

ONLY BELIEVERS WILL GO TO HEAVEN

March 4/6, 2011

(Read the following story from Matthew 22:1-14 to your child. Stop as indicated to let your child(ren) participate and respond. Show your child where this story is found in your Bible.)

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Jesus had been talking and talking and talking to the people when He lived on earth. Soon, it would be time for Jesus to return to heaven to live with His Father, God. But first, Jesus wanted to make sure that the people understood that he was inviting everyone to be His Friend and to someday live in heaven with Him. *(Ask your child what they think heaven will be like. Help them imagine what the things we will see and experience.)*

So Jesus told them a story called a parable, about a king who threw a party, but none of the people he invited showed up for his party. In Jesus' story, the king was going to have a party for his Son who was getting married. Since he was a king, and this was his only son, you can imagine that it was going to be quite a celebration and it was a tremendous honor to be invited!

All of the plans had been made, the food was prepared, the invitations had been sent. The day of the celebration came, but no one showed up! The king sent his servants to see where the people were and why they had not come to his celebration. The people all began to make excuses about how busy they were. And some, who had been invited, grabbed the servants and were mean to them!! *(Ask your child how they would feel if no one came to a party they were having. Would they be sad? Angry? Explain that this is exactly how the king must have felt.)*

The king was very upset, and said, "The people I invited do not deserve to come!" So the king told his servants to go out into the streets and invite everyone they saw to come to his son's wedding celebration. They did exactly what the king told them to do and the Bible tells us that the wedding hall was filled with guests.

In this story, the King is God and, of course, Jesus is His Son. God is going to have a great celebration for His Son (Jesus) in Heaven and we have all been invited. I can't imagine why, but some people will turn down God's invitation. Some people did not like Jesus and they did not want to be His friend. These people will not live someday in heaven.

Everyone has been invited to be Jesus' friend, but not everyone will choose to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. ONLY BELIEVERS WILL GO TO HEAVEN. A believer is someone who knows for sure that Jesus is the Son of God and **loves and obeys Jesus. You've been invited to be Jesus' friend now and someday live with Him in Heaven--** I hope you will accept God's invitation.

These commandments that I give to you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

— Deuteronomy 6:6-8

Let's Talk About It!

1. Who is invited to be Jesus' friend?
2. Do all people or some people want to be Jesus' friend?
3. What kind of party did the king have for his son?
4. Did the people who were invited come to the wedding banquet?
5. Where do believers get to someday go?

ANSWERS:
(1) Everyone (2) Some people
(3) A wedding banquet (4) No (5) Heaven

At Home And On The Road

At a meal or in the car, discuss the following with your child.

How wonderful it is to know that Jesus has invited us all to be His friend! He wants us to accept His invitation and live with him in heaven. Even though, **everyone has been invited to be Jesus' friend, not everyone will choose to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. ONLY BELIEVERS WILL GO TO HEAVEN.**

Discussion: Ask your child if he or she wants to be a friend of Jesus. If **they have not already accepted Jesus' invitation, what is holding them back? Do they feel nervous? Do they not understand what it means to be Jesus' friend?** Celebrate with your child if they have decided to be a friend of Jesus! Discuss with your child that those who do not accept Jesus as their friend will not live with Jesus forever in Heaven, just like the guests who were too busy **were not allowed to go to the king's banquet. ONLY BELIEVERS WILL GO TO HEAVEN.**

Read 1 Samuel 3:9 to your child and show them where it is found in the Bible. Recite the verse a few times with them using the following motions to help them remember the verse:

"Speak (*put both hands by your mouth*) Lord (*with your thumb and forefinger in the shape of an "L", move your hand from your left shoulder to your right hip*), for your servant (*point to yourself with both thumbs*) is listening." (*put both hands by your ears*)
1 Samuel 3:9

Hands and Forehead

Enjoy the following scripture verse with your child.

Doorframes And Gates

Enjoy this project that reinforces the lesson to your child.

(Have fun with this project that reinforces the lesson to your child.)

Only Believers Will Go to Heaven. Have your child draw a picture of himself or herself with Jesus as their friend. Ask them what they think Heaven will look like, and have them include their ideas of **Heaven in the drawing. At the top of the drawing, write the words "I am a friend of Jesus". Place the picture in their room, in the bathroom, or on the refrigerator door to remind them that friends of Jesus are those who believe in Him, and ONLY BELIEVERS WILL GO TO HEAVEN.**