



DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Meals and the Kingdom

Luke 14.7-24

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Share plans for future Community Group gatherings and the following happening in the life of the church:*

- **Flying Pig Weekend** is THIS WEEKEND, **April 30th-May 1st!** Each year we *celebrate Christ* with a worship service and “pig out” dinner on Saturday evening and then *serve Cincinnati* on Sunday morning by staffing a hydration station at mile 10 along the marathon route. Information on how to sign up to serve, and info about the “pig out” dinner is on the City. The registration deadline for serving is FRIDAY, APRIL 22ND!!!
- Discuss plans for your community heading into the summer. Note: there will be some summer studies. Stay tuned...details coming early-mid May.

## LEADER NOTES

Luke 14 includes a couple stories from Jesus about the kingdom of God and they are stories that involve feasting and eating and fellowship. At New City we make much of hospitality and eating together not only because a feast, the heavenly banquet, is probably the most oft used metaphor for the kingdom but also because Jesus himself is said to have come eating and drinking. He came to seek and save the lost, he came to give his life as a ransom for many (both of which are *why* he came), and he came EATING AND DRINKING (*how* he came). We want to be a church that reaches out to the least and lost and points them to Jesus, and *how* we go about doing that is often through eating and drinking together; sharing in food and conversation, celebrating Christ and serving Cincinnati.

## OPENER

What one critter are you most afraid of? OR What one food are you least likely to try?

## OPENING PRAYER

Open your group in prayer. Pray extemporaneously, or use this prayer:

*Father, help us to gain a deeper and richer understanding of your kingdom. Help us encourage one another to be helping your kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven. Give us eyes to see you, ears to hear you, and hearts to love you more.*

## STUDY/DISCUSSION

*For the Flying Pig weekend we took a little break from our series Moses and the Journey of Faith.*

1. Read Luke 14.7-11. Why do you think Jesus tells this story? What is the point?
2. If you really believed (to the bottom of who you are) that one day the humble would be exalted, what would you do differently?
3. Read vv. 12-14. What point is Jesus making when he addresses the host of the party? What implications does this have for how you deal with people?
4. Read vv. 15-24. What do we learn about the kingdom of God from this parable?
5. If you were talking about this parable with someone who didn't know Jesus, how would you explain the main point?
6. Compare the reaction of the Pharisees to Jesus in chapter 14/1 to that of the tax collectors and sinners in 15.1. Why do you think they react so differently to Jesus?
7. Zooming out from our text and thinking more generally about meals and hospitality, read and reflect on the following quote from theologian and chef Simon Carey Holt:

*It's good to be reminded that the table is a very ordinary place, a place so routine and everyday it's easily overlooked as a place of ministry. And this business of hospitality that lies at the heart of Christian mission, it's a very ordinary thing; it's not rocket science nor it is terribly glamorous. Yet it is the very ordinariness of the table and of the ministry we exercise there that renders these elements of Christian life so important to the mission of the church... Most of what you do as a community of hospitality will go unnoticed and unrecognized. At base, hospitality is about provided a space for God's Spirit to move. Setting a table, cooking meal, washing the dishes is the ministry of facilitation: providing a context in which people feel loved and welcome and where God's Spirit can be at work in their lives. Hospitality is a very ordinary business, but in its ordinariness is its real worth.*

8. How does this description / vision of the kingdom challenge your understanding?
9. What is God calling you to believe in, trust in, or apply to your life this week? How would life be different if you really believed and lived out what these verses teach us?

### *PRAY THE TEXT*

Take some time and pray together. This can be done together as a whole group, or in smaller groups. Use Philippians 2.3 as a way to pray.