

PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE FEAST- - THE INVITATION

Luke 14:16-24

The telephone rang the other day and
 And I picked it up and the person said:
 Hello, Mr Reich yes? You are a valued credit card customer,
 I'm going to send you \$100 gasoline voucher.
 I reply, "Thank you!"
 He says: I'm going to enroll you for 3 months free in our shoppers program.
 I say, "no thank you, but go ahead and send my \$100 gasoline vouchers."
 There's an awkward silence.
 They can't until you join the club.
 Have you ever got an offer too good to be true?
 There's always a catch.

Jesus was invited to a meal at a Pharisee's house.
 That's good but it was an offer too good to be true?
 What Jesus discovered is that the meal was to be at His expense.

¹One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. Luke 14:1

This was to have been a Pharisee fun night with Jesus.

This was a set up, vs two says they had put a man

²There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. Luke 14:2

A diseased man would never have been invited to a Pharisee banquet,
 much less to his home..

This was a deliberate plant.

This free meal was all about getting Jesus

To break the law of the Sabbath and heal the suffering man.

They knew He would...he had at least 7 times before.

But Jesus took the initiative to them.

A lesson we should take to heart when dealing with conflict.

³Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" ⁴But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away.

Also Jesus took their defenses away.

⁵Then he asked them, "If one of you has a son^[a] or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull him out?" ⁶And they had nothing to say. Luke 14:5-6

Two times in three verses it says:

They had nothing to say.

If they said "no", they would appear heartless.

If they said "yes", their legalistic cronies would shun them, so...

Jesus had taken this party to them.

And suddenly they were in the hot seat.

It was quiet at the table...

Jesus had corrected their manners.

And now, he turns to correct the host:

Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. ¹³But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Luke 14:12-14

One of the guests came to rescue his host.

Probably the co-host of the party

¹⁵When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

This was one of those pious statements that was made back then,

like we say "God bless you" today but don't actually ask God to bless them

By this time Jesus was ready.

And he delivered the parable of the marriage feast.

He began with an

I. AN INVITATION TOO GENEROUS TO REFUSE

¹⁶Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. ¹⁷At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

No one at the table was unaware of how a banquet worked.

The dinner invitation was given well in advance.

People would be invited to a banquet on a certain day.

They would accept or decline the invitation.

That way the cook would know how much food to prepare.

On the banquet day when the food was almost ready,

the host would send out his servants with the second invitation

which was to tell them the food was ready and it was time to come.

This then was the reminder and not the original invitation

Which had been already agreed too.

The host would expect you to come.

Over 2000 years ago God invited you to the banquet table.

Christ who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, II Timothy 1:9

God had fixed a great banquet,

He sent out his invitations,

Slaughtered the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

And now awaits our coming.

Nothing was left undone.
 Only thing left is to come and eat
 At a table that would never be empty.
 To drink from the fountain that would never run dry.
 An eternal invitation.
 Given first to the nation of Israel, the Pharisees and religious leaders.
 An invitation too generous to refuse.
 But, as so often happens,
 They refused God's invitation to the banquet with...

II. AN EXCUSE TOO FOOLISH TO BELIEVE

Jesus was saying to these Pharisee that he was the Lamb of God.
 His was the banquet feast.
 He was and is the messiah,
 But .

John 1:11 "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

They looked for the Messiah but when He came
 they rejected Him with excuses too foolish to be true.

1. The first guest gave an excuse based on his possessions.

**The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me
 Luke 14:18**

Who buys property without looking at it first?
 The truth of the matter is no one buys a field without seeing it first.
 The guest would have had plenty of time to see the field.
 Remember, he had already agreed to come to the banquet weeks in advance.
 But he refused to come and used the excuse of his possessions
 Excuses are just dressed up lies.
 We say, "I have a good excuse."
 But there's no such thing.
 A 'good' excuse can become just a 'good' lie.
 The danger of making excuses and using lies is
 we often to believe our own lies and excuses as truth.

Like Judi who tried to sell her old car.

She was having problems because it has 250,000 miles on it.
 One day her friend told her that there was the possibility to make the car
 Easier to sell, but technically illegal.
 Judi said: "That doesn't matter, if only I can sell the car."
 "Okay," said Judi's friend.
 "Here is the address of a friend of mine. He owns a car repair shop. Tell him I sent you
 and he will turn the odometer back in your car to 50,000 miles. Then you can sell your
 car." The following weekend, Judi made the trip to the mechanic.
 Two weeks later her friend asked Judi, "Did you sell your car?"
 "No," replied Judi, "why should I? It only has 50,000 miles on it!"

The first excuse was based on the man's possession.

2. The second guest uses the excuse of profession –

"Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' Luke 14:19

If the first man let his possessions be his excuse,
The second man let's his PROFESSION OR business be his excuse.
Do you know how many people put God off because of their business?

It's true; you have to make a living,
but it is God Himself who blesses and
allows you to make a living in the first place!

What is this farmer going to do?
v. 19 strap some headlights to his ox's horns and try 'em out at night?

Once again, the excuse is not valid.
He knew of the invitation for some time,
He chose his work over his worship.
Sometimes we let ourselves become too busy to accept god's invitation.

Over the past 40 years of ministry I've sat by many deathbeds,
and not one person has ever said:
**"Oh, I wish I had worked more, I wish I had saved more,
I wish I had made more money."**
Let's not wait until our deathbed to realize that when you are gone,
business will go on as usual without you.
What is it you will have left in your hand?
Nothing but "Dust to Dust."
The second man used his excuse of his profession.

3. The third guest uses the excuse of people:

Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come. Luke 14:20

Notice he doesn't say I am getting married.
The wedding wasn't just today.
Wedding in those days took a year for the engagement.
While the husband was building the home,
At the end of a year they would then come and live together.
v. 20 this third man gives the most lame excuse.
He blames his excuse on his wife.

It is amazing how many men there are who blame
their lack of religion and faith on their wives.
The truth is "he didn't want to come" and
He used his wife & family, as his use.

If he really was a newlywed,
Then he should have readily accepted the invitation
Knowing that this was the only good meal he

Was going to get for some time.

To often we men use, amuse and abuse our wives.

Take the man and his young son who was shopping in the local grocery store, The man had stopped for an item from the shelf which he then marked off his shopping list. But he was overheard to say to his young son. "You know, if we really mess this up, we'll never have to do it again."

Do we see ourselves in the excuses of these guests?
Do you allow your possessions, profession, or people
To deter you from doing what God has called you to do?

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. John 3:18

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. Isaiah 49:8
Friend when you hear the Savior calling
Take up your cross and follow him.

To whom do you listen?

Too many people are like the tourist stood facing away from the ocean, pressing a seashell against his ear. The water lapped at his feet, the sun beamed down on him, and the waves crashed just behind him. Firmly, he pressed the seashell against his ear. He wanted to hear the powerful surge of the ocean as it heaved and rolled.

We need to take the garbage from our ears and
Once again listen to the voice of God around us.
Because if we don't, then our place will be given to another.

**Jesus just took this parable a notch up. This is now
III. GOD NEW INVITATION TO BE RECEIVED**

²¹"The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

²²" 'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.'²³"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full'"Luke 14:21-23

A. Go Out

1. To the streets and the lanes of the city
 2. To the highways and hedges
 3. Go to the strays, the outcasts and dredges of society
- Why?

So that my house will be full.

The invitation just changed from the House of Israel, from the temple of Jerusalem.

To the whole world, to the Gentiles
 God's invitation included you.

B. Bring In

God wants His house to be full. Our God with His burning love for souls will never settle for His house half full. **2 Peter 3:9 God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."**

You and I are the servants God in this parable
 That God is using to bring in the world.

As Christians our attitude and lifestyle should be
 a walking invitation of the good news of God in Christ Jesus.

Does the example of your living and giving befit the nature of the King of Kings?

Jazz saxophonist Charlie Parker called the "Bird", once said,
 "If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn."

We need to blow the horn of our love for Christ.

C. Compel

Compel - to constrain by threat, entreaty, force, or persuasion

Do we live our Christian lives that attracts the attention of the world?

Do they see that we really care?

That our lives full of joy and meaning?

So that they want to follow us to church and to the Savior?

Rev Robert Schuller said, "Love is my decision to make your problem my problem."

That is exactly what these servants did.

They took the Master's invitation to the world.

To the highways and byways.

They invited all they met and they all came

Do we have the same care for others, to share their pain?

To offer them the joy of knowing Jesus?

I was getting the oil changed in my car, and was sitting in the waiting room.

When a young girl came in to get her oil changed. She seemed quiet and sad.

We talked a little. She was going to Northern and trying to make it on her own.

So For some reason the Lord said to me "pay for her oil change". Now I didn't know her name nor did I think she knew me. So I thought ok I'll do it the \$24 special. Not

knowing that she had other things done as well and the bill was much higher than that.

But I paid thinking that was the end of it.

One week later I got this letter.

Eldon,

I want to start with thank you for what you did. There are a lot of things going on in my life and I had hardened my heart, to a certain extent. On Friday when you picked up my bill, you touched 'me in a way in which no one ever has. It opened my heart back up and showed that there are people in this world that go out of the way to change the live of

others. I believe that the Holy Spirit worked through you to restore my hope and compassion. You may never truly know what you have done in my life, and words do not come close in portraying it. I do not know the words to say, but all I can do is pray that some one touches you, like you touched me.

The Steward said; Go out of you way into the streets and alleys and bring them in, Go out to the roads and the country lanes. So that my house can be full. Luke 14:21-23

God went to the Jewish nation, and they said no,
and He went to the Gentiles and they said yes.
Because God wants his table full.

This parable ends with a warning.

²⁴I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'
"Luke 14:24

The mistake the Pharisee made was that
They assumed there would be another invitation.
But there never was.

They missed it.
Let's you and I not miss it today.
Will you accept God's gracious invitation?
And come and feast at his banquet table.