READY TO USE PARABLE

# Esther and the Eurovision evangelist

“Here she comes again,” said Esther, nodding in the direction of the canteen doors.

“Don’t look at her,” Freddie said. “Pretend I’m showing you something on my phone.”

Esther and Freddie huddled together, laughing at a blank screen, hoping that Chloe would walk past them. No such luck.

“Alright?” said Chloe, plonking herself down opposite Esther and Freddie. “What are you looking at?”

“Oh, not much,” Freddie said and put his phone screen side down on the table.

“Are you coming to my Eurovision party?” Chloe asked. “I messaged you about it yesterday. And the day before!”

Esther and Freddie glanced at each other. They didn’t want to go but didn’t know how to say it. Chloe was weird, but she was OK really. It was just…Eurovision. Whoever watched that?

The silence stretched on for longer than was comfortable. Chloe just stared at them with a grin on her face. Eventually, they cracked and both spoke at once.

“I suppose I can come,” Esther blurted out.

“I think I’m going to my nan’s,” said Freddie.

Chloe beamed and got up. “I’ll see you there! Freddie, say hello to your nan for me.”

Esther watched Chloe leave, half-walking and half doing a little dance, then shot a look at Freddie.

“How can you abandon me to Eurovision?”

Esther walked up the path to Chloe’s front door. The unmistakable sound of Europop was coming from inside. She rang the doorbell – it played the chorus of Sam Ryder’s ‘SPACE MAN’.

Chloe appeared at the door and shouted: “Esther! *Tervetuloa*, *bienvenue*, welcome!”

Esther followed Chloe through to the living room. It was decorated with loads of different flags and packed with people from school – people she didn’t expect to see at a Eurovision party. By the buffet table, Louisa was trying to eat five Danish pastries at once, while LaShawn was battling with a cake with a Polish flag stuck in it. Darren and Dean were arguing about what track to play next and in the middle of the room, Kofi and Imran were dancing like lunatics.

“It’s Esther!” Chloe shouted, and everyone cheered.

“Hey, Chloe, how about Loreen next?” asked Darren.

“Absolutely,” replied Chloe, and the EDM strains of ‘Euphoria’ filled the room. Suddenly, the floor was packed with people waving their hands in the air.

Later, Esther was tired but happy, sitting on the sofa next to Darren. She’d danced to ‘Fuego’ and ‘Zitti e buoni’, she’d pretended to be ABBA, Netta and Celine Dion, she’d sung ‘Snap’ at the top of her lungs.

“I didn’t think you’d be into this, Darren, why did you come?” she asked.

“Well, Chloe kept going on about it. She said it would be a load of fun and played me some of the songs on YouTube. They didn’t sound terrible and I thought I could sneak out if the party was rubbish. But it’s been brilliant.”

“Yeah, I’d never have come if Chloe hadn’t kept on asking,” she said. “I’m glad she did!”

## Discussion questions

* Why do you think Chloe kept going on about her Eurovision party?
* If you were invited to this party, would you be like Esther or Freddie? Why?
* Do you have an interest which you think is a bit embarrassing? Do you ever try to share it with others, like Chloe does with Eurovision?
* How difficult is it to try to get someone excited about something they might think is rubbish or embarrassing?

This story is based on Matthew 5:13–16. Read this passage to the group and compare the story to this one. You may want to chat about the story using these questions:

* What do you think Jesus means when he says: “You are the salt of the earth”?
* What do you think Jesus means when he says: “You are the light of the world”?
* Is there anything that you try to hide away when you should be telling others about it? What is it and why?
* Is it the same with your faith? Do you sometimes hide that away, instead of showing it to others?
* How easy is it to be salt and light in your life? What might help you?

The artists and songs mentioned in the story are real Eurovision competitors and entries. Why not finish your session by looking some of them up on your streaming service or on YouTube?

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