Preschool–Grade 6

The Great Supper

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: Come when God calls. God invites everyone, and nothing is worth making an excuse to Him.
Bible passage: Luke 14:1, 14:12–24. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." *Luke 14:17 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), paper and a pencil for each child, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: The Best Excuse (5–10 minutes)

Put kids in teams with paper and a pencil. Read a situation, and each team writes the best-sounding excuse they can in one minute: 1) You didn't do your homework. 2) You didn't clean your room. 3) You didn't come when your mom called you for dinner. Teams read their excuses, and the class votes on the best one. Ask: *Even if an excuse sounds good, does it change what you did?* Say: "Today Jesus tells about people with good-sounding excuses, and what they missed."

2. Bible story: All Things Are Ready (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Luke 14. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

At a Pharisee's table. Jesus went to eat bread on the sabbath day in the house of one of the chief Pharisees, the religious leaders (Luke 14:1). He told the man who invited Him that when he made a feast, he should "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," who could not pay him back (14:12–14). **Look up Luke 14:15.** One of the guests said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." So Jesus told this story.

The invitation. A certain man made a great supper and **bade** (invited) many (14:16). **Look up Luke 14:17.** At supper time he sent his servant to say to those who were **bidden** (invited), "Come; for all things are now ready."

The excuses. Look up Luke 14:18. "They all with one consent began to make excuse." **With one consent** means all alike, every one of them. The first had bought a piece of ground and said he **must needs** (had to) go and see it. The second had bought five **yoke** of oxen (five pairs, ten oxen) and was going to **prove** them, which means try them out (14:19). The third had married a wife and said, "I cannot come" (14:20).

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Bring them in. The servant told his lord these things. The master of the house was angry, and said, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city," and bring in "the poor, and the **maimed**," people missing a hand or a foot or badly hurt, "and the **halt**," people who could not walk well, "and the blind" (14:21). **Look up Luke 14:22.** The servant said, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."

Fill my house. Look up Luke 14:23. The lord said, "Go out into the highways and hedges," the country roads and the bushes along them, "and **compel** them to come in," which means urge them strongly, "that my house may be filled." Then he said that none of the men who were first bidden would taste of his supper (14:24). They missed it because they would not come.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. A field, oxen, a wedding: none of these things is bad. So why were the excuses wrong (14:18–20)?
2. The servant said "all things are now ready" (14:17). The guests didn't have to bring or do anything but come. What does that tell us about God's invitation?
3. The master brought in the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind (14:21). Jesus had just said to invite people like this (14:13). Who are people at school or church that others leave out? How could you invite them?
4. "Yet there is room" (14:22). What do you think that tells us about God?
5. What excuses do people make today for not coming to God? What excuses do you make?

Recall questions

1. How many yoke of oxen did the second man buy? *(Five, Luke 14:19)*
2. Where did the servant go first to bring people in? *(Into the streets and lanes of the city, 14:21)*
3. Where did the servant go next? *(Into the highways and hedges, 14:23)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old word: **bidden** means invited. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God is inviting you, and all things are ready. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: notice one excuse you make to God (to skip praying, reading your Bible or obeying) and come anyway. Invite someone who is often left out to sit with you or to come to church.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Luke 14:1: Whose house was Jesus eating in? *(One of the chief Pharisees)*
2. Luke 14:13: Who did Jesus say to call to a feast? *(The poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind)*
3. Luke 14:16: How many did the man bid? *(Many)*
4. Luke 14:17: When did he send his servant? *(At supper time)*
5. Luke 14:18: What had the first man bought? *(A piece of ground)*
6. Luke 14:19: What was the second man going to do with his oxen? *(Prove them)*
7. Luke 14:22: What did the servant say was left? *(Room: "yet there is room")*
8. Luke 14:23: Why did the lord want them to come in? *("That my house may be filled")*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for inviting us and for having room for everyone. Help us come when You call, with no excuses, and help us invite people others leave out. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

About the guests: say "the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind" kindly; the master wanted them at his table. **About 14:24:** keep it plain and gentle: the men who would not come missed the supper. God wants everyone to come.

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