

He Spoke a Word of Invitation

- ✠ To a meal that unites us sinners with our Savior
- ✠ To a meal paid for by our Savior

In the name of Jesus our generous Savior, dear believers living in His gracious presence:

Invitation on a date not popular: “Are we going Dutch?” But what about someone who invites you, then forgets his wallet – again and again? Joke among pastors. No joke if Jesus did that to us. Jesus **Spoke a Word of Invitation** not directly among His Seven Words from the cross, but bringing us all their beauty and blessing in a meal for which He paid dearly and...

✠ To a meal that unites us sinners with our Savior

A. “This man welcomes sinners” – the motto of Jesus’ ministry

1. An angry accusation from Jesus’ enemies among the Pharisees and teachers of the law (Luke 15:1f)
 - a) They trusted in their own righteousness → no need for a Savior from sin.
 - b) Jesus did not listen to them
2. Jesus kept on welcoming sinners throughout His three-year ministry.
 - a) Zacchaeus – *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”* (Luke 19:10 NIV)
 - b) Sick in body and soul – *On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”* (Mark 2:17 NIV)
 - c) Outcast lepers, prostitutes, blind beggars – all who could give Jesus nothing in return.
 - ✠ Jesus passed the test of true kindness in a big way.
 - ✠ 33 years of selfless service – *“He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.”* (John 1:11 NIV)
 - ✠ This love for sinners led Him to the cross.

B. Jesus still welcomes sinners and eats with them.

1. In the Upper Room – not sure if the Twelve with Judas, or just the Eleven
2. Not one disciple deserved to be there. Remember...?
 - Matthew – tax collector
 - Boanerges – sons of thunder: James & John
 - Peter’s bad case of “foot-in-mouth” disease despite Jesus’ warnings
 - Jesus knew all would forsake Him on the cross except John.
3. In this house of God tonight we find sinners from all walks of life. Who of us deserves to be here?
 - Husbands and wives loving and respecting as Christ commands, marriage vows?
 - Sons and daughters living in respect for parents and each other?
 - Students and workers all doing their level best – for God’s glory and not self?
 - How many times have we come confessing the same sins?
 - How many sins have we forgotten – arguing, bickering, struggling with temper, worry?

Transition: Listen to Jesus’ **Words of Invitation:** *“Take and eat...Take and drink.”* Still welcomes all of us as penitent paupers. Wants us united with Him and His Father forever.

✠ To a meal paid for by our Savior

A. Don't take this Holy Supper lightly!

1. This meal is free, but it wasn't cheap.
 - ✠ Cost: blood shed on the cross of Christ.
 - ✠ *“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”* (1 Peter 1:18f NIV)
2. The Passover Lamb was slain for us.
 - ✠ *“Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.”* (1 Corinthians 5:7 NIV)
 - ✠ We receive in this meal the very body and blood of our Lord and Savior, God's own Son.

B. Might Jesus have changed His mind?

1. We sometimes regret our invitations – family and friends not too friendly.
 - ✠ Wanting to sell us something, get into a marketing scheme?
2. To see if Jesus regrets, stand beneath the cross and hear again a few of His Seven Words:
 - a) First – a word of Forgiveness: *“Father forgive them....”*
 - b) Second – a word of Promise: *“Today...paradise.”*
 - c) Sixth – a word of Accomplishment: *“It is finished.”*
3. The apostles and prophets show no regrets from God.
 - a) For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38f NIV)
 - b) *“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.* (Isaiah 54:10 NIV)

C. Listen: “Given and poured out for you....”

1. Personal significance and comfort.
2. Do we let others get in the way of our eating and drinking?
 - a) *“Settle matters quickly....”*
 - ✠ With family members and friends.
 - ✠ Don't even let pastor “get in the way,” but resolve issues in personal repentance and reconciliation.

Conclusion: Jesus today speaks **A Word of Invitation**. There will be no surprises. This is the meal that **unites us sinners to our Savior**. This is the meal for which He **paid** so personally such a costly price. Come and let there be changes in our hearts and lives from God's powerful working within us in a meal unmatched by any other. Amen.