

July 14 & 15

Throw a Great Party

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Introduction

In his sermon "Throw a Great Party," Pastor Jesse Tink is kicking off week one of our series *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* As we explore what the Bible says about being a godly neighbor, Pastor Jesse leads us into a perspective shift: Jesus is throwing a party, and everyone is invited. Jesus is our perfect and greatest example of what it means to be a neighbor and include others. Although He was born into a very exclusive people group, Jesus continuously walked with, talked to and drew in people regardless of who they were. Understanding this about Jesus helps us become a more Christ-like, invitational neighbor.

Discussion

1. As Pastor Jesse stated, most of us remember a time when we were an outsider wanting to be an insider. From the sermon passages in Luke, list the ways Jesus was invitational to outsiders. How does Jesus's life, death and resurrection influence our desire to be "invited"?
2. **Read John 2:1-12.** In your own words, describe how Jesus used His first miracle to show He had an invitation for all people. Discuss why this is significant for us.
3. Have you experienced a time where you've held back from going deeper with a neighbor because they were different from you? Discuss these experiences, and consider how a focus on Jesus' example could change your response in future interactions.
4. **Read Matthew 9:13-15.** This is an example of a category of people (children) who the disciples viewed as unworthy of an invitation to the table. How did Jesus treat the children? What does this mean for us as we interact with people who the world may see as insignificant?

Do Something

1. Choose a passage used in this week's sermon and dig into it using the COMA method (Context, Observation, Message, Application).
2. Ask God if there is a person or community whom you need to extend an invitation to. If God places someone on your heart, share this with the group, and hold each other accountable.
3. Who in your life is a godly example of an invitational neighbor? Use him or her as a resource to become more Christ-like on your mission to bless and include your neighbors.

Resources

1. The Practice of Include: Knocking Down Barriers (June 2016 sermon by John Fuller)
2. *Sometimes it Takes a Party* by Reggie Joiner is a free e-book, which can be accessed at starttheparty.org.