

5 Tips to Inviting Guests

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Overview

Thank you for wanting to learn how to invite people into a conversation about life and faith. By reading this, it shows that you have a desire to help others feel included and accepted.

If you want to invite a friend, family member or neighbour to church, small group or Alpha, whether online or in person, you may wonder how do I get them to actually connect?

And on a more personal level, What if they say no? What if they ask questions that I'm not prepared to answer? How will my invitation impact our relationship?

On Alpha, we know that historically **80% of guests have come on because someone has invited them.** It was a real conversation with a real person that made a real difference. The best invitations are rooted in relationships, but here are some practical steps.

Top Tips for Inviting Others

1) Stop before you Start

Pause and pray. Ask God who you should invite. We have the opportunity to partner with the Holy Spirit in the conversations that He's already having with the people around us.

2) Customize the Conversation

In the Bible, Jesus interacted with different people differently. There was no "one-size fits all" conversation. Consider what you know about the past experiences, hesitations, frustrations and hopes of the person you are going to invite. By taking the time to understand the individual, you increase the chance they'll say yes to your invitation.

3) Be Specific and Direct

We often invite people to something without them really knowing it's an invitation. Consider how many times plans have been made to "hang out sometime" with someone, and it's never happened. Asking a yes or no question you will get a yes or no answer. Provide specific details so they can make an informed decision.

Top Tip: Avoid starting with a vague inquiry like "Are you doing anything Sunday morning?" Those questions put people on guard and can lead to resentment if they feel backed into a corner. They may prefer to do nothing than join you...and that's ok! Instead, just ask if they would like to join you for church on Sunday!

4) If I...Would You...?

When it comes to inviting, simplicity is best. Rather than having a long, complex conversation that ends in a suggestion, try a series of direct interactions that are clear and concise using the “If I...Would You” framework.

*“If I sent you the trailer for Alpha, **would you** watch it and share your thoughts with me?”*

*“If I shared a zoom link for Alpha on Friday night at 7pm, **would you** join me?”*

Top Tip: Start Small. People are more likely to say yes to an invitation that requires a minimal commitment. Consider how you can move through stages of invitation from exploring the idea to experiencing it for themselves.

5) Don't Get Discouraged

A “No” is not necessarily the end of the opportunity. People may say no for a number of reasons, and most of them will have nothing to do with you as a person! Accept the no with grace and revisit step 2, considering if there is a different way to approach the individual. Maintaining the relationship is key, so demonstrate that you care more about them than getting a yes from them.

Top Tip: If you get a “no,” don't be afraid to ask, “Why?” No is often used as a protective measure when someone doesn't have all of the information they need to move forward. If you know the Why you can be a part of the solution.