

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

jkroberts_us@yahoo.com
www.pacolethillsbaptist.org

September 4, 2022

Luke 14:15-25

1. In last week's message we examined Jesus' behavior when He was invited to eat at the home of one of the leader's of the Pharisees on the Sabbath.
2. He took the opportunity to confront several issues that need to be confronted.
3. Here we see what appears to be a positive response on the part of one of the other guests.
4. He declared, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the in the Kingdom of God."
5. What he said had a ring of truth to it, but was the theology behind the statement correct?
6. The Jews believed that when the Messiah came He would set up an earthly kingdom in which they would have the place of honor.
 - a. Only Jews would be invited to the great Messianic Banquet.
 - b. Their view of the Kingdom of God was narrow and exclusive.
7. Regardless of the speaker's motivation, Jesus used the opportunity to point out that many of those invited to eat bread in the Kingdom of God, would not, due to their own unwillingness to accept God's invitation.
8. The direct application of the parable had to do with the Jew's rejection of Jesus Christ and the bringing in of the Gentiles.
9. I believe that the underlying, spiritual principles can be applied to our day as well.

I. An invitation extended.

A. The Bible is full of invitations; many of which are ignored or rejected.

1. Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

NOTE: Countless people are weighed down by life, and yet they refuse to be yoked together with Jesus, and to learn from Him.

2. Luke 13:34-35

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and **you would not have it!** 35 "Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

B. Earlier in His ministry Jesus had pointed out that entrance into His kingdom was by invitation only. John 6:44-45

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."

- C. Most of the Jews had been ignoring God's overtures and invitations for centuries.
- D. As the Church Age approached, God extended two additional invitations.
- E. In the parable Jesus told, the man who was giving the big dinner would have extended two invitations to those He intended to invite.

1. The first invitation was designed to prepare the invited guests and to give them a chance to clear their calendars and make any necessary arrangements. Mark 1:2-4

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; 3 THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'"

4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

2. The second invitation was to let the invited guests know that all was ready for their arrival. Mark 1:14-15

Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

II. An invitation rejected.

A. When the second invitation was extended, we are told that, "They all alike began to make excuses."

B. I think that we would all agree that there are excuses, and then there are excuses.

1. Someone might wake up on Sunday morning and decide that some other opportunity or invitation was more important than partaking of what God had prepared for them at their church.

2. Someone else might wake up on Sunday morning and be running a fever, along with other obvious flu symptoms.

C. The real issue was that the invited guest had no interest in spending time with the host or partaking of his feast.

D. They had other priorities that took precedence over what their priority should have been.

E. The competing priorities were not wrong in and of themselves.

1. All the invited guests had plenty of time to prepare to attend the feast.

2. The excuses used were convenient reasons to justify their rejection of the host and his feast.

NOTE: Good things can become bad things when they interfere with God's things.

F. Note the excuses:

1. "I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it."

a. The claims of business took precedence over responding to the invitation.

b. The excuse was pretty lame because who would buy a piece of land without seeing it, and why the rush, the land was not going anywhere.

2. "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out."

a. In this instance the host was supposed to believe that a person would invest in 10 oxen without having determined what they were capable of.

- b. What an insult to the host; many insult God in the same way by making excuses for not responding to His kind invitations and intentions towards them.
- 3. "I have married a wife."
 - a. Family responsibilities and expectations often take precedence over God's commands and expectations.
 - b. "We must obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29

III. An invitation withdrawn.

- A. Those who reject God's kind invitations and expectations are always the losers.
- B. Whatever satisfaction and fulfillment people find in other activities and pursuits cannot match the blessings and joy associated with being rightly related to God.
- C. Those who reject God's invitations may find those invitations withdrawn.

APPLICATION

1. Why is it that when life offers other options the things of God get neglected?
2. Why is it that when presented with a choice people often chose that which in reality is a rejection of God.
3. Jesus Christ died on the Cross to make it possible for us to respond to the invitation to live in fellowship with God and to enjoy the blessings and riches of His Kingdom.
4. Many come, but there is still room for more.
5. We cheat ourselves when we live our life our way rather than God's way.