



"2 Invitations, 3 Excuses, and a Full House"

Luke 14:16-24

July 30, 2023

Luke 14:14-15

14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

15 When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

- All religious people think they will be in the final resurrection.
- Jesus is not going to let that statement go uncorrected.
- It's not - "Can't we all just get along?"
- This is not a time for "religious unity." A line needs to be drawn. "Everyone" is not who you think it is.
- There is too much at stake.

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- So Jesus answers this guy . . .

"Jesus always sought to shatter false religious hope. He never put His arm around a Pharisee and said well we worship the same God, we're both going to be there, You're my brother. He never put His arm around a scribe who was living in a delusion and said to Him well you are a student of the Old Testament and you are worshipping the God of Israel and we're going to be there. You're my brother."

- John MacArthur

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16 **But He said to him, "A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; 17 and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'**

18 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'

19 "Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.'

20 "Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'

21 "And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'

22 "And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.'

23 "And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.'

24 'For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'"

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17 and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'

"big" and "many" – this is a major event. A huge gala banquet. The Pharisees listening would understand how big of a deal this was. Banquet dinners were the pinnacle of social events in that society. This man had to be wealthy.

• **2 stage invitation.**

1st invitation: To determine the count, to know what food to buy and prepare. Animals killed, cooked or roasted, vegetables harvested, washed, and prepared. Lot of time and work was invested.

- If you accept, then it would be extremely rude not to be there.

2nd invitation: "It's all ready – Come!" They are expecting you.

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Isa 25:6-9

6 The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain;

A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.

7 And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples,

Even the veil which is stretched over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death for all time,

And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces,

And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken.

9 And it will be said in that day,

"Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us.

This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

18 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'

- What transpires in the next 3 verses just doesn't make any sense.
- You have been invited to perhaps the biggest dinner party of the year by a very wealthy person.
- You just don't miss events like this.
- There are 3 excuses given here which represent everyone ("all alike") who were invited but now all decline the 2nd invitation. All of them back out.

Excuse #1 - look at some land. Ridiculous! Why?

1. The land is not going anywhere. You could see it at a different time.
 2. There are several things you had to do to purchase a piece of property back in the 1st century.
 1. You had to go out and walk the property.
 2. You'd have to be able to memorize and define its characteristics, its topography, its history, the amount of income it had produced from its previous owners.
 3. Then you had to go to the village elders and recite from memory everything you'd learned about that land so at no point could you come back saying you didn't know something or were unaware.
 4. You had to declare everything you knew about that land because changing possession of ownership of land was a big deal in that culture.
- The Pharisees must be having a good laugh at this.

19 "Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.'

Excuse #2 – try out some oxen. Just as ridiculous as #1.

"5 yoke of oxen" = 10.

1. Oxen aren't going anywhere.
 2. That was a large purchase by someone wealthy. You don't do that unless you try them out first to see if they pulled together.
- That's like a farmer purchasing 5 tractors without checking them out.
 - That's like saying you purchased a car at the "Cream Puff" used car lot. But you didn't drive it, look it over, or kick the tires.
 - The Pharisees are now bent over with laughter.

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22 "And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.'

23 "And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.'

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"Excuses are curses, and when you have no excuses left there will be hope for you."

- Spurgeon

20 "Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'

Excuse #3 – I am married. Equally ridiculous.

1. In that culture men ruled. Women were looked down on. If the man wanted to go, he would go.
2. Besides, no woman would want to miss this gala for anything.

 - Now the Pharisees are rolling on the floor.
 - These are the worst excuses anyone could give.
 - But this is intentional, as we shall see.

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- Big problem: All that he has done for the invited guests and they all back out. What do we do with all of this food? A lot of work and expense has gone into it. And it is all turned down for some flimsy excuses.
- This makes the master angry. "We are not going to cancel!"
- So the slave is instructed to turn to a different group – the disadvantaged (cmp. vss. 12, 13).
- **Note:** They are still in the city.

- They live in the streets. Homeless. Beggars. Destitute. The cast offs. Ignored, shunned. The scum of society.

"bring in" – necessary because unable to reciprocate.

- To the Pharisees this part of the parable is just as crazy as the excuses.

"When they're invited, they'll come. You know why? Because the blind don't go out to examine farmland. The crippled don't plow with oxen. The poor aren't invited to hang out with the rich. And the lame and the maimed, they don't get married. Who wants them? And so when they hear the invitation there's no excuses. They hear the invitation and they say, "Of course! There's nothing in my world that I would value more highly than this! There is no treasure that you could offer me that would be more valuable than this. Of course I'll come! I'll come running, I'll come crawling, but I'll come."

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- The servant had done his job. Everyone possible from the disadvantaged, from the local area, had been brought in.
- But this was a large banquet. Lots of tables and chairs to fill.
- There is still lots of room.

23 "And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.'

- Determined to have a full house, the master tells his slave to broaden the area.
- Now it goes beyond the city. It goes to the highways and the hedges that ran along side of them.
- These are more difficult people to reach:

1. They may be located miles away. It will take more effort.
2. They know they can't pay so are reluctant to come. They know they don't belong there. They live outside the city. They're just different.

"compel" – persuade. They must be persuaded to come. They don't feel they are worthy.

- The goal is to fill the house.
- The master is going to have a full house whether some of the people invited cooperate or not.

24 'For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner:'"

- You can hear the anger and disgust in the master's voice.
- The first invites were rude by turning down the 2nd invitation.
- They were given the opportunity and they blew it.
- The master was determined that they will not be at the dinner.

Master = God.

1st invitation = OT - big offer to Israel for salvation and to be the people of God. Given Law, promises, scriptures, covenants, and prophets which all declared the invitation.

Acceptance to the 1st invitation = Israel accepts their invite to be the people of God.

Servant – Jesus Christ.

2nd invitation – Jesus comes to Israel and invites Israel to believe in Him as their Messiah.

Excuses – The majority of Israel rejects their Messiah.

John 1:11

11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

Disadvantaged found in the streets of the city – This is the small remnant of Israel who responded in belief to their Messiah. Humble. We don't deserve it. This is God's grace.

John 1:12

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

Rom 11:26

6 and so all Israel will be saved

Highways and hedges – Gentiles. Those residing in the uttermost part of the earth. God's grace. **None of those men. . . shall taste of my dinner** – they are barred from entering the Kingdom and the great dinner. No Pharisees or the religious establishment will be there.

Rom 11:17-18

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree,

18 do not be arrogant toward the branches;

Application

1. Rejection of Jesus Christ is the ultimate offense. There is no escape from judgment.

Heb 2:3

3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

2. We are replaceable. No individual, church, nation, or ethnic group, is beyond being replaced.

Rom 11:20-21

20 Do not be conceited, but fear;

21 for if God did not spare the natural branches (*Israel*), He will not spare you (*Gentiles*), either.

3. Many people believe in God (i.e. 1st invitation) but refuse Jesus Christ (i.e. 2nd invitation). Beware of those who talk about God but do not mention Jesus Christ.

John 5:23

23 . . . He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

John 8:42

42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

John 14:1

1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.