

A PLACE AT THE

TABLE

FOR EVERYONE

**YOUTH
BIBLE STUDIES**



OFFERING FOR
GLOBAL MISSIONS

BECAUSE PRESENCE MATTERS

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Because Presence Matters

**FIELD PERSONNEL FOCUS: Scarlett Jasper
Kentucky**

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: Luke 14:12-14

INTRODUCTION

Then Jesus said to the person who had invited him, “When you host a lunch or dinner, don’t invite your friends, your brothers and sisters, your relatives, or rich neighbors. If you do, they will invite you in return and that will be your reward.

Instead, when you give a banquet, invite the poor, crippled, lame, and blind.

And you will be blessed because they can’t repay you. Instead, you will be repaid when the just are resurrected.”

PREPARATION

1. Mail invitations to your group for this study. Include the time, place and dates for each of these three sessions. A sample is included. All videos are available at www.cbf.net/ogm. Direct links are provided below.
2. Read Luke 14:12-14 and watch the overview video “A Place at the Table for Everyone” <https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181152>.
 - Mike: “*The Offering for Global Missions means that we can be with the people here not just for one year or two years and then go home, but that we can be here long-term, serving the community and learning the things we need to know to do the work more effectively.*”
3. The offering video is: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732207605>
4. Each session also has three video clips sharing stories of CBF’s ministry of presence and the impact felt by those who have experienced the invitation to shared life around the table.



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SESSION 1

Preview the video clips for this session:

- Kimberley—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181138>
- Darrell—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181060>
- Glynda—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181078>

1. Set up the room with the chairs in a wide circle and a small table in the center. Place elements for communion (cup/bread) in the center of the table each week. Have additional tables and chairs—more than needed for your group—in a nearby closet or corner of the room.
2. Welcome students as they arrive and give them a pair of scissors and a copy of “Fit at the Feast.” Explain that they are to fit as many of the squares (chairs) around the table as possible. Since this represents a real table setting, remind them they need to be as realistic as possible.
3. After they have had time to complete the challenge, **invite** them (feel free to overuse this word to help emphasize it during our study) to place their finished “tables” on the table in the center of the room, and **invite** them all to pull their own chairs up to this small table to examine the entries and declare a winner of the “Fit at the Feast” challenge. Give a prize to the person who was able to fit the most around the table. **Invite** the group to answer: **Was this easy or hard? Why?**
4. They will likely complain that there were more “chairs” than would fit around the table. This will probably echo their complaint as you invited them to move their chairs around the small center table that there wasn’t enough room there either.
5. Ask: **How could we solve that problem on paper? And how could we solve that problem here in our meeting space?**
6. The obvious answer will be: “Get a bigger table!”
Reveal your bigger table from the closet/corner and set it up so that everyone can now sit comfortably around the expanded table(s).



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7. Ask the group to share about a time they felt uninvited or left out. How did that feel?
8. Ask for a volunteer to read the passage from Luke 14:12-14.
9. Ask what it means to have “A Place at the Table” and have a volunteer list the answers on a whiteboard or piece of newsprint.
10. Introduce the videos about Scarlettte Jasper’s *Ministry of Presence* in Corbin, Kentucky. (Depending on time and on your group, you may choose to show all three.) Ask the group to listen for what is said about having “A Place at the Table” so that you can add these descriptions to the list you just made.

Darrell—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181060>

- Darrell says: “A place at the table means, to me, it’s a spot for you here! The white flag used to mean ‘I’m giving up;’ but this flag here to me means ‘hope.’”

Kimberley—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181138>

- In Kimberley’s video, Scarlettte says: “We’re all made in the image of God, so we all have a place at the table together.”

Glynda—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181078>

- Glynda says: “A Place at the Table” means anyone can have a seat... without judgment. They can bring what they have to offer. They don’t have to just receive, but they can also bring it to the table.”

11. After watching and adding any new descriptions to your list, ask youth if they have any new insights into what it means to have “A Place at the Table.” Ask if they realize that money they put in *our* offering plates goes to help Scarlettte Jasper aid people struggling in Kentucky.

In closing, tell the group they are **invited** over the next two weeks to meet some more friends who are making “A Place at the Table.” Ask them to brainstorm some ways they are—or can become—part of the *ministry of presence* that is **inviting** others to have a “Place at the Table.” List these on your whiteboard or newsprint.

Gather your group around the table and hold hands. Pray something like this:

God, you have invited every one of us to join this circle. And it feels good to be included and to be holding onto someone else’s hand. Help us realize there are others outside this circle longing to be invited in. So, as we leave and let go of each other, help our hands reach out to someone else, so we might invite them to a place at the table too. Amen.



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**FIELD PERSONNEL FOCUS: Mike and Brooke
Southeast Asia**

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: Luke 14:12-14

SESSION 2

Preview the video clips for this session at www.cbf.net/ogm or using the direct links below.

- Rio—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181069>
- Yuliana—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/723882436>
- Alfons—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181105>

For this session, we will be talking about the importance of light; so, you will need to make your room as dark as possible. If your usual meeting space does not have that option, consider using another setting in the church where the room can be darkened. You may need a monitor to keep youth from turning on the lights until you're ready.

1. Again, set up the room with the chairs in a wide circle and with a small table in the center. Place elements for communion (cup/bread) in the center of the table and *add an unlit candle this week*. Have additional tables and chairs—more than needed for your group—in a nearby closet or corner of the room. Also, have extra candles ready for each student.
2. As youth arrive, welcome them as usual and if anyone questions you about why the room is so dark, listen for their groans when you reply “You’ll see as soon as we start talking about the *power of God’s invitation to a Place at the Table.*”
3. Remembering that your room will be darkened, divide the group in half.
 - **Invite** one group to list on a whiteboard or on newsprint things that require electricity in their homes.
 - **Invite** the other group to list things you **cannot** do in the dark.

(Although most will probably immediately use the lights on their phones, depending on your group, you may want to let them struggle with this for awhile before allowing that.)

4. Have each group share their list. **Invite** the group to choose the top three items from each list, and number them one through three with one being the thing that must be the last thing disconnected if power is limited.



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5. Share that, “Today, we will be learning about something most of us only think about when our phones are dying: how important electricity is!”
6. Light the candle on your center table and **invite** someone to read the focal passage from Luke 14:12-14. As the passage is read, **invite** everyone to stand when they hear the word **invite** and to stay standing until they hear it again. (They should stand/sit twice since it appears four times in the text.)
7. Ask, “**How many times did you hear the word “invite”?** Why do you think it was so prominent in this short passage?”
8. Remind youth that Jesus was constantly criticized for hanging out with “the wrong people”—ie: not “church folks.” But Jesus didn’t care about those distinctions because Jesus had come to tear down the walls that separate us and to **invite** all of us to have “A Place at the Table.”
9. Introduce the videos about Mike and Brooke’s *Ministry of Presence* in Southeast Asia. (Depending on time and on your group, you may choose to show all three.) Ask the group to listen for what is said about having “A Place at the Table” so that you can add these descriptions to the list you made last week.

Rio—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181069>

- Pastor Daniel says: “I think this is a blessing from God. God answers our prayers through our brothers and sisters in Christ by giving us solar energy.”
- Mike shares one pastor’s thanks: “Because now we have this light, we can more effectively be the Light of the world.”

Yuliana—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/723882436>

- Yuliana says: “I believe that God is here and helps; but I also want more of my friends to believe in God too.”

Alfons—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181105>

- Alfons says: “A place at the table means that everyone should be invited and eat equally, together, like a family, like my family.”

10. After watching the video, ask youth to review the lists they made in the beginning of this session. Ask if any of the priorities on those lists have changed and why.
11. Remind youth that Mike and Brooke have been invited to make a difference in Southeast Asia because they saw a very basic problem (no electricity) and offered a solution (solar panels). Because of their *ministry of presence*, people are able to study God’s word, churches are growing, and people are learning that they have “A Place at the Table.”



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12. As you distribute candles to each youth, say, ***“Lighting a candle is one of the simplest ways to dispel the darkness. What is something simple you can do to shine God’s light this week?”***

13. ***Invite*** youth to ponder the question and to respond when the light reaches their candle. Light one of their candles from the candle on your table and ***invite*** them to pass the light to each other until everyone’s candle is lighted. As they receive the light, they should respond to the question ***“What is something simple you can do to shine God’s light this week?”***

14. Close with the reminder of the pastor’s words from the video: “Because now we have this light, we can more effectively be the Light of the world.”



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**FIELD PERSONNEL FOCUS: Rick Burnette
Florida**

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: Luke 14:12-14

SESSION 3

Preview the video clips for this session at www.cbf.net/ogm or using the direct links below.

- Miguel—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181121>
- Felipa—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181089>
- Maria—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/723884186>

1. Set up the room with the chairs in a wide circle and a small table in the center. Place elements for communion (cup/bread) in the center of the table. For the first two sessions, these elements have just been symbolic; but today you should be prepared to serve them. (Make sure your church doesn't have an issue with this.) You will also want to place some extra food on the center table. Fresh fruits and vegetables would be perfect for this session which is about fresh fruits and vegetables, but anything is fine.
2. Also, for this final session, set up one or more tables with enough space for most of the students to occupy. Leave a small number of chairs around the small center table.
3. Make copies of "Immokalee Economy" to cut apart and pass out to youth. Give five random "bills"—random amounts—to each youth as they arrive, but only distribute enough of those labeled "one" to match the number of chairs at your small center table, and do not offer any explanations. Encourage them to travel the room to see what everyone else received and whether anyone else wants to trade with them.
4. After youth have had enough time to barter, call the group together and see who thinks they "won." Youth will likely guess that more is better, but they will be wrong.
5. **Invite** those holding bills marked "one" to come forward and give them a seat at the center table. If only one person has collected all those bills, only one person sits at the center table. **Invite** everyone else to sit at the other tables.
6. Ask, "**What did you think was the point of this game with these slips of paper?** (Get as much as possible) **What does the real point seem to be?**" (Life's not fair.)



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7. Remind youth that Jesus came to reorient our way of thinking to God's way. **Invite** someone to read Luke 14:12-14 for the group.
8. Say, "**Why do you think Jesus said to invite the poor, crippled, lame, and blind?**" After youth offer possibilities, remind them that in Jesus' day, not only were all of these ailments considered God's judgment for sin, but that it also meant these people were excluded from the community of faith. And because fellowship around meals was a vital part of their culture, they literally had no "Place at the Table."

But Jesus turns that upside down and says that these people whom we are likely to exclude are **exactly** whom God **invites** into the kingdom—a kingdom where the last are first and the first are last!

9. Remind youth to look at where they are sitting and to notice the center table with all of the food on it. Ask, "**How is our situation today like Jesus' statement in Luke 14?**"
10. Introduce the videos about Rick Burnette and CBF's *Ministry of Presence* in Florida. (Depending on time and on your group, you may choose to show all three.) Ask the group to listen for what is said about having "A Place at the Table" so that you can add these descriptions to the list you have made over the last two weeks.

Miguel—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181121>

- Miguel says: "If you really want to learn about anyone else's culture, get the time and the chance to sit with other people to eat. That's the best place. Because when people are eating, they literally open their hearts. So, when you feed them the culturally appropriate food, you are feeding not just stomachs, but heart and souls too. And that makes a huge difference."

Felipa—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/732181089>

- Felipa says: "A place at the table means we would have what is needed to live with the family. To have what is necessary...the food to live together. I feel grateful because this is a beautiful community to live in."
- Rick says: "We come together, and we do what we do, so that others have more. That's God's economy."

Maria—<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9691005/video/723884186>

- Maria says: "A Place at the Table means we are all ready or prepared to have food on the table."
- Rick says: "She knows everything that is going on in Immokalee...and as a recipient, she's also a donor."



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11. After watching the videos, ask, ***“Have you ever thought that the people who pick our food might struggle to feed themselves? Will this make a difference the next time we eat fresh fruit or vegetables? How can we change so that these people can also have ‘A Place at the Table?’”***
12. Conclude this session by sharing fresh fruit and veggies and communion with the group. You might do this by ***inviting*** those sitting at the center table to share/serve the others. Remind youth that Jesus served the disciples by washing their feet on that night, and Jesus ***invites*** us to follow his example and serve.
12. Remind them that the communion table symbolizes that Jesus did not even exclude Judas from that meal, but Jesus welcomes ALL to the table. You might also ***invite*** the youth to connect the tables so that you have one large table big enough for all.

After all, everyone has “A Place at the Table.”



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