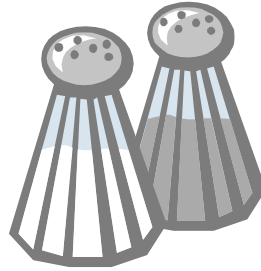


SPICE RACK®

E-Curriculum



by Mark DeVries

“JESUS ON PARTYING”

Matthew 22:1-22

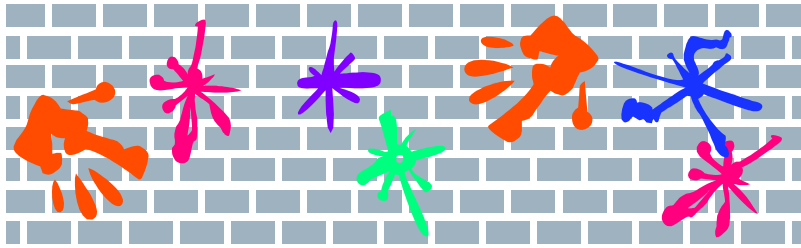
- I. Gathering (Attendance, Announcements, First Timers)
- II. Engaging the Brain

- A. Have the room set up like a party before the group comes in.



1. You can be as simple or as elaborate as you want with this one.
2. You can have streamers, and cake and ice cream, or you can just bring M&M's or cookies to class today.
3. If anyone asks what the class is celebrating, simply explain that it is just a way to reinforce the point of the lesson today.

B. Graffiti Sheets



1. Hang graffiti sheets on the walls around the room, with a different one of these questions or phrases on each one:
 - a. Christians should never be known as being in the “partying” crowd.
 - b. How would Jesus feel at a typical party of folks at your school?
 - c. I don’t think Jesus would ever go to a party where...
 - d. Partying is all about...
2. Hand each student a crayon when he or she comes in, and ask him or her to write a comment on each of the graffiti sheets.
3. You could have some “party” music playing in the background as the group is completing the graffiti sheets.
4. Once everyone has had the chance to write his or her graffiti, review out loud the responses that the class made on the graffiti sheets.
5. Process Questions
 - a. Was there anything you heard from the sheets that might make people react strongly?
 - b. Can you think of any places in the Scripture that talk about partying?

C. Nutty Newspaper Wedding Gown



1. Bring a pile of old newspapers and some masking tape (of course, duct tape always comes in handy) to class today.
2. Divide the class into 2 or three teams.
3. Give each team a pile of newspapers and some tape.
4. Explain that the teams will have three minutes to “dress” at least one of their members in wedding clothes, using the newspapers and tape to create the wedding gown (For example, they could take a newspaper and fashionably tape it to their “bride’s” head as the veil)
5. Explain that if any group has time, they can do more than one person (a bride and a groom for example).
6. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
7. Have each group pick the person they are going to dress in wedding clothes.
8. Give the groups three minutes to complete their wedding outfits (longer if they are really getting into it).

9. After time is up, have each group present their models, explaining the fashion features of each design to the rest of the class.

10. Process Questions

- ➔ Based on what we have done so far in class today, do you have any idea what we might be talking about?
- ➔ What does the Bible have to say about weddings?
- ➔ Can you think of any good wedding parties in the Bible?

D. Candid Camera or Candid Recorder: “Partying”

1. Before Class (the fellowship hall just before Sunday School could work), record (audio or video) kids’ and adults’ responses to the following questions.

a. Questions For Kids

- 1) What words come to your mind when you hear the word “party?”
- 2) What words do you think come to your parents’ minds when they hear the word “party?”
- 3) What words do you think came to Jesus’ mind when he heard the word party?

b. For Adults:

- 1) What words come to your mind when you hear the word “party”?
- 2) What words do you think come to teenagers’ minds when they hear the word “party”?
- 3) What words do you think came to Jesus’ mind when he heard the word “party”?

2. If there is a student in the class who needs “a mission,” assign him or her the task of pulling together this recording during the week.

3. Bring the recording to class today, explaining to the group that you have asked a random sample of people to give their input on the topic of “partying.”

4. Before playing the tape, ask the group members to listen to the responses and to be prepared to make at least one observation about what they have heard.

5. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.

6. Play the tape.

7. Process Questions

- ➔ Fill me in. What are parties like for most kids at your school?
- ➔ What did you notice about the difference between the responses of the kids and the responses of the adults?
- ➔ What did you hear that you agreed with?
- ➔ What did you hear that you had trouble agreeing with?
- ➔ Can you think of anywhere in the Bible that the whole topic of “partying” is addressed?

III. Igniting the Heart

A. Small Groups: “Top That Question”/”Top That Answer”

1. Divide the group into teams of four-ish each (younger grades may need an adult in each group).
2. Make sure every group has at least one Bible or a copy of the text for today, Matthew 22:1-22
3. Explain how first round of the game will work.
 - a. After reading through the story at least once, the groups will have three minutes to come up with all the questions (in writing) they can about the story they have just read.
 - b. Once time is called, each team will turn in its the collection of questions, and the teams will be awarded 10 points for every question they came up with.
4. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
5. Play the first round, and award the points.
6. Explain how the second round will work.
 - a. The questions will be redistributed, so that each group gets another group’s questions.
 - b. The teams will then have another three minutes to answer as many of the questions as they can, and they will be given 20 points for every good answer they give (teacher has complete latitude here).
7. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
8. Play the second round.
9. Have each group give the answers to the questions they were able to complete (and award points).
10. Process Questions
 - ➔ How many of you have ever heard this parable before?
 - ➔ Is there anything surprising about this story?
 - ➔ Some parables have a clear message (like the Good Samaritan story) and others are a little more difficult to understand. Would you say this is one of the easier parables or one of the harder ones?
 - ➔ Were there any questions that your group was presented with that you chose not to try to answer?
 - ➔ What were those questions?
 - ➔ What do you do when you come across something in the Bible that you don’t quite understand?
 - ➔ How would you compare Jesus’ understanding of partying to the understanding of most of your friends?

B. And For Those Journal Lovers Among Us...

1. Distribute journal sheets and pencils to the group.
2. Give the group two minutes to complete their journal sheets.
3. Process Questions
 - ➔ What was the main point of this parable for you? (question 3)
 - ➔ Does anybody recall the first time you sensed that Jesus was inviting you personally to follow him?
 - ➔ Which character do you relate to the most in this story?

C. It's All About "the Right Outfit"

1. Intro Questions
 - a. In your circle of friends, how important is it for everyone to wear the "right" clothes?
 - b. Do most of the people you hang around dress the same?
 - c. Do you know people who would banish their friends if those friends were wearing the wrong kind of clothes?
 - d. In the parable, there is a problem with one guest—he is not wearing wedding clothes. What do you think that means?
2. Brainstorming Teams
 - a. Have the group move into teams of four(ish).
 - b. Remind the group that, in the parable, one of the people did not get to enjoy the party because he had the wrong "clothes."
 - c. Explain that the groups will have three minutes to come up with what the proper "attire" for Christians should be (in other words, if a Christian is to enjoy life in Christ, what qualities do they need to "clothe" themselves with?). Explain that these could be things like attitudes, behavior, spiritual practices, etc.
 - d. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
3. After three minutes are up, have the group report on their answers.
4. Process Questions
 - ➔ Do most people you know see the Christian life as an invitation to a party?
 - ➔ If not, how do they see it?

D. Best Reason: Mini-Leadership Task Forces

1. Remind the group that in this parable, the king is relentless about making sure that his party is full, but there are certain people who refuse to come in and enjoy the party (and they actually attack the messengers).
2. Have the groups return to their teams.
3. Best Reason—Round One: Explain that each team will have 2 minutes to come up with all the possible reasons why people might say "no" to God's invitation.
4. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.

5. Give the groups two minutes to come up with their reasons.
6. Have each group report on the reasons they collected.
7. Best Reason—Round Two: Explain that the teams will have two minutes to come up with the reasons that people might say no to the invitation to be a part of our group.
8. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
9. Again, give the group two minutes to come up with their reasons, and then have them report their reasons to the entire group.
10. Process Questions
 - ➔ Were there any similarities between the two lists?
 - ➔ Did you notice any differences?
 - ➔ What does that tell us about our group?
 - ➔ How likely is it that someone might reject the invitation to become a part of our group but, at the same time, accept God's invitation to be a disciple?
 - ➔ Are there things we should be doing differently in inviting people to our group?
 - ➔ When a stranger comes into our group does it feel like a party, like a funeral or like something in between?
 - ➔ Do you think there are some people who will always say "no" to God's invitation, no matter how attractively it is presented?

IV. Taking It Home

A. Story Time

1. Explain that you are going to read a story in which each of the people in the room is a main character.
2. Explain that after you read the story you will want them to complete the last line of dialogue in writing.
3. If the group does not yet have paper and pencils (they can use the back of the journal sheet), distribute them before starting to read.
4. Read the following story to the group:

You have asked Jesus to live with you, to be with you wherever you go. He has moved into your home, and things are going fine until one day when you are headed out the door. Jesus says to you, "Where are we going?"

You say, "Oh, just out to a party, but I think you'd have more fun if you just stayed here."

Jesus asks, "I'm not going with you?"

You answer, "No, Lord, I don't think you'd enjoy it very much. Uh, you know, there will probably be some folks there doing some things you wouldn't approve of, and I think you might be a little uncomfortable. If it's okay with you, I'll just come back to you when I get home tonight."

Jesus looks at you with a sort of confused expression, and you ask, “What is it?”

He answers, “When you invited me to live with you, I agreed to go everywhere with you. Remember I promised never to leave you. At first, you liked that idea. But now it seems like there are some areas of your life that you’d rather I stayed out of. I’m wondering why you would want to go somewhere that you think I would be uncomfortable?”

5. Once you have finished the story, invite the group members to complete the last line of the dialogue between themselves and Jesus.
6. Process Questions
 - ➔ In what ways would you anticipate the people in the class would have completed this dialogue?
 - ➔ Do you think this story is a realistic picture of most teenager’s relationship with Christ?

B. Praying in the Party Hats

1. This is a little out there, but it could create for the kids a memorable picture of this parable.
2. Distribute party hats to everyone in the group and close the class in prayer with everyone wearing their party hats.

↓ JOURNAL SHEET BELOW ↓

JOURNAL SHEET
Matthew 22
Jesus on Partying

1. What is the most important ingredient for a great party?
2. If you were hired to plan the perfect wedding party for your best friend, what would it look like?
3. What is the point of this parable?
 - The kingdom of God is like a party.
 - Most people miss the party God has for them because they are busy doing other stuff.
 - It's the least likely people who will enjoy God the most.
 - When God invites people to a party, some people wind up getting angry about the invitation.
 - Sometimes God wants us to drop everything and party.
4. I agree with this story, but...
 - Being a Christian is a lot more than a party, and a lot harder.
 - I'm afraid that I would be one of the ones who would be too busy to come to the party.
 - It seems a little harsh that people would be punished for missing a party.
 - I don't get why the guy with the wrong clothes gets banished.
5. When did Jesus first call you to his party? And how did you initially respond?
6. With whom in this story do you most relate to? Why?
7. My big take home from this story is...
 - God really wants me at his party.
 - I need to come to God's party prepared.
 - It's time to quit making excuses and get to the party.
 - I need to change my attitudes and behavior so that I am "dressed" for God's party.