the tomb and found what they described. Even if he didn’t fully understand, he also felt his hope return to life. This changed everything.

- Jesus' work brought back hope to the disciples. When Jesus appeared to the women first, he inspired a new way of thinking about how society could work.
 - Ancient cultural norms and social structures viewed women as less important than men. Jesus knew these women might be viewed as unreliable sources, but he decided to appear to them first anyway. He breathed new life into their joy, confidence, and belief that Jesus was the savior he claimed to be.
 - When Jesus lived on Earth, he always revealed more of God's kingdom. He invited people who had never been asked into God's family. He went up to people who were seen as outcasts and became their friend.
- Jesus' resurrection shows us that everyone is invited to share the good news of his love, and because of him, death no longer has the final word.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ✳ **When was the last time you were disappointed about something? What are some other emotions that go along with disappointment?**
 - **What would be your first reaction if you were in the women's position when they first got to the tomb and found it empty? Fear? Anger? Surprise?**
 - ✳ **Why do you think Jesus came back this way, and why do you think he allowed for some confusion and uncertainty around his resurrection? What does this tell you about God?**

OBJECT LESSON | The Party Host

- We can think of Jesus as the ultimate party host. Parties don't just happen. You don't just walk down the street and see groups of people launch confetti out of cannons or do some big choreographed dance they've never rehearsed. A good party takes a big investment upfront before any music begins playing.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this object lesson, you will need two bags and several large Jenga blocks. Label one block "time," three blocks "money," and one block "increase status" or "(arrow pointing up) status." Place them in one bag. Draw a cross on the other bag and fill it with one block labeled "time," one block "love," one block "lower status," and one block "life." While you teach the first part, pull from your first bag. For the second part, grab from your "cross" bag. Stack the blocks together while you teach.*
- The massive parties around the world have tons of investors.
 - People are willing to put up big *money* to throw incredible parties, hoping their *status* will increase through brand exposure, new customers, and more *money*.
 - They set aside a limited amount of *time* and *money* when they invest. Just enough to maximize their return and walk away knowing it was a good investment. They'll say "yes" to supporting a party if it works out for them.
- Jesus' approach is radically different.
 - Jesus doesn't offer us any money, but he does offer us his *time*. He goes a step further and offers us his *love* in the way he treats others.
 - Jesus cares so much about us making it to the party he gives up his *status* as the son of God. He opens the door so we can all join God's family.
 - Jesus goes even further. He wants us at the party and will do anything to get us there, so he offers up his *life*.
- Jesus was willing to give up everything to free us from evil and death and breathe new life into our lives.

SCRIPTURE | 2 Corinthians 5:17–18

- Years after Jesus' resurrection, an early follower of Jesus named Paul helped start new churches. Paul told others about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and what it could mean to their lives.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read 2 Corinthians 5:17–18.
- Paul sees the way Jesus makes us all brand new. Jesus makes the entire world brand new. The final week of Jesus' life led to the moment when the doors to the party flew open, and everyone could step inside. The good news of Easter and Jesus' resurrection is that we're made new when we say "yes" to following Jesus.
- The things that used to weigh us down don't need to burden us anymore. There's hope for us to keep growing as we build our relationship with God. We can start to build up habits that help shape our lives to look more like Jesus'.
- Jesus' death wasn't the end of hope for those who followed Jesus. It was just the beginning. His resurrection revealed God's invitation for each of us throughout time. Every Easter, the resurrection lets us see **we're invited to let Jesus make us new.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

TALK | Don't Let The Rhythm Die

- On the day the women went to Jesus' tomb, they needed hope. Their dreams of a good life with Jesus had just been smashed into pieces.
- If we're honest, many of us have probably felt the same way. It can feel like life is slipping through our fingers, leaving us hoping for something bigger, something new.
- What are those places for you? Where could you use new life right now? **We're invited to let Jesus make us new**, and here's what that could look like this week.
 - **LET JESUS MAKE YOU NEW:** Are there places in your heart, head, or character that Jesus hopes to restore? This is more than just asking Jesus to fix specific behaviors in your life. This is a deeper ask for Jesus to restore your heart. It's about letting Jesus into every part of your life to bring light and life into what may feel dead or fading away. Where do you need hope? Where do you need to feel confident? This week, ask Jesus to start bringing renewal into the places you need light, hope, and joy the most.
 - **LET JESUS MAKE YOUR WORLD NEW:** The world around us affects us more than we may know. We can do all the right things to change our personal habits, but we're still affected by the brokenness around us. Let's invite Jesus into our homes, communities, and friendships to change and restore them. This Easter season, look for places where new life is needed. Talk to God about how you can be a part of someone's story. Invite others into God's story, like the women who told the disciples about the resurrection.
- Letting Jesus make us new does not happen overnight. It's a lifetime process, but you can start right now. Every day, we choose to respond to Jesus' invitation to be made new. We can live like the women at the tomb, embracing God's invitation and developing the habits that help us become more like Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ⊛ **What do you think Paul meant by saying we are given the ministry of reconciliation? What would that look like in your life?**
 - **What might be keeping you from letting Jesus make you new? How can we support you in**

allowing Jesus to transform you?

- 🕒 **What areas in your life need to change or be made new? Who can encourage you in the areas where you need to be made new?**

MUSIC | “I Thank God” (Maverick City and UPPERROOM)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For the following reflection and response, play the song “I Thank God” by Maverick City and UPPERROOM. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to do so. For more information, [read this!](#) [Here’s a link](#) to preview the song for your personal use.

REFLECTION | Where I Am Being Made New

- **We’re invited to let Jesus make us new.** He’ll take on the parts of us that need to be refreshed and offer a new perspective. We simply need to admit where we need hope, which is the most challenging part if we are honest.
- When we give over those parts of ourselves and trust Jesus to make us new, he’ll bring life from death. He’ll take what is obscured and hard to see and fill it with light. We all want to hold on to habits, thoughts, or relationships, but maybe it’s time to trust Jesus. Consider giving him what keeps you from growing and being who God desires you to be.
- Some will say “yes” to growing with God for the first time. Maybe you’re ready to experience new hope and joy like the women at the tomb. Perhaps you’re prepared to have a transformative friendship with Jesus.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this reflection, each person will need small [multi-colored cards](#) and pens. Invite everyone to write down one thing they wish to leave behind and one way they want Jesus to make them new.
- Jesus is inviting us into a new life. He can exchange the parts of ourselves we may think are dying and transform them into new life. Let’s take time right now to think about what you want to change in your old life.
- Maybe it’s behaviors like perfection, people pleasing, pressure to perform, lying, or gossip. Maybe you need transformation in a relationship with a family member or friend. Whatever it is, write down that “old” thing on your card. Then, turn in your card and receive a gift we have for you to remind you of the hope, love, and joy Jesus offers you.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups.
 - **Read 2 Corinthians 4:16–17. When you think about who you were six months ago, a year ago, or longer, how have you seen God change you? Why do you think God made it so that transformation is a process?**
 - **What is one step more you can take this week to be made new or help to make the world new?**

RESPONSE | The Confetti Exchange

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this response, you will need [mini confetti poppers](#) for each teen. If you decide to do the “Where I Am Being Made New” reflection, have teenagers exchange their cards for a confetti popper. You can invite the group to pop their confetti simultaneously to end your program. To level up this reflection, you could cut all the cards into small pieces of confetti and [build a confetti cannon](#). Or shred the cards and have teenagers throw them up to celebrate their new life in Jesus.
- Whatever you decide to write down, the offer is the same: Jesus wants you to be at the party. Nothing can separate you from the love of Jesus, shown in his death and resurrection for each of us.
- The old is wiped away, and Jesus’ new way is here. Every Easter, **we’re invited to let Jesus make us new.**

WEEK 4

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

We're invited to let Jesus make us new.

BIBLE

Luke 24:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–17

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Playing the right music can keep things feeling new and full of life, no matter what kind of party we're throwing. This week, we'll hear what happened when some of Jesus' followers showed up at his tomb after his crucifixion. They discovered Jesus was doing something brand new in the world, and **we're invited to let Jesus make us new.**

- **What's your favorite song at a party that always gets you hyped?**
- **What's your favorite part about getting something new? What does it feel like?**
- **When was the last time you were disappointed about something? What are some other emotions that go along with disappointment?**
- **What would be your first reaction if you were in the women's position when they first got to the tomb and found it empty? Fear? Anger? Surprise?**
- **Why do you think Jesus came back this way, and why do you think he allowed for some confusion and uncertainty around his resurrection? What does this tell you about God?**
- **What do you think Paul meant by saying we are given the ministry of reconciliation? What would that look like in your life?**
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WEEK 4

DISCUSSION GUIDE *for middle schoolers*

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

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- What is one step more you can take this week to be made new or help to make the world new?

WEEK 5
LESSON OUTLINE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.

BIBLE

John 20:19–23; Acts 2:1–4;
John 3:8

ABOUT THIS WEEK

There's not much worse than showing up to a party where you don't know anyone and don't know what to do. This week, we'll take a look at what Jesus said to his disciples right before he left them to continue his ministry without him. Jesus gave them instructions on what to do next and how **we're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.**

WHAT?

When you show up to the party and there's dancing, how do you respond? Dancing can make us feel so vulnerable, and for some of us, that's an easy thing to overcome, but for others, when it's time to hit the dance floor, we pull back. Maybe all we need to get into the party's flow is someone to help us feel comfortable. The same is true in our lives. Sometimes, when it is slightly intimidating, we need a guide to help us understand what to do next.

SO WHAT?

In John 20:19–23, Jesus showed up when the disciples least expected it. He was about to send them out to continue his mission and work, but they wouldn't do it alone. He was giving them the Holy Spirit to help guide them every step of the way. Jesus gave us God's Spirit to help lead us into moments of connection and purpose, as well as through times of loneliness and confusion.

In Acts 2, we get a glimpse into the moment when the Holy Spirit started leading the church in the way Jesus talked about. The disciples followed the Holy Spirit's lead. They trusted God to provide a guide for them, and when this guide showed up, they listened. They invited people to the party and shared God's message of love, hope, and peace. We are encouraged to do the same, which means **we're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.**

NOW WHAT?

Here are a few ways to start listening and following the Holy Spirit's lead this week.

- **PLAN TO PRACTICE SILENCE:** Silence when talking to God may seem counterintuitive, but we learn to listen to the Holy Spirit when everything around us slows and quiets down. Set aside a few minutes daily to sit still in silence and listen to God.
- **PLAN FOR INTERRUPTIONS:** If you struggle to stick to a plan because of constant interruptions, change your location, find a quiet place, or invite a friend to help you. Stay flexible and be okay with adjusting and adapting.
- **PLAN TO TRY NEW THINGS:** When we read stories about all the things the disciples did, we think, "Of course they did that. They're in the Bible!" We forget Jesus' earliest disciples were the first to trust the Holy Spirit and try new things.

Because of Jesus, we have access to the same guide he left for the disciples. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is in you, and **we're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.**

WEEK 5
LESSON GUIDE

Invited

BIG IDEA

We're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.

BIBLE

John 20:19–23; Acts 2:1–4;
John 3:8

ABOUT THIS WEEK

There's not much worse than showing up to a party where you don't know anyone and don't know what to do. This week, we'll take a look at what Jesus said to his disciples right before he left them to continue his ministry without him. Jesus gave them instructions on what to do next and how **we're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

POLL | So You Think You Can Dance?

- Welcome back to another week of *Invited!* We've been talking about Easter this whole series, and it has been such a blast.
- When I go to a party, I notice two types of people—the ones who like to dance and the ones who avoid it at all costs. I'm curious: which type are you?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Poll everyone's responses to the following questions. Play some upbeat music. If they answer "Yes," have them start dancing. If they answer "No," have them sit down.*
- **Do you like to ...**
 - **dance**
 - **dance alone**
 - **dance alone in public**
 - **dance with a partner**
 - **dance with a group of people**
 - **make up your moves**
 - **copy someone else's moves**
 - **avoid dancing at parties**
- Dancing on our own can be fun. I'm sure we've all held little concerts in our rooms, where we danced to the music while we cleaned or did our homework.
- Dancing alone is one thing, but creating a dance and building up all the choreography around it is an advanced skill. To become an incredible dancer, you need someone to lead and help you step by step.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*

- If you could be part of any dance scene in any movie or musical, what would it be and why?
- Have you ever had an experience where you were surprised in a good way? What was that like?
- ☛ Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like God showed up in some way as a guide for you? What happened?

ACTIVITY | Dance Charades

- Dancing feels so vulnerable. We may be comfortable in our skin, but once it's time to hit the dance floor, we pull back and make our way over to the side of the room with the other wallflowers. Let's see if we can begin to change that right now.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before your program, create a dance music playlist that works for your group's culture. Create a list of objects and phrases to act out and put it into a common bowl. To play, split the room into two or three teams and select one volunteer from each team. Players will have 45 seconds to act out their mystery words and try to get their team to guess correctly, but they must dance the entire time. For every correct guess, teams earn one point. If players stop moving before their time ends, they'll lose two points. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.
- Some people felt the song and created dance moves. It's like the music led them.
- Imagine knowing exactly what to do when you enter a party. You wouldn't have that awkward moment of wondering where to stand or who to talk with.
- Having someone along for the ride would be amazing, helping us feel comfortable, even when we don't get the steps just right on the dance floor. For followers of Jesus, this isn't an impossible wish. This really can happen in our lives.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | John 20:19–23

- Imagine you're approaching a dance or party with a friend. You've both agreed on a plan, and they will take the lead. Now, you're walking in, you look around, and your friend is gone! You might panic momentarily, then search the party, hoping to find them. Maybe you find a spot where you feel safe and comfortable while waiting to see them.
- That's how I imagine the disciples felt. They had followed Jesus for three years, learning from him, eating with him, and making a plan with him. Then, suddenly, he's gone.
- They did what many people would do. They returned to places that made them feel safe. While trying to figure out what to do next, they received a big surprise.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read John 20:19–23.
- When the disciples least expected it, Jesus showed up. Even though the door was locked, Jesus stood among them.
- Their leader, whom they watched die, the one they had devoted their lives to following, was in front of them now. Talk about a party trick! Jesus wasn't there to show off—he had come with a message for the disciples.
- Jesus sent them out into the world to forgive sins, but they wouldn't be doing it alone. He gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit in them. The disciples must have questioned what they were seeing and hearing.
- But Jesus really was in front of them, speaking to them just like before. The leader the disciples once followed was still with them, offering them a new guide to follow, the Holy Spirit. Unlike Jesus, who had one body and could only be in one place at a time, this new guide would be everywhere.

IMAGE | Who is the Holy Spirit?

- You're not alone if you have questions about who this Holy Spirit is. The early disciples felt that way, too. So, maybe this will help... If we're thinking of a party, then the Holy Spirit is the ultimate party DJ.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, show an [image](#) like one of these from Unsplash of a DJ. These images are free for you to use under the [Unsplash license](#).*
- At a party, there's usually one person in charge of the playlist. They know exactly what songs to play to get everyone dancing and having a blast. The Holy Spirit is similar to a good DJ. The one who takes time to understand what brings people joy, what resonates with their hearts, their purpose, and how they feel insecure and tender.
- Just as the music adapts to the party's vibe and the crowd's mood, the Holy Spirit is always there to comfort, guide, and inspire us.
 - The Holy Spirit brings people together, just like music brings everyone to the dance floor at the party. When people are together, the Holy Spirit helps build community even when there are diverse backgrounds or personalities.
 - Even though we may not notice it, the Holy Spirit is always present in our lives. The Holy Spirit quietly works behind the scenes, supports us, and leads us towards goodness and growth.
- Think of the Holy Spirit as the best, lifelong DJ, creating rhythm in our lives. The Holy Spirit leads us through moments of connection and purpose, as well as times of loneliness and confusion. After Jesus' resurrection, he gave us the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in our faith.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **How would you have responded to seeing him alive again if you were in the disciples' position? What questions would you have for him?**
 - **What surprised you in the passage of the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit?**
 - ★ **How does knowing that the Holy Spirit actively moves in your life change or challenge your understanding of God?**

SCRIPTURE | Acts 2:1-4

- In the Bible, Acts tells stories of churches forming after Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Before Jesus returned to God, he appeared to the disciples one last time. He gave the disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, which empowered them to stay connected to God and their mission. This is how the book of Acts captures this wild moment.
- **INSTRUCTION:** *Read Acts 2:1-4.*
- This was the sign that the party was starting. The Holy Spirit arrived, and the disciples were ready to share everything.
- Many people visited the new churches, and the disciples were eager to share the message of God's power through Jesus. Miraculously, every person understood the message in their own language.
- The disciples followed the Holy Spirit's lead. They trusted God to provide a guide for them, and when this guide showed up, they listened. They invited people to the party and shared God's message of love, hope, and peace.
- We can share this invitation, too. You can follow the Holy Spirit's lead like the disciples because of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. The Holy Spirit is active and available to you right now. As we learn to trust God, the Holy Spirit helps us become more like Jesus. **We're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

OBJECT LESSON | Learning To Listen And Follow

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this object lesson, you will need a pair of over-the-ear headphones like [these](#). Put on the headphones any time you are talking about listening to God. If you want to incorporate the DJ theme, borrow a few turntables to display.
- The story of the disciples' trust is inspiring. They listened to the Holy Spirit and transformed their entire community. If this is our invitation, too, maybe you're starting to wonder if you have to go out and preach now. What did you get yourself into?
- Here are a few ways to start listening and following the Holy Spirit's lead.
 - **PLAN TO PRACTICE SILENCE:** Silence when talking to God may seem counterintuitive, but we learn to listen to the Holy Spirit when everything around us slows and quiets down. Set aside a few minutes daily to sit still in silence and listen for God's voice.
 - **PLAN FOR INTERRUPTIONS:** When we accept God's invitation to listen and follow the Holy Spirit, we'll notice how many things want to keep us from connecting. We can learn to adapt when our attention is being pulled in different directions. If you struggle to stick to a plan because of constant interruptions, change your location, find a quiet place, or invite a friend to help you. Stay flexible and be okay with adjusting and adapting.
 - **PLAN TO TRY NEW THINGS:** When we read stories about all the things the disciples did, we think, "Of course they did that. They're in the Bible!" We forget Jesus' earliest disciples were the first to trust the Holy Spirit and try new things. For you, a new thing might be inviting people to sit with you at lunch or study with you. It could mean inviting people to church or sharing stories with each other. Listen to the Holy Spirit's lead this week and be open to trying something new.
- Thankfully, there's more than one way to listen to the Holy Spirit. There are so many ways to connect with God and hear where the Spirit is guiding you.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.
 - ★ **On a scale of 1–10, how comfortable are you with silence? What makes it difficult or easy for you? Why do you think silence is important when it comes to following the guidance of the Holy Spirit?**
 - ★ **If you were going to explain what it looks like to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit to a friend, what would your steps be?**

RESPONSE | Fill My Cup

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this reflection, you will need permanent markers and paper cups for your group to write on. Instruct everyone to write down how they want to start listening for the Holy Spirit. Have them take it home and put it somewhere to remind them to trust the Holy Spirit's lead.
- Right now, you'll have a chance to listen to where the Holy Spirit is leading you. Consider how this can become a habit in your life, and write down steps that will help you listen to the Holy Spirit beyond today.
- **We're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead**, which could look like creating a regular rhythm for prayer. You could make time to talk with a friend or leader about the Holy Spirit and how God leads in their life.
- Maybe you invest in a hobby or activity that helps you feel connected to God, like singing, hiking, or painting. Whatever you decide, write your plan on one of these cups. This will remind you of the new things God is doing in you and the ways the Holy Spirit fills us with what we need to stay connected to God.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups.*
 - **Read John 3:8. What do you think about how Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit like a wind we cannot control or fully understand? What questions do you have about following the Holy Spirit's lead?**
 - **Today, what's one step you will take towards following the Holy Spirit's lead?**

PRAYER | A Quiet Spirit

- Great parties are full of music, noise, and conversation. You've probably never described a party as "quiet." Even silent discos have their share of talking, shouting, and singing. Let's end our time by shaking up what a party could look like. To hear God well, let's listen well.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *This prayer time is made up of two moments of silence. The first time, invite everyone to be silent for one minute. For the second time, invite them to be quiet for three minutes. After each time of silence, ask if they heard anything from God.*
- We will be experiencing two short times of silence together. Clear out your thoughts from the day or your to-do list. I like to take distracting thoughts. Imagine putting them in a book, closing the book, and putting it on a shelf for later.
- Make space for God to speak to you. Silence can help connect us to God. Maybe you heard a word, or a next step to take, or an affirmation of how loved you are. You might not have heard anything, and that's okay.
- The point of being silent with God is simply allowing space for you to show up with God. It doesn't matter what you're wearing or what you own or about choosing the right words.
- Because of Jesus, we have access to the same guide he left for the disciples. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is in you, and **we're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.**

WEEK 5

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

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BIBLE

John 20:19–23; Acts 2:1–4;
John 3:8

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DISCUSSION GUIDE *for middle schoolers*

Invited

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- **If you could be part of any dance scene in any movie or musical, what would it be and why?**
- **Have you ever had an experience where you were surprised in a good way? What was that like?**
- **How would you have responded to seeing him alive again if you were in the disciples' position? What questions would you have for him?**
- **What surprised you in the passage of the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit?**
- **Read John 3:8. What do you think about how Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit like a wind we cannot control or fully understand? What questions do you have about following the Holy Spirit's lead?**
- **Today, what's one step you will take towards following the Holy Spirit's lead?**

WEEK 6
LESSON OUTLINE

Invited

BIG IDEA

Jesus invites us to invite others.

BIBLE

Luke 14:12–24; Psalm 30:8–12; John 1:39–46

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Whenever we throw a party, we have the power to influence others in a pretty significant way—even if we're not aware of it. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a great banquet and the difference an invitation can make. Jesus shows he'll go to great lengths to include people, and we can do the same because **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

WHAT?

When we are invited to participate in something fun, there's an energy around that moment. We're so glad they thought of us. An invitation can energize us and refresh us. Even though we know this, we might forget to invite others into the excitement. We've all experienced what it's like to be excluded and included. So, why don't we spend more time including people? What's keeping us from taking that step?

SO WHAT?

In Luke 14, Jesus tells a story of what bringing people to his party looks like. Instead of inviting people perceived as powerful or in your social circle, we should ask the people on the margins of society—the poor, the blind, and those with disabilities. Think about those who don't get invited to a lot of parties. Jesus is saying the type of people who wouldn't expect an invitation from God are the exact people who will be in God's kingdom. They are not too busy to notice God's work in the world right now. God will never leave willing and eager guests out. They will always have a seat at the table.

When the poet who wrote Psalm 30 felt low, they noticed God's invitation to step into something new. When they did, they felt joy, and their wailing turned to dancing! God's invitation to us includes a partnership to act. Instead of sitting on the sidelines, hoping someone shows up for the people we care about, we can jump in with God to pass out invitations. We can tell others who Jesus is and what he has done for all of us because **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

NOW WHAT?

Here are a few questions to answer that will help you figure out what to say about Jesus to others.

- **WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT JESUS?** What are the ideas, words, or characteristics of Jesus that make him someone you want to follow? Is it the way he cared for people? The way he invited others? What makes you interested in following Jesus? Write down a few answers and start living out these characteristics in your life.
- **WHAT IS YOUR STORY WITH JESUS?** None of us would be connected to each other without Jesus. What else have you experienced, felt, and lived that's connected you to Jesus? How does it feel to be connected to Jesus? Share that story with others and invite them to start their own story.

God has invited us into something amazing, and **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

WEEK 6
LESSON GUIDE

Invited

BIG IDEA

Jesus invites us to invite others.

BIBLE

Luke 14:12–24; Psalm 30:8–12; John 1:39–46

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Whenever we throw a party, we have the power to influence others in a pretty significant way—even if we're not aware of it. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a great banquet and the difference an invitation can make. Jesus shows he'll go to great lengths to include people, and we can do the same because **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Flip The Piñata, Find A Friend

- Welcome to the final week of Invited! We've had such a blast talking through Easter and the big party God invites us to. It's time for one last party game. Are you ready to show off your skills?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this game, you will need two piñatas like [this one](#). You can fill your piñata with candy for an extra challenge or leave it empty. To play, break your group into two teams. Select one volunteer per team to begin the game. They will flip the piñata to land upright like a bottle flip. Once the player has successfully flipped the piñata, they will grab one person from their team to go next, and so on. The team with the most people who have flipped the piñata in a set amount of time wins.*
- I've seen someone flip a bottle for entertainment, but I don't think I've ever seen someone flip a whole piñata! Thank you to everyone who participated, but some people were left out because of the time limit.
- We know no one wants people to be left out. What would it look like to be the type of person who invites everyone to participate in the party?

QUESTION | "How Does It Feel to Be Included?"

- It doesn't feel great to miss out. We all want to have fun and hang out with the people we care about
- **How does it feel to be included?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Ask the question above and give a few teenagers the chance to respond out loud.*
- When we are invited to participate in something fun, there's an energy around that moment. We're so glad they thought of us. An invitation can energize us and refresh us. Even though we know this, we might forget to invite others into the excitement.
- We've all experienced what it's like to be excluded and included. So, why don't we spend more time including people? What's keeping us from taking that step?

VIDEO | Community Birthday Party

- Now, let's look at a party from the host's perspective. It feels great to be invited. Having people say "yes" to

your invitation also feels great. Imagine if no one says yes.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As a teaching tool, play a short clip from a video like this [one](#) (0:00–2:04) of a community showing up for a 5-year-old's birthday party. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this](#).
- Imagine putting yourself out there and having no one attend. Out of love for her daughter, this mom sent another set of invitations. There was a new invitation, and anyone who wanted to come could attend.
- We can invite people to a great friendship of knowing Jesus. But it's scary to give out that invite because maybe we're afraid of rejection or being laughed at, or we don't want to be associated with religious people who have hurt people we care about.
- What would it look like to be like Marlowe's mom and invite people without hesitation? Let's take a look at a story from the life of the Early Church and find out.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.
 - **What's your favorite game to play at a party?**
 - **What feeling comes up when you are intentionally included in something you want to be a part of? What about excluded?**
 - ★ **Do you feel like you are more likely to include people when they can do something for you? Why do you think that is?**

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Luke 14:12–14

- Jesus knew a simple invitation could change the lives of so many people. Jesus told a story about what bringing people to his party looked like.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Luke 14:12–14.
- Inviting people who could return the favor is a common way to think of a guest list. Your friend invited you to their birthday party, so you'll invite them to yours. Only people who already know each other will interact. A host might also strategically invite an "important" person to their dinner to force a return invitation.
- Jesus points this out and challenges his followers to think of God's party differently. Instead of inviting people perceived as powerful or in your social circle, we should ask the people on the margins of society—the poor, the blind, and those with disabilities.
- Think about those who don't get invited to a lot of parties. This act would demonstrate that the host cares about the people in attendance and not how the guests could serve them later.

SCRIPTURE | Luke 14:15–24

- One guest assumed they would undoubtedly be a part of God's kingdom, God's party. Jesus had this to say.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Luke 14:15–24.
- This story is a glimpse into how God's kingdom works. Jesus revealed how invitations to God's kingdom are rejected and accepted. God was throwing an incredible party, but people put their lives and work ahead of what God offered them.
- The first group of people invited in rejected the invitation at that moment. Jesus was talking directly to the religious leaders about the excuses they made for disregarding God's words. They assumed the invitation from God was only for them and treated it carelessly.

- The host asked his servants to go out and find people willing to come right then. The new guests didn't care about who was attending or what the party would look like. They just wanted to be included.
- The host specifically asked for people who were overlooked and ignored. When they filled the room, and there was still space, the host opened the invitation even further to people no one would have expected to be invited. Jesus was saying the type of people who wouldn't expect an invitation from God were the exact people who would be in God's kingdom.
- They were not too busy to notice God's work in the world. God will never leave willing and eager guests out. They will always have a seat at the table.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **Why do you think Jesus made it obvious that he gravitated toward the people and groups others might have overlooked?**
 - ★ **What does it tell us about God and God's character that the people in the parable are the people God wants to ensure are included?**

OBJECT LESSON | Blank Invitation

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, write "You're invited" on an otherwise blank card and put it into an envelope. Open it while you talk.*
- Imagine you check your mail and find an envelope like this inside. When you open it, it's just a simple card with two words—"You're invited." What would you do? Would you show up? Would you RSVP "Yes"?
 - There wasn't time for the host to add all the little details or design a prettier-looking invitation. Something was happening, and people needed to know. Would you go? Would you be hesitant?
 - Jesus' invitation is like this simple note. You don't have to know specific theology or every detail in the Bible to know you're invited. You can trust Jesus and say "Yes," and show up.
- If you've ever tried to plan a party, you might remember stressing over the details and wanting to make everything perfect.
- As much as we want to show our care through our party details, spending too much time on them might keep us from throwing a party. Imagine what your guests would miss out on if you let your fears get in the way.
- The same is true when we invite others to know Jesus. You don't need to know everything about God or have a perfect prayer life before inviting others to experience Jesus. You have a simple invitation that says, "You're invited." And that's enough!

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **If you had to put what this parable is inviting us to do in your own words, what would you say that is?**
 - ★ **What keeps you from inviting others into what Jesus is doing? How can you address that barrier?**

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 30:8–12

- If you feel left out or overlooked, Jesus' story reminds us of God's expansive invitation. The story doesn't

end at our arrival. We can start inviting other people in.

- One of the poems in the Old Testament shows us how God invites us to celebrate, even at our lowest points. No matter how tough our circumstances are, there's always an invitation to celebrate.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Psalm 30:8–12.*
- When the author of this psalm felt low, they noticed God's invitation to step into something new. When they did, they felt joy, and their wailing turned to dancing!
- God's invitation to us includes a partnership to act. People are waiting for help to find their dancing feet again. You can show God's joy and love in their lives.
- Through Jesus, God offers us and everyone we know the chance to attend a new party. When we say "Yes" to following Jesus, we also say "Yes" to inviting as many people as possible to participate in the party.
- Instead of sitting on the sidelines, hoping someone shows up for the people we care about, we can jump in with God to pass out invitations. We can tell others who Jesus is and what he has done for all of us.
- Jesus has invited us to the best party we could ever imagine. Now, we have the opportunity to do the same because **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | A Photo Backdrop Of Experiences

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you will need a large whiteboard (or a wall with white butcher paper), several [party streamers](#), tape, and pens. Teenagers will answer questions about Jesus on a streamer and tape it to the board. Include the slide in [this week's series of materials](#) to reference while reflecting. The streamers are a backdrop for a photo booth. At the end of your program, take photos in small groups using the backdrop. Consider playing some reflective music while they reflect.*
- After a great party, we might have stories, pictures, videos, or keepsakes to remember it. We can show these mementos off when sharing the experience, but it's not the same as being at the party.
- It would be so cool to pull people into the exact things we saw so they could be included in the party, too. We can do that when it comes to Jesus. Here are a few questions to answer that will help you figure out what to say about Jesus to others.
 - **WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT JESUS?** What are the ideas, words, or characteristics of Jesus that make him someone you want to follow? Is it the way he cared for people? The way he invited others? What makes you interested in following Jesus? Write down a few answers and start living out these characteristics in your life. People will notice how kindly you treat others.
 - **WHAT IS YOUR STORY WITH JESUS?** None of us would be connected to each other without Jesus. What else have you experienced, felt, and lived that's connected you to Jesus? How does it feel to be connected to Jesus? Share that story with others and invite them to start their own story.
- There are so many things to love about Jesus, more than words can convey. Hold on to key memories with Jesus so you can share them with others.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ☆ **Who is one person you know who includes and invites people into what God is doing well? What do they do well? What's something they do that you could do, too?**
 - **Read John 1:39–46. What do you think about Jesus' invitation to the disciples to take one**

- **small step to follow him? What is one step more you can take in responding to God's invitation?**
- **How can you also work this week to extend the invitation of belonging to those who need it most?**

RESPONSE | Relational Maps

- Whether you've been following Jesus or are new to faith, we are all asked to love others. Start thinking about and praying for the people in your life who would love to know God is inviting them to the party.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this response, every teen will need the blank half sheet of card stock and something to write with. Have them draw a small circle in the center of the paper with their name in it, then write the names of the people closest to them around the circle. Then, they can draw lines from the circle to the names of their friends. A solid line represents a strong relationship, three solid lines represent an unbreakable friendship, and a dotted line represents a strained friendship. Have them draw another circle encompassing all the friendships and write "God" at the top.*
- Each day, you have the chance to help people experience what Jesus is like so they can start seeing themselves at this party with God. Consider the people you wrote on your page, and talk to God about them.
- You can create new habits, continue old ones, or shift how you approach a relationship to open up God's invitation.
- You have the opportunity to be an incredible host who ensures everyone knows they can follow and be transformed by Jesus. You have been invited into something amazing, and **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

WEEK 6

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Invited

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

Jesus invites us to invite others.

BIBLE

Luke 14:12–24; Psalm 30:8–12; John 1:39–46

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Whenever we throw a party, we have the power to influence others in a pretty significant way—even if we're not aware of it. This week, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a great banquet and the difference an invitation can make. Jesus shows he'll go to great lengths to include people, and we can do the same because **Jesus invites us to invite others.**

- **What's your favorite game to play at a party?**
- **What feeling comes up when you are intentionally included in something you want to be a part of? What about excluded?**
- **Do you feel like you are more likely to include people when they can do something for you? Why do you think that is?**
- **Why do you think Jesus made it obvious that he gravitated toward the people and groups others might have overlooked?**
- **What does it tell us about God and God's character that the people in the parable are the people God wants to ensure are included?**
- **If you had to put what this parable is inviting us to do in your own words, what would you say that is?**
- **What keeps you from inviting others into what Jesus is doing? How can you address that barrier?**
- **Who is one person you know who includes and invites people into what God is doing well? What do they do well? What's something they do that you could do, too?**
- **Read John 1:39–46. What do you think about Jesus' invitation to the disciples to take one small step to follow him? What is one step more you can take in responding to God's invitation?**
- **How can you also work this week to extend the invitation of belonging to those who need it most?**

WEEK 6

DISCUSSION GUIDE *for middle schoolers*

Invited

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BIG IDEA

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BIBLE

Luke 14:12–24; Psalm 30:8–12; John 1:39–46

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LOOKING FOR A DEVOTIONAL?



GET THE BOOK!

GET IT ON THE BIBLE APP!



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DEVOTIONAL

for volunteers



There's nothing like throwing a party to celebrate the people you love. Be it for a birthday, an achievement, or a new chapter of life, parties give us a reason to gather, laugh, and create new memories together. And if we really stopped to look around, we'd find so many reasons to celebrate what's happening in our lives that the parties would never stop. In this 6-week series, we'll see what it's like when we celebrate all that God has done through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We'll celebrate that **with Jesus, everyone's invited**, and we'll **celebrate who Jesus is**. Then, we'll see how **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done, let Jesus make us new, follow the Holy Spirit's lead**, and how **Jesus invites us to invite others**.

To get ready for this teaching series, spend a few minutes each week **studying** the passages of Scripture we'll be teaching, **praying** about what God wants to do in and through us in the next few weeks, and **growing** by putting God's words into practice in your own life.

WEEK 1 With Jesus, everyone's invited.

Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy 4:29–31

STUDY

Take a moment to read the passages we're covering this week.
What stands out to you in this passage and why?

PRAY

This week, thank God for offering you an invitation.

GROW

So what's your next step? Do you need to accept God's invitation? Could you share about what God is doing? Do you need someone to remind you of the great thing God is inviting you into? Whatever your next step is right now, take it.

WEEK 2 We're invited to celebrate who Jesus is.

Luke 19:28–40; Psalm 126:2–3; 1 John 1:5

STUDY

Take a moment to read the passages we're covering this week.
What stands out to you in this passage and why?

PRAY

This week, thank God for sending Jesus into the world.

GROW

So what's your next step? Can you make a list to celebrate the things God has done in your life? Do you have stories you could share with others? Do you need help discovering who Jesus is to you? Whatever your next step is right now, take it.

WEEK 3 We're invited to remember what Jesus has done.

Luke 23; Isaiah 53:1–12; John 15:3

STUDY

Take a moment to read the passages we're covering this week.
What stands out to you in this passage and why?

PRAY

This week, thank God for sending Jesus to do what we couldn't do ourselves.

GROW

So what's your next step? Do you need to share about the things Jesus did? Is there someone you could take steps toward forgiving? Can you help someone feel the love of Jesus this week? Whatever your next step is right now, take it.

WEEK 4 We're invited to let Jesus make us new.

Luke 24:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–17

STUDY

Take a moment to read the passages we're covering this week.
What stands out to you in this passage and why?

PRAY

This week, ask God to help you bring new life wherever you go.

GROW

So what's your next step? Is there something keeping you from feeling like you've been made new? Do you have any habits that might need to change? How can you help show someone the new life Jesus offers this week? Whatever your next step is right now, take it.

WEEK 5 We're invited to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.

John 20:19–23; Acts 2:1–13; John 3:8

STUDY

Take a moment to read the passages we're covering this week.
What stands out to you in this passage and why?

PRAY

This week, ask God to help you follow the Holy Spirit closely.

GROW

So what's your next step? Can you learn more about the Holy Spirit and its role in your life? Do you need help discerning God's voice and guidance? Are there new habits or spiritual practices you can develop? Whatever your next step is right now, take it.

WEEK 6 Jesus invites us to invite others.

Luke 14:15–24; Psalm 30:8–12; John 1:39–46

STUDY

Take a moment to read the passages we're covering this week.
What stands out to you in this passage and why?

PRAY

This week, ask God to help you share Jesus' story through your words or actions.

GROW

So what's your next step? Can you write out your story with Jesus so far? Could you start a conversation about the things God has done in your life? Can you share Jesus with someone through your love and care this week? Whatever your next step is right now, take it.

DEVOTIONAL

for parents



There's nothing like throwing a party to celebrate the people you love. Be it for a birthday, an achievement, or a new chapter of life, parties give us a reason to gather, laugh, and create new memories together. And if we really stopped to look around, we'd find so many reasons to celebrate what's happening in our lives that the parties would never stop. In this 6-week series, we'll see what it's like when we celebrate all that God has done through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We'll celebrate that **with Jesus, everyone's invited**, and we'll **celebrate who Jesus is**. Then, we'll see how **we're invited to remember what Jesus has done, let Jesus make us new, follow the Holy Spirit's lead, and how Jesus invites us to invite others**.

Want to learn and grow alongside your kid as we go through this teaching series? You can! Spend a few minutes each week **studying** the passages of Scripture we'll be teaching, **praying** about what God wants to do in you and in your family, and **growing** by putting God's words into practice in your own life.

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Luke 15:11–32; Isaiah 55:1–3; Deuteronomy 4:29–31

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Luke 24:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–17

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**MARKETING
CHECKLIST**

Invited

BEFORE THE SERIES

✓	Print your Series Poster , Series Flyers , and Devotional Flyers , and display them where students, parents, and volunteers can see them.
✓	Customize your Volunteer Hub and Parent Hub web pages for this series.
✓	Customize and send the Parent Email for this series, along with the Parent Devotional .
✓	Customize and schedule your Volunteer Emails for each week of this series, and don't forget to include the Volunteer Devotional !
✓	Review and customize the suggested Social Media Posts and Captions for this series.
✓	Post the Bumper Video on social media with this caption: We're starting a new series on Easter this week called Invited. So invite a friend, and we will see you there!

AFTER WEEK 1

✓	Post the One-Minute Sermon Video for Week 1 on social media with this caption: In case you missed it, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others.
✓	Post the Big Idea Graphic for Week 1 on social media with this caption: Remember, because of Jesus, we don't have to wonder if we made God's invite list. We know exactly how God feels about us.
✓	Post the Memory Verse on social media by posting either the graphics provided, a video of someone reciting the verse, or a creative way one of your students is memorizing it.
✓	Send the Volunteer Email for next week of this series.

AFTER WEEK 2

✓	Post the One-Minute Sermon Video for Week 2 on social media with this caption: In case you missed it, we looked at how Jesus was celebrated as a king when he entered Jerusalem.
✓	Post the Big Idea Graphic for Week 2 on social media with this caption: Remember, the early followers of Jesus saw that God was at work in their lives. They saw God in Jesus and knew precisely what God was like.
✓	Post the Memory Verse on social media by posting either the graphics provided, a video of someone reciting the verse, or a creative way one of your students is memorizing it.
✓	Send the Volunteer Email for next week of this series.

AFTER WEEK 3

✓	Post the One-Minute Sermon Video for Week 3 on social media with this caption: In case you missed it, we read the story of Jesus' crucifixion and saw why it was such an important event for us all.
✓	Post the Big Idea Graphic for Week 3 on social media with this caption: Remember, Jesus died on the cross to rescue us. Through him, we no longer need to be separated from God by evil and death.
✓	Post the Memory Verse on social media by posting either the graphics provided, a video of someone reciting the verse, or a creative way one of your students is memorizing it.
✓	Send the Volunteer Email for next week of this series.

AFTER WEEK 4

✓	Post the One-Minute Sermon Video for Week 4 on social media with this caption: In case you missed it, we heard about what happened when some of Jesus' followers showed up at his tomb after his crucifixion and discovered Jesus was doing something new in the world.
✓	Post the Big Idea Graphic for Week 4 on social media with this caption: Remember, Jesus makes the entire world brand new. His death wasn't the end of hope — it was just the beginning.
✓	Post the Memory Verse on social media by posting either the graphics provided, a video of someone reciting the verse, or a creative way one of your students is memorizing it.
✓	Send the Volunteer Email for next week of this series.

AFTER WEEK 5

✓	<p>Post the One-Minute Sermon Video for Week 5 on social media with this caption:</p> <p>In case you missed it, we read what Jesus said to his disciples right before he left them so they would continue his ministry without him.</p>
✓	<p>Post the Big Idea Graphic for Week 5 on social media with this caption:</p> <p>Remember, the Holy Spirit helps lead us into moments of connection and purpose, as well as through times of loneliness and confusion.</p>
✓	<p>Post the Memory Verse on social media by posting either the graphics provided, a video of someone reciting the verse, or a creative way one of your students is memorizing it.</p>
✓	<p>Send the Volunteer Email for next week of this series.</p>

AFTER WEEK 6

✓	<p>Post the One-Minute Sermon Video for Week 6 on social media with this caption:</p> <p>In case you missed it, we looked at Jesus' parable about a great banquet and the lengths he goes to in order to include people.</p>
✓	<p>Post the Big Idea Graphic for Week 6 on social media with this caption:</p> <p>Remember, Jesus has invited us to the best party we could ever have imagined, and now, we have the opportunity to do the same for others.</p>
✓	<p>Post the Memory Verse on social media by posting either the graphics provided, a video of someone reciting the verse, or a creative way one of your students is memorizing it.</p>
✓	<p>Get ready for the next series!</p>

**SOCIAL MEDIA
POSTS & CAPTIONS**

Invited

Need some help deciding what to post on social media before and during this series? Here's our suggestion: each week, share the media we've provided in your Graphics and Videos folder using the captions below.

BEFORE THE SERIES



BUMPER VIDEO

We're starting a new series on Easter this week called Invited. So invite a friend, and we will see you there!

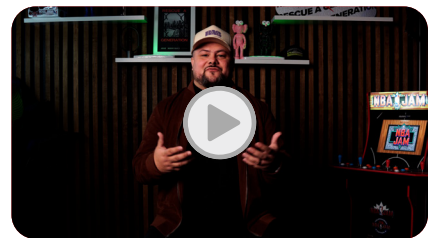
AFTER WEEK 1



ONE-MINUTE SERMON VIDEO

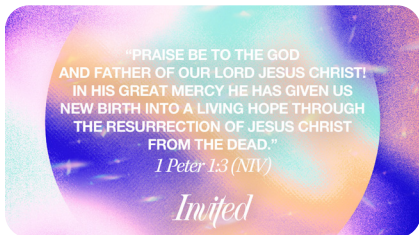
In case you missed it, we'll hear Jesus' parable about a lost son and see how an invitation can change the way we view ourselves and others.

AFTER WEEK 2



ONE-MINUTE SERMON VIDEO

In case you missed it, we looked at how Jesus was celebrated as a king when he entered Jerusalem.



"PRAISE BE TO THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! IN HIS GREAT MERCY HE HAS GIVEN US NEW BIRTH INTO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD."
1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

Invited



WITH JESUS,
everyone's invited

Invited

BIG IDEA

Remember, because of Jesus, we don't have to wonder if we made God's invite list. We know exactly how God feels about us.



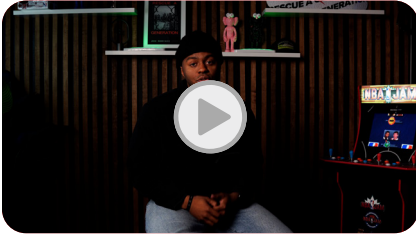
WE'RE INVITED TO CELEBRATE
who Jesus is.

Invited

BIG IDEA

Remember, the early followers of Jesus saw that God was at work in their lives. They saw God in Jesus and knew precisely what God was like.

AFTER WEEK 3



ONE-MINUTE SERMON VIDEO

In case you missed it, we read the story of Jesus' crucifixion and saw why it was such an important event for us all.

AFTER WEEK 4



ONE-MINUTE SERMON VIDEO

In case you missed it, we heard about what happened when some of Jesus' followers showed up at his tomb after his crucifixion and discovered Jesus was doing something new in the world.

AFTER WEEK 5



ONE-MINUTE SERMON VIDEO

In case you missed it, we read what Jesus said to his disciples right before he left them so they would continue his ministry without him.



BIG IDEA

Remember, Jesus died on the cross to rescue us. Through him, we no longer need to be separated from God by evil and death.



BIG IDEA

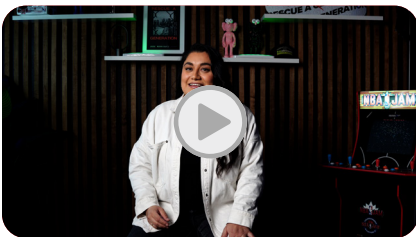
Remember, Jesus makes the entire world brand new. His death wasn't the end of hope — it was just the beginning.



BIG IDEA

Remember, the Holy Spirit helps lead us into moments of connection and purpose, as well as through times of loneliness and confusion.

AFTER WEEK 6



ONE-MINUTE SERMON VIDEO

In case you missed it, we looked at Jesus' parable about a great banquet and the lengths he goes to in order to include people.



BIG IDEA

Remember, Jesus has invited us to the best party we could ever have imagined, and now, we have the opportunity to do the same for others.

ONE-MINUTE SERMONS

VIDEO LINKS



INSTRUCTIONS

In addition to your full teaching time each week, we recommend **posting a video summary of your message in one minute or less**. We've already filmed these 1-Minute Sermon Videos for you and included them in your downloads but if you want to film your own, we've included the scripts in your downloads too. Make your own, or post ours – whatever you want!

AUG	<p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD!</p> <p>OPEN IN FOLDER</p>	
SEP	<p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD!</p> <p>OPEN IN FOLDER</p>	
OCT	<p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD!</p> <p>OPEN IN FOLDER</p>	
NOV	<p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD!</p> <p>OPEN IN FOLDER</p>	
DEC	<p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD!</p> <p>OPEN IN FOLDER</p>	
JAN	<p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD!</p> <p>OPEN IN FOLDER</p>	

FEB	 <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD! OPEN IN FOLDER</p> 
MAR	 <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD! OPEN IN FOLDER</p> 
APR	 <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD! OPEN IN FOLDER</p> 
MAY	 <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD! OPEN IN FOLDER</p> 
JUN	 <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD! OPEN IN FOLDER</p> 
JUL	 <p>CLICK THE WEEK YOU'D LIKE TO DOWNLOAD! OPEN IN FOLDER</p> 

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