



# Bible Heroes

## Parable of the Banquet Guests

## Teachers Story notes

Essential Teachers notes:

There are two tellings of this story, and if you'll forgive the huge simplification, the telling in Luke pretty much sticks to the bare bones of the story, the idea that there was a banquet where everyone uninvited was welcomed. The Matthew one by contrast puts in some deep symbolism, it ups the banquet to a wedding, talks about the servants being killed when they went to collect the guests, and ends with a puzzling passage about a man being thrown out for dressing incorrectly. All these are great to explore further with older groups but I've stuck to the simple form for this retelling.

Tell this story or a similar one of your choice from a favourite bible translation or story book. This version is supplied for inspiration, feel free to omit or embellish to give it your personal voice.

Main Passage : Luke 14

Additional Passage : Matthew 22

It was hard to explain quite what God's kingdom would look like to Jesus' friends, so Jesus told stories instead. One of his favourite images was a big party, a banquet with many guests.

"A man prepared a huge party" Jesus told his friends, they settled down to listen, they all loved Jesus' stories

"the tables were set with huge platters of food, the room was decorated, the smell of freshly roasted meat hung in the air as the servants made sure every place had plates and goblets for wine"

Then the man shouted everything was ready, it was time to go fetch the guests he had invited. The hall went quiet as many servants left and the man waited.

Slowly the servants started to arrive back, but they were alone.

"Where are the guests the man questioned, tears in his eyes"

"The one I went to collect has a new field he must tend" said one servant.

"The one I went to collect is newly married and will not leave" said another.

"Mine has 5 new oxen and would like to try them out" said a third.

Slowly each servant reported their excuse to the man until he shouted in anger "stop" for not a single invited guest had arrived.

The man stood up and looked at the wonderful party he had prepared

"It seems those I invited did not deserve to come." he said to himself. Then raising his voice so the servants could hear he gave them new instructions "Go out to the town, go into the city, go to the back streets where the poor and the lame and the blind lay and invite all you find."

And so the servants went. They brought everyone they met, the good, the bad, the poor, the rich, the young, the old, everyone who could come did. But there was still room so the man sent his servants to the country roads, the tiny villages, the footpaths and the hills until the hall was bursting with people enjoying the banquet."

Jesus' sat back and looked at his friends. He could see them picturing the hall full of all those different people - some looked horrified that they were all mixed together, others delighted. The kingdom of heaven was going to be noisy and smelly and chaotic and joyful and this was just a whisper of what was in store.

**Today's hero is the banquet host because he shows us the gift of an open door**

