Asbury Church
a United Methodist Community

Small Group Study Guide

February 18, 2018

"The Invitation"

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you so much for making it so easy, for making it so simple, for making it so clear as to how to have a relationship with you. So today, would you please give each of us the wisdom to know what to do with what we discuss and then give us the courage to do it. We pray all of that in the matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Matthew 9:9-13

9 As Jesus continued on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at a kiosk for collecting taxes. He said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him. 10 As Jesus sat down to eat in Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners joined Jesus and his disciples at the table. 11 But when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" 12 When Jesus heard it, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. 13 Go and learn what this means: I want mercy and not sacrifice.[a] I didn't come to call righteous people, but sinners."

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INTRODUCTION

Jesus says to pray. Jesus says not to look over there. Jesus says to be nice. Jesus says to get up early and read your Bible. Many people think Christianity is all about "do's and don'ts." But is that what Jesus' invitation was all about? Regardless of what you believe. Regardless of how you behave. Jesus invites you to follow him. The question isn't how far along on your spiritual journey you are, but whether you're following Jesus.

QUESTIONS

1) What is your favorite Winter Olympic sport to watch?

2) Did you grow up in a church that emphasized "do's and don'ts" over following Jesus? Or if you didn't grow up going to church, did you assume that's what Christianity was all about? How has the "do's and don'ts" mindset affected your spiritual journey?

3) In the message, Pastor Eric said this about his own spiritual journey: "When I viewed Christianity as a set of do's and don'ts it didn't make me more like Jesus. In fact, it made me more judgmental." How does that statement align with your own spiritual journey or with your experiences interacting with Christians?

4) How is the idea that Jesus wants us all to follow him, regardless of what we believe or how we behave, comforting? How is it challenging?

5) What makes it difficult for you to follow Jesus?

FINAL APPLICATION

What's one thing you can do this week to begin to follow Jesus or to follow him more closely?