



## **Eleos Parties**

Eleos Parties are based off of Matthew 9:9-13:

*As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.*

*And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."*

The idea is that each person invites their "one" to this party/get together so that they can experience community and therefore experience Christ in a beautiful way. This is by no means a bait and switch. We are not aiming to trick someone into coming to these parties so that we can instantly share the gospel with them. Rather, this is an opportunity to invite unbelievers into gospel-centered community with the intention of continuing to build relationships with them, meeting each other's "ones" and allowing them to see the difference in the way believers live on a regular and casual basis in community with one another.

With that being said, we need to have great purpose in the way we communicate and interact with each other and with the "ones" at Eleos Parties. If our goal is to bring unbelievers in to experience rich community in Christ, but we are cutting each other down or being negative, that is not the most effective route. Also, we are not just bringing our "ones" to a party for them to have fun—of course we want them to have fun, but our main goal is for them to experience community that sacrificially loves and serves one another. Therefore, our actions and words should match our goal.

One of the great things about throwing an Eleos Party is that before the party, each person can send in their DGroup group message who they are bringing (at least one person, but more than one is great). This allows the group members to have an extra layer of accountability in bringing someone to the party.

Each group will be paired with another D-Group to host Eleos Parties together. These groups are responsible for hosting two parties per semester. (Freshman groups will only be responsible for hosting two parties in the spring semester).

### **Party Ideas**

- September: Cookout
  - The weather is still nice this time of year, so grill out and play lawn games (i.e. cornhole frisbee, spikeball, etc.)
- October: Halloween
  - Dress up, have a campfire, carve/paint pumpkins, make s'mores
- November: Friendsgiving
  - Have a big pot luck feast Thanksgiving-style; talk about what you're thankful for
- December: Christmas Party
  - Decorate Christmas cookies, dirty Santa/white elephant, read the Christmas story, gingerbread house building competition
- January: MLK
  - Go hiking, talk about racial reconciliation and how in Jesus the dividing wall of hostility is broken down (Eph. 2:14)
- February: Valentine's, Super Bowl
  - Get together for either of these events—all you need is fun snacks and gospel conversations!
- March: March Madness
  - Watch basketball over some fun snacks
- April: Easter
  - Have an Easter Egg hunt for kids in your apartment complex, Dye Easter Eggs, have an egg hunt where you hide different "Get to know you" questions in them and all sit around afterwards answering them.

### **Other ideas that fit anywhere:**

- Taco Night
- Breakfast for dinner
- Picnic at Railroad park
- Game Night—catch phrase, cards, signs, fish bowl, empire, board games, etc.

**Other things to note:**

- If for some reason the person you invite does not come, you still have a very important responsibility to welcome, help host, and further conversation with people who do come. This is not a chance to “check out.”
- Your group could consider doing the same food/theme each time (i.e. taco night, breakfast for dinner, etc.) so it seems like a regularly occurring night to come to for your “ones.”
- Do not use these parties as an opportunity just to hang out and have fun with your friends in your DGroups, there is time for that at DGroups. Be intentional with this time that is specifically set aside to have intentional gospel conversations and relationship building with those far from God.
- Members of the DGroup should text in their group message who they are bringing so there is a layer of accountability there. This also allows each member of the group to be praying over the attendees beforehand.