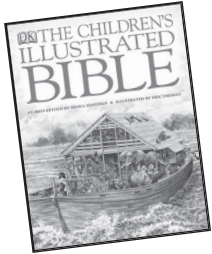


# Ordinary Time, Proper 23



The Children's Illustrated Bible page 251

Jesus told a parable about the kingdom of heaven being like a wedding dinner. The king invited important people to the dinner, but they were too busy to come. So the king invited the homeless people, beggars, and sick people. They all came. Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is not for those who think they are too important, but those who really need to feel loved.

—Matthew 22:1–14 adapted

Think about things that are true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, and praiseworthy, and the God of peace will be with you.

—Philippians 4:9 adapted



## Jesus Teaches Peace

Share the parable of the wedding dinner that Jesus told, showing the drawings on page 251 of *The Children's Illustrated Bible*. Have kids act out the parable by using the drama on their KidsPage.

Jesus said that everyone is invited to be loved by God, just as everyone was invited to the wedding feast. The phrase “For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14) is a traditional Jewish saying that means “many are called but not everyone ends up worthy of it.” In this parable, everyone was invited to the wedding feast, but not everyone responded to the invitation. How and if we respond is up to us.

In the second scripture for today, from a letter Paul wrote to the Philippians, we learn the qualities of being God's people, of being peacemakers. Paul writes a plea for peace. Ask a child to read Philippians 4:4-9.

Share the good news that is contained within today's scriptures. Kids may choose any of the following phrases or may find something else to share. Make Good News Fliers—paper airplanes using the instructions on the KidsPage. Once made, form a circle and kids may simultaneously share the good news by sailing their plane to the kid on the right. When kids receive a plane, they are to read it and send it on. Continue until everyone's plane has been flown to each kid.

The kingdom of heaven is for those who need to feel loved.

Rejoice in the Lord always.

Rejoice!

Don't worry!

Give thanksgiving to God.

Let God know what you need.

Think about what's true.

Think about what's just and pure.

Think about what's pleasing.

Do what Jesus taught.

Peace be with you.

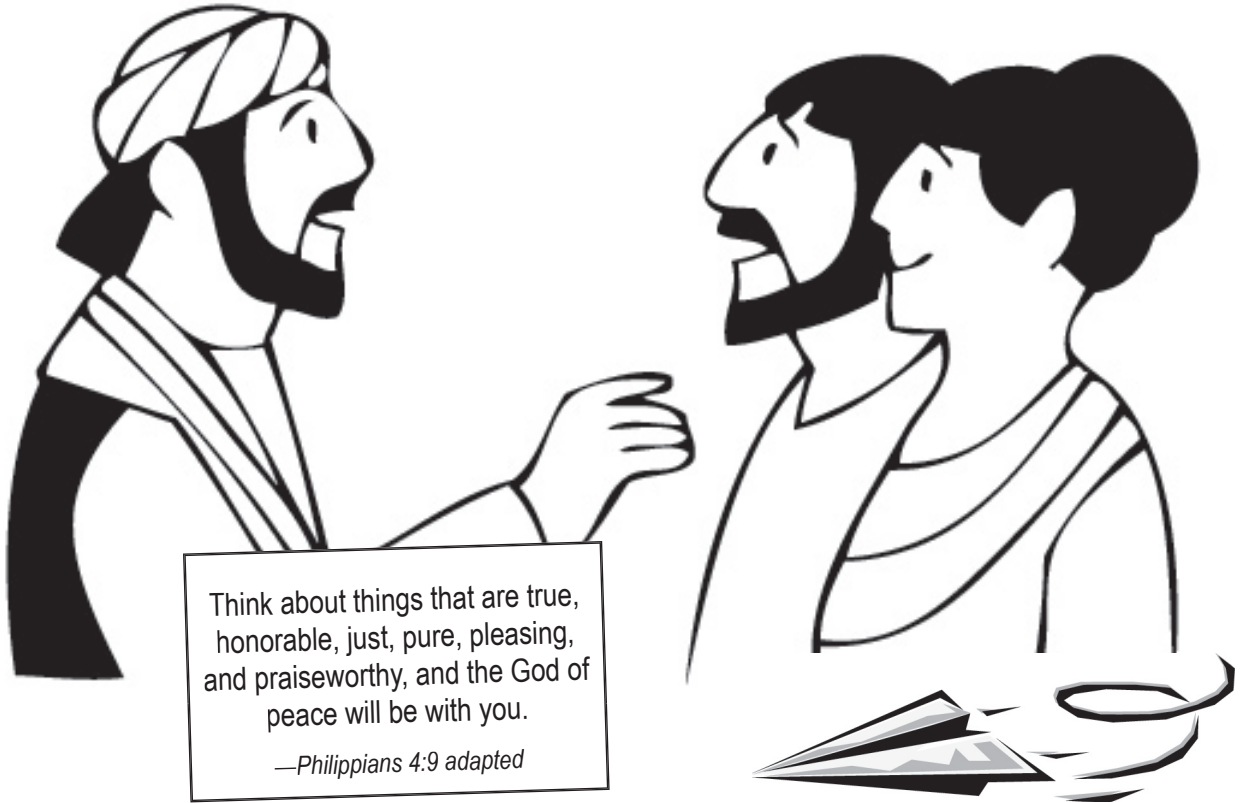


## Who to Invite?

Who would the kids in your class invite to a very special dinner? Give kids invitations to an upcoming potluck or congregational dinner. Ask kids to think about who the king invited to the wedding dinner and who finally came. Kids should then write invitations to this special dinner to whoever they think of that should be included. Encourage them to deliver that invitation to the person, followed up by a phone call or other show of invitation.

## Peace Place

What are ways that people find peace? Some visit meditation gardens to help bring peace and unity to their lives. Kids can create a meditation garden by pouring sand into a dish or box top, or they may make a meditation garden for the classroom. They should carefully rake the sand and create designs with a twig, placing rocks and shells where they wish. Discuss how people find places of peace with God's love. Invite kids to look at their gardens as the Philippians scripture is read again. What are some of your loving thoughts?



Think about things that are true,  
honorable, just, pure, pleasing,  
and praiseworthy, and the God of  
peace will be with you.

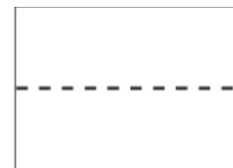
—Philippians 4:9 adapted

## Good News Fliers

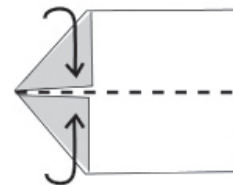
### Parable of the Wedding Feast

- Jesus: The kingdom of heaven is like a king whose child was getting married. The king told his servants,
- King: Invite everyone to my child's wedding feast.
- Servants: (going out to people) Come to the king's feast!
- Jesus: But the people didn't come.
- King: Invite *everyone* to the feast. Tell them there's *room* for all.
- Servants: (going out to people) Come to the king's feast! There's *room* for everyone!
- Jesus: But again, the people didn't come.
- King: Tell them that there is *food* for everyone.
- Servants: Come to the feast! There's *room* and *food* for everyone!
- Jesus: But again, the people didn't come.
- King: Go to the homeless and the sick. Bring them all to my feast.
- Servants: (going out to homeless and sick people) Come to the feast! Everyone is welcome!
- Jesus: The people who were homeless, sick, and hungry were all surprised to be invited. They felt loved and were dressed in love and joy. There was room and food enough for everyone.

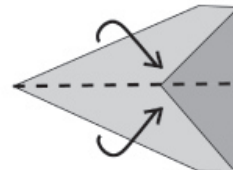
—Matthew 22:1–14 adapted



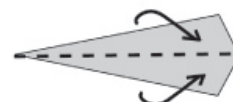
Fold the paper in half lengthwise. Unfold.



Fold down the two top corners, making the edges meet in the middle.



Fold down the sides again to meet in the center.



Fold the sides in again to meet in the center. Write your "Send the Word" messages on top of the wings.