

Deep Practice Discipleship Guide

The Invitation

Text: Luke 14:15–24

Big Idea: God fills His house through invitation—and He sends ordinary servants to carry it.

1. OPENING REFLECTION — LOOKING BACK (Share)

Begin by giving space for honest reflection on last week's practice.

Invite each person (or a few volunteers) to share briefly:

- What practice did you try last week?
- Where did you notice resistance, fear, or unexpected openness?
- What did you learn about yourself?

This is not a performance report. It's a noticing exercise. Faithfulness, not success, is the measure.

2. SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT — HEARING THE TEXT (Learn)

Read Luke 14:15–24 aloud

If possible, have two different voices read it slowly.

As the passage is read, invite the group to listen for:

- Repetition
- Emotional movement
- Surprises or tensions in the story

Brief Teaching Summary (Facilitator Overview)

Jesus tells this parable at a dinner table—after someone confidently assumes they'll be present at God's banquet.

What unfolds is unexpected:

- The banquet is **ready**.
- The invitation is **generous**.

- The host is **persistent**.
- The goal is unmistakable: “*that my house may be filled.*”

The shock is not that people are busy.

It’s that they **break a prior commitment**.

The excuses are ordinary. Life gets in the way.

So the host sends the servants—ordinary people—out into roads and lanes to carry the invitation.

Before this is about *inviting others*, it is about this truth:

You are invited.

Into fellowship with God through faith in Christ.

3. DISCUSSION — DIGGING DEEPER (Think)

Use these questions to guide conversation. You do not need to answer all of them.

Remember / Understand

- What reasons do people give for declining the invitation in the parable?
- What stands out to you about the host’s response?

Analyze

- Why do you think Jesus emphasizes that the banquet is already prepared?
- What does this parable reveal about God’s posture toward people who are far away?

Evaluate

- Which part of the sermon felt most challenging or uncomfortable?
- Where do you see yourself in the story—invited guest, servant, excuse-maker, or observer?

Apply

- What makes invitation feel awkward or risky in real life?
 - How does reframing invitation as *kindness with courage* change how it feels?
-

4. STORYING EXERCISE — SEEING THE THEME AGAIN (Tell)

Story: The Calling of Levi (Luke 5:27–32)

Step 1: Read the Story

Have one person read Luke 5:27–32 aloud.

Step 2: Retell the Story

Close Bibles. As a group, retell the story together from memory.

Let different people add pieces as they remember them.

Step 3: Discussion

- Who takes the initiative in this story?
- How does Levi respond to Jesus' invitation?
- Who ends up gathered at the table?
- What similarities do you see between this story and Luke 14?

Help the group notice:

Invitation leads to tables.

Tables lead to transformation.

And Jesus is never anxious about who belongs at the table.

5. DEEP PRACTICE — LIVING THE INVITATION (Live)

Now move from reflection to intention.

If you don't have a practice you are working on choose ONE practice for the coming week

Encourage participants to write their commitment down.

Option 1: Visibility

This week, let your faith be gently visible.

- Mention church naturally.
- Speak openly about following Jesus without forcing it.
- Stop hiding something that matters to you.

You can't invite people into something you hide.

Option 2: Relational Bridge

Identify one person you already have a relationship with.

- Coffee → Group
- Kids activity → Worship
- Shared service → Community

Practice a simple sentence:

- “You’d be welcome to come.”
- “I’d sit with you.”
- “No pressure at all.”

Option 3: Open-Handed Asking

Invite someone while clearly honoring their freedom.

- No manipulation.
- No pressure.
- No fixing.

Invitation opens doors.

It does not push people through them.

6. CLOSING REFLECTION — STEPPING OUT OF THE BOAT

Return to the image from the sermon.

You can stay in the boat:

- Safe
- Stable
- Comfortable

Or you can step out—to help someone else in.

God is filling His house.

The question is not, “*Will there be a banquet?*”

The question is, “*Will we carry the invitation?*”

Take a moment of quiet.

Invite each person to silently name:

- One person
- One step
- One act of courage this week

Close together, trusting that God is already at work long before the invitation is ever spoken.