

“Invitation Rejected”

Luke 14: 15 – 24

We have here in the scripture text a word portrait of self-excuse which often becomes a habit. An invitation had been given and then when everything was ready another invitation was given, “Come, all is ready. “Somewhere a certain person has said, “My next step is to get deeper conviction.” His friend said “No, your next and only step is to come to Christ just as you are.” Jesus does not say ‘come to a deeper conviction or to a deeper sense of sin’, but he says, “come to me.” Come, for all things are now ready. We do not prepare to come to Jesus, we just come.

If we put away our excuses and allow Jesus to minister to us, if we will come and dine at his banquet we will be filled. Excuses! What is an excuse? Well for one thing it is a preference – deeming something else of greater importance than the real issue. Jesus spoke of the bread of life in (John 6: 35), “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” He also spoke of living water in (John 4:14), “but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will be in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” And in (Matthew 5: 6), “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” Get the picture; the invitation was sent and now at the time of the banquet the servant goes and reminds those who were invited, “Come, for everything is now ready.” (vs. 17). Then come the excuses. (Vss. 18 – 20). BUT; in many instances this little three lettered word comes before the excuse. One bought a field and now must go to see it, how practical is that? Another bought five yoke of oxen and now he must go and try them out, what kind of business man was he? Another just got married, so he couldn't come. Wow! Yes, there are all kinds of excuses such as; too young, too old, I am as good as others,

some other time, I couldn't do that, anyway somebody else could do better. Then there were the two men out on the lake fishing Sunday morning when they heard the church bells ringing. One of them said contritely, "You know Sam, we really ought to be in church." Sam re-baited his hook and answered, "Well, I couldn't go anyway, my wife is sick." Excuses are mostly used when a person has their priorities mixed up and when it comes to spiritual things, God is not utmost in their lives.

In (vs. 21), we hear of the master's anger at the rejection of those who he had so graciously invited to his banquet. We can't live a life of indifference to God and then expect his favor and blessing. He will share his banquet with those who respond and come. He sends his servant out to the streets and alleys of the town to bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. The servant told the master, what you ordered has been done and there is still room. So, in (vs. 23), there is the command to go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. The lesson here would seem to be, go everywhere with the invitation, be persistent in bringing folks in to God's house that it may be filled.

We find in (vs. 24) there is a pay day for excuses. Notice the finality of the matter concerning those who rejected the invitation through their excuses. The master says, I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.

Have you or are you willing to accept the gracious invitation to "Come" or will you continue to make excuses and finally be cut off completely from the blessings of God's banquet?

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