

# FOR CLARKSVILLE

## FOR CLARKSVILLE, PART 4: INVITING

The people we engage with—as well as those we avoid and judge—reveal a great deal about our hearts condition. With more people open and searching spiritually, are we willing to invest in other people's lives by spending time with them and start to dialogue with them about God? You have the power to change the trajectory of someone's entire life. All it takes is an invitation.

**BIG IDEA: An invitation can change everything.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

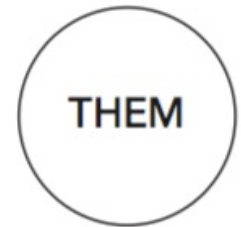
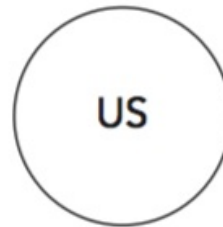
1. Tell us about a friend you have who is in some way different from you. How did you become friends?
2. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Matthew 9:9-13.*

*As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

*Matthew 9:9-13*

3. In this passage, Jesus is questioned for the people he was hanging out with. What's your initial reaction to reading about Jesus having dinner with tax collectors and other sinners of his day?
4. The Pharisees really wanted to categorize people: clean and unclean, righteous and unrighteous, us and them. When you think about the difference between us and them, what do you think of? Who falls into each category?

*Jesus was different from the Pharisees. He lived at the intersection of "us" and "them." He consistently engaged people who were different from him.*



- *Jesus touched a leprous man who everyone else wouldn't even go near (Matthew 8, Mark 1, Luke 5).*
  - *Jesus healed the servant of a Roman centurion; a man most would view as the oppressive enemy (Matthew 8, Luke 7).*
  - *Jesus stopped to talk with a woman who every other Jewish man would have ignored and viewed as unimportant (John 4).*
5. How did the outsiders respond to Jesus? How did the insiders respond?
  6. In the way you relate to religious outsiders, are you more like Matthew (inviting them to your party?), the Pharisees (looking down on them and judging them), or the disciples (unsure what to do)? Why?
  7. Why is it significant that Jesus chose to hang out with outsiders? Why do you think the Bible includes so many stories of Jesus hanging out with "them"?



8. Have you ever found yourself shying away from the kinds of people that Jesus purposely engaged? Why do we shy away—or maybe even run—from them?
9. How might we benefit from hanging out with people who are different from us?
10. How many of your relationships could be seen as questionable?
11. Think of someone in your life with whom you might be able to build or further a questionable relationship. Who could you eat with or spend time with this week—someone who is different from you?
12. As a group, what relationships are we building with “outsiders” that could be seen as questionable?

## MOVING FORWARD

We ask everyone at oneChurch to invest and invite. We don't know your friends and neighbors, so we can't invite them to church. So we ask you to invest and build relationships with people outside the church, then invite them to church. At oneChurch.tv, our job is to present the good news of Jesus in a clear and loving way so when you do invite your friends, they can understand the message.

## WHAT WILL YOU DO?

### *4 for FOR Challenge*

Choose 4 people or 4 families that you will be FOR. Not people who become projects, but 4 families whom you choose that the posture of your heart is, “I am going to be FOR them.”

Text FOR to 25827 to let us know, “I am FOR these 4 people.” We need to know, because just as you are in their corner? We want to be in your corner!

*An invitation can change everything.* You have the power to change the trajectory of someone’s entire life. All it takes is an invitation. Or series of invitations. You don’t know what hangs in the balance of your willingness to extend an invitation.

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*When Jesus heard this, he said, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.” Then he added, “Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: ‘I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.’ For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.”* *Matthew 9:12-13*

**BE FOR YOUR FOUR**

WRITE THE INITIALS OF 4 PEOPLE YOU WILL PRAY FOR AND INVITE TO ONECHURCH.TV:

MY 4FORFOR I AM PRAYING FOR:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE EVERYTHING...  
ALL IT TAKES IS AN INVITATION.

