

An Invitation to a Block Party

Characters: *Hannah, Eric, and Elsa*

Three friends are hanging around outside after school.

Hannah: Hey, glad to meet up with you. I have something to tell you!

Elsa: Oh no! I hope you don't want to talk about homework stuff. I can't think about that right now! We just got out!

Hannah: This isn't about school. It's about a block party that our church is having on Saturday. I want your help inviting people. I'm starting by inviting you. I hope you can come.

Elsa: What's a block party?

Hannah: Games, food, prizes—the whole church parking lot will be filled with fun things to do. It's kind of like a carnival. We'll have face painting, balloon animals, and a dunk tank!

Eric: AND there will be popcorn, caramel apples, and hotdogs!

Elsa: Will there be clowns? Because I don't like clowns.

Hannah: I don't think so. But there will be a cool guy doing illusions.

Eric: He's going to put on a show at the end. He uses his tricks to explain the gospel.

Elsa: Why do churches have to ruin the fun by preaching about Jesus all the time?

Hannah: Ruin the fun? What? Telling people the truth about Jesus is an important part of being a Christian.

Eric: I'm surprised you said that, Elsa. I thought you were a Christian.

Elsa: I used to be. I mean I said the prayer last year. But nothing really changed. I'm not sure if I am.

Hannah: Well, the Bible makes it pretty clear that if we are Christians, we are new creations. When that happens, lives change! The Bible says that Christians will want to please God more. Is that something you think about?

Elsa: Not really. Not at all, I guess.

Eric: And Christians will want to read God's Word. Have you been doing that?

Elsa: No.

Hannah: Do you enjoy going to church and being around other Christians?

Elsa: I like you two! But I haven't been to church in a long time.

Hannah: If you haven't changed at all, maybe you really didn't become a Christian. It's more than just repeating a prayer. The Bible says that sinners have to believe in Jesus. That includes repenting of our sins, turning away from them, and turning to Jesus.

Elsa is listening thoughtfully, nodding her head.

Eric: Becoming a Christian and turning to Jesus will definitely change your life. It will bring you hope and joy that you never had before.

Elsa: That's not me. I don't have much hope and joy when it comes to church stuff and God. Maybe I was just going through the motions before.

Hannah: You can always turn back to God—with your whole heart this time. Maybe this block party is just what you need!

Elsa: Yeah. I'll probably come. Who else do you plan on inviting, Hannah?

Hannah: I was thinking about Melissa, Jimmy, and Jameson. I see them sometimes at the community center.

Elsa: Oh, you don't want to invite them to your church.

Hannah: Why not?

Elsa: Isn't it obvious? They're horrible! You'd have to nail down all the valuables so they don't walk off, if you know what I mean.

Hannah: But the gospel is for everyone! God said there is no partiality. Jimmy and Melissa and Jameson are sinners. They need Jesus just like we do!

Eric: Yeah, our church welcomes everyone. That's how Jesus wants His church to be.

Elsa: You know. That might be my problem. A lot of Christians seem like hypocrites.

Hannah: What do you mean?

Elsa: You know. They go to church on Sundays. But they swear and lie and cheat just like regular people every other day.

Eric: Christians know they aren't perfect. They mess up a lot! But if someone is a new creation in Christ—a sincere believer—he tries to live like the Bible says he should. Christians should want to learn God's Word, teach it, and obey it.

Hannah: Yes! And a real Christian hates sin because God hates it. Christians don't want to sin anymore. Christians turn to Jesus because they are grateful to Him for dying on the Cross and offering forgiveness and eternal life!

Eric: You know, Elsa, instead of thinking about other Christians you might be better off considering your own sin. It is a huge problem for ALL people. And Jesus is the only answer to the problem. Forgiveness and eternal life with God can only come through Jesus.

Elsa: Yeah, well, maybe. You two are different from the other Christians I know.

Hannah: What do you mean?

Elsa: You actually have answers. I mean at least you can help me with my questions. And you don't make me feel stupid for asking!

Eric: Elsa, we don't know that much really! But we know that the Bible has answers to our questions. We trust that. When you read it and study it, you'll see.

Elsa: OK. Count me in. I'll come to the block party. And maybe I'll come to church with you, too, if you don't mind!

Hannah: Of course we don't mind! We'd love it.

Eric: Elsa, knowing God and understanding what Jesus did for us while we were still sinners brings real joy to our hearts.

Hannah: And I'll help you with any questions you might have. I don't have all the answers at all! But I know we can talk to other people and find out what the Bible says.

Elsa: Thanks, Hannah. I really appreciate that. And I'm looking forward to the block party.

Hannah: Great! I think it is going to be fun!