

## CLOTHED IN KINGDOM-MINDEDNESS

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**Luke 14:15-24**

### **The Parable of the Great Supper**

Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' "

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This parable has been called "The Parable of the Great Supper". A very similar parable is recorded in Matthew, and has been called "The Parable of the Wedding Feast". There are slight variations between the two recordings of this parable in Matthew 22 and Luke 14. We'll look at those differences shortly. It is possible though that these two recordings of the parables of the feasts were different parables given at different times. The account that is in Matthew has a setting that is in the temple where Jesus was addressing the chief priests, the elders (21:23) and the Pharisees (21:45).

In the account in Luke, Jesus had been invited into one of the Pharisees' home for dinner on the Sabbath. Prior to the dinner, Jesus is recorded as healing a man with dropsy (now called edema-which typically has the sufferer with the swelling of the legs, feet, and ankles). Then, Jesus noticed that the people invited to the dinner were selecting for themselves the best places to sit. In a restaurant, that would mean not sitting by the kitchen or near the servers' station. In a night club that would possibly mean sitting up front, nearest the stage, for the entertainment. That is, unless the entertainer was known for picking on the people in the front row, or

the entertainer was accustomed to smashing watermelons that sprayed the front row. Anyone remember Gallagher?

Jesus' reply to those people sitting in the best seats, though, is very pertinent to us today, and it actually leads into to our passage of Scripture for today in **Luke 14:15-24**. Starting at **Luke 14:10**, Jesus said, "But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." In a typical church service the front row is almost always empty, so no one will judge you for sitting up front. Hopefully for all of us, we aren't just looking to be enlightened in the first row, we are patiently enduring and continuing to be about our Father's business, sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ, spending time in God's Word, and in praying for ourselves and others, all the while, we are waiting on our Lord and Savior Jesus to call us up higher. As the Apostle Paul said, "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (**Philippians 3:14**)

Jesus said to the man who invited Him to dinner, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just." (**Luke 14:10-14**) Does that sound familiar to another thing Jesus had said? Hint: store up for yourselves treasure in heaven. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (**Matthew 6:19-20**) The Apostle Paul stated that "to live is Christ and to die is gain". (**Philippians 1:21**) Laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven means to be about our Father's business, doing the will of God, in sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is Kingdom-mindedness!

Jesus' teachings were always geared towards getting the people to be Kingdom-minded. That is, to have the focus on Christ Jesus and His building of His eternal kingdom. Jesus began His ministry preaching, as John the Baptist did, proclaiming, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (**Matthew 4:17**) As we've looked at in previous messages, repent has the meaning, "to have a change of mind". We are to have a kingdom-mindedness, which means we are, as the writer of Hebrews gave many examples of those who lived their life in the faith of God's eternal kingdom, states, "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every

weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Hebrews 12:1-2**) That is the message we are not only sharing with others but also showing.

We are led by the Spirit of God to believe on Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God, believing that He died on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself, and then He raised from the dead on the third day, conquering death so that we too will overcome death, and live eternally in Him! "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (**John 1-11-13**) We are believing what Jesus said in **John 3:16-17**, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Everlasting life! Everlasting means forever, right? How does that compare to the short period of time we have on this earth in trials and temptations and tribulations? Jesus had to go through the sufferings of this life too, right? In the setting of our passage of Scripture for today, Jesus was being hated and judged for healing a man of dropsy because it was the Sabbath. Yet Jesus was kingdom-minded, even on the Sabbath. What that means is that Jesus, as it is expected of us, was about doing the Father's business, doing the will of God.

Luke starts the "Parable of the Great Supper" with, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses." **Matthew 22:2-5** starts the parable saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, tell them which are bidden, behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways." I like the start of the Matthew version best for a couple of reasons. First, it has a King having a marriage supper for His Son. Sound familiar? The Marriage Supper of the Lamb? "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, write, Blessed are

they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”  
(**Revelation 19:7-9**) The second reason that I prefer the starting of the Matthew parable is that Jesus refers to servants (plural) being sent out to make the announcement. “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (**1 Corinthians 2:9**) While God has revealed to us His plan to become one in Christ and that there will be a Marriage Supper of the Lamb, it is for certain that we can’t possibly grasp that incredible blessing that awaits us. With that hope that we have in Christ Jesus we ARE being sent out to tell others that God is preparing and building His kingdom through His Son Jesus the Christ.

We ARE God’s servants who are being sent out to share and show the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ, to proclaim to God’s people to get ready. That’s not meant to be condescending or judgmental. It is great and exciting news. JESUS IS COMING! I also like the Matthew account because Jesus had also added this, “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.” (**Matthew 22:11-14**) I certainly don’t like the fact that many will reject Christ and many will try to enter into God’s eternal kingdom their own way. The reason I like it, is it points to our need to put on the Lord Jesus, to be clothed in Christ. We are to get our garments ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb! That garment that we must put on, as mentioned, is in Christ Jesus. “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” (**Galatians 3:27**) As Jesus clearly stated, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (**John 14:6**) Likewise, Peter, in preaching Jesus after the day of Pentecost, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit said, “This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (**Acts 4:11-12**)

I have now pointed out several reasons why I like the Matthew account of the great feast. There is one primary reason though of why I chose the Luke account and why it blesses me and will bless you too. After the servant reported back to the man who was giving the feast, saying that all the people had excuses as to why they couldn’t come, “Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and

hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'" God IS presently sending out His people into the highways and hedges, pleading with His people to get ready to come to His Marriage Supper of the Lamb. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

When the Word comes forth for the final call to His supper, there will not be time to GET READY. Jesus gave a parable that speaks to that is the parable of the ten virgins. 5 of them were wise and made sure they had enough oil in their lamps so that if the bridegroom was late, they would still be able to go at His call. The other 5 foolish virgins did not tend to their lamps, keeping the oil in them and so, when the call came forth they were out of oil.

We are to be ready and clothed with Christ and not be caught up in the affairs of this world to where we won't be ready when He comes. Jesus addressed that in another metaphor in saying, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples." (John 15:5-8) Abiding in Christ means that we are about our Father's business, in prayer and in reading His Word, and in doing the will of God by continuing in sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When anyone asks me where I get that phrase of sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ I refer to what Jesus said was the great commandment of God and what is like it. We are to love God with all that is in us, and to love others as ourselves. (Mark 12:30-32) The church, overtime, has put such an emphasis on "getting saved" that the real picture has gotten distorted. We are not just "getting saved" when we believe on Jesus, we are becoming a child of God, to be part of God's eternal kingdom, to where we are His representatives, His ambassadors, and as our parable suggests, we are His servants sent out to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ-and to tell others to get ready-for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!

Contrary to that is to get wrapped up in one's affairs to where Jesus is always our second choice. Like the folks in the parable, them saying, "I'd love to come but I have other stuff more important to do." What could possibly be more important than God building His eternal kingdom through His Son Christ Jesus? Once again, we are in a

spiritual battle for living souls, ourselves included. "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (**Ephesians 6:12**) It is not always easy but we are encouraging and pleading with anyone that will listen to put on the Lord Jesus and be ready! We are in a spiritual battle! "No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier." (**2 Timothy 2:4**)

Yet ultimately, the battle belongs to the Lord. **Proverbs 3:5-6** says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Right now we ARE His servants, or soldiers, that God is using to get His people ready. The good news, or really the great news, is that we are His workmanship from the beginning to the end. **Ephesians 2:8-10** says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." We are called to believe on Christ for dying for our sins, that we will also overcome death as He did, and be in Him and in His eternal kingdom. Those good works that God is working in us IS sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, many will dismiss the many warnings that Jesus taught and think that just because they showed up to church once in a while, that will buy them a seat at the table of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Are you clothed in Christ? "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." (**1 John 5:12**) If you have the Son of God in you then you will be bearing the fruit of the Spirit of, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (**Galatians 5:22-23**) That makes us a viable witness to the testimony that we have in Christ Jesus.

No one is perfect though right? "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." (**1 John 1:8-10**) We are though supposed to be surrendered to the will of God, even if we have stumbled, even if we have fallen. As Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (**Romans 12:1-2**)

Why is that so important to God? He is making us into the very image of His Son Christ Jesus. But also, He wants to use us in sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ as God desires for none to perish but that all should come to repentance. I hope and pray that each of us are growing in the love and grace of God and continuing to read His Word and to be praying for God's mercies for ourselves and for others. There is a reason God has placed certain people in your life. If it isn't already, may your heart have a longing for each person you meet to want for them to be sitting next to you at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. That, is being clothed in Christ Jesus with a Kingdom-mindedness!