

## New Year New Me

### Luke 14:15-24

- \*What sort of excuses does the servant get from those who were invited to the banquet?
- \*Do we believe their excuses? Why, or why not?
- \*What do those reasons tell us about these invited guests?
- \*What do these excuses tell us about their relationship with the host?
- \*Are there ways we resemble these guests?
- \*What are the possible implications of that similarity?
- \*What is the response of the host when he is told of the excuses?
- \*How would you tell this parable in a modern context? Does it need to be changed much?
- \*In what ways do you allow the day-to-day busyness of life keep you from joining in with Jesus?
- \*Put yourself in the shoes of the people on the street who got the last-minute invitation. How would you have felt?
- \*How can you hold on to and remember that feeling?
- \*How do you cultivate your heart, so you are aware of the invitations to join Jesus at the feast?
- \*What will it take to slow our lives down so that we are not among the ones who get excluded from the feast because we are too busy?
- \*What is the message from this parable that you would share with those who know Jesus?
- \*Would you tell the story differently to someone who does not know Jesus?

### This year

**Take some time to pray for the ability to keep Jesus in the center and not miss his invitations to come and feast with him.**

### Luke 9:57-62

- \*Do you think Jesus wants all of His disciples to without reserve follow Him?
- \*Is this what this passage is about? Why or why not?
- \*Why does Jesus three times not encourage but warn His disciples after they express their willingness to follow Him?
- \*Usually we never add any caution to them following Jesus. Is this good or bad?
- \*In thinking about Luke 9:58, we see that Jesus is challenging those who say they want to follow Him by telling them it is not always easy to follow Jesus. Share some examples of how it might be difficult to follow Jesus in His day.

- \*And in this Day and time?
- \*As we think about Luke 9:60, do we try to make bargains with Jesus?
- \*Do we sometimes think that we are in charge?
- \*What particular problem is Jesus targeting among His professing disciples in Luke 9:62?
- \*Is consistency a problem behind Christians that you know? (Or yourself?)
- \*What is the root problem behind persistence in faith?
- \*How do you think about Christians that are inconsistent in their faith?
- \*After reading Luke 9:57-62, how would you answer the person who asked you, "What is a Christian?"

### **Mark 2:1-5**

- \*What was Jesus focused on when the people gathered together?
- \*What were many of the people gathered for?
- \*What do we learn from verse 4 about the houses the people lived in?
- \*Why did they go to such great effort for Jesus to see this paralytic?
- \*Why was Jesus not worried about the damage done to roof?
- \*Why do you think Jesus only said to the one man that his sins were forgiven instead of to all five?
- \*What did He see in that situation that we cannot?
- \*In this passage what is the relationship between their faith and their works?

### **2 Peter 1:5-11**

- \*If God has already granted us everything we need for a successful spiritual life, then how does making "every effort" fit into the equation?
- \*How does God's work and our work fit together?
- \*Share some ways believers could make "every effort" to do the things described in verses 5-7.
- \*How are the qualities Peter mentions connected with faith?
- \*Share one specific way you will make an effort in one specific quality Peter mentions this week.
- \*Peter says, "if these qualities are yours and are increasing." Are they?
- \*What do we learn from this statement about the life of a disciple?
- \*If having these qualities keeps you from being unfruitful, then what are the marks of the unfruitful life? And what is Peter's view of fruit in this verse?
- \*Is this person who lacks these qualities (verse 9) saved or not?

\*What would you say to a person who professes faith, but does not appear to be growing or showing these qualities?

\*How could you use verses 9-10 to help people reach an assurance of salvation?

\*How could you use verses 9-10 to challenge people who maybe shouldn't have an assurance of salvation?

\*How can you be diligent to confirm your calling and election?

### **Galatians 2:20-21**

\*What does it mean for me to be crucified with Christ? I wasn't physically there.

\*How do I ensure that Christ is living in me, and guiding me more than my own thoughts and desires?

\*How do I learn to rely first on my faith in God?

\*Define "grace". How do I show grace in the same manner that God shows it to me?

\*Define "righteousness".

\*What do I gain from Christ's death?