

**THE BOOK OF LUKE**  
**STUDY TWENTY EIGHT (LUKE 14:15-24)**  
**PARABLES FOR THE RELIGIOUS**  
**"THE GREAT BANQUET"**  
**JULY 27, 2008**

**MEMORY VERSE**

"And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are the true words of God.'" Revelation 19:9

**INTRODUCTION**

It's easy to become complacent, callused and careless in this life. The parable Jesus told at this Pharisee's table has a way of stirring and refocusing us to see God's heart and perspective. The man who asked the question at the dinner table saw the glory of God's kingdom, but he did not yet understand how to get in. In Jesus' story, many people turned down the invitation to the banquet because the timing was inconvenient. It was customary in that day to send out two invitations to a party - the first to announce the event and the second to tell the guests that everything was ready. In this parable, Jesus portrays God, the host, inviting His people, Israel, to the messianic banquet. The first invitation came from Moses and the prophets and the second came from God's Son, Jesus. The rich and socially elite, who represent the Pharisees and Jewish religious establishment, accepted the first invitation. However, they rejected the second invitation. In the story, the host became angry at the busy guests who made excuses and chose not to attend the His banquet. He then directed His servant to go into the "streets and alleys and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame," and all outsiders who desired to come and join in the banquet. In the same way, Jesus was telling them that God had now sent His Son to the whole world of needy people in order to tell them that His kingdom had arrived and was ready for them. In this parable, Jesus is emphasizing three key points:

1. **Rejection and Insult** - God invited His chosen people, Israel, to join Him in the banquet of His Son, but they rejected and insulted Him. In His sovereignty, He chose to open up the invitation to all who were needy and hopeless in the world.

"He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him. Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural

descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."  
(John 1:11-13 NIV)

2. **Mercy and Grace** - Those who were not worthy to come to the host's table - the poor, lame, crippled, blind - are now invited. This is you and me. We were unworthy to eat at the host's table, but through Jesus we are now cleansed and invited.

"Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."  
(Luke 14:15b NIV)

3. **Evangelism** - The third point concerns the call to share the invitation of God to all who will listen. The poor, lame, crippled and blind from all places are now sought out and urged to accept the host's invitation. We are now the servants, who must carry the invitation of the host to all who would listen. This is the mission God, our host, has given us and we must fulfill it.

Many people today respond in the same way as the religious and elite in this story. They choose to resist or delay responding to God's invitation. They make excuses that seem sound and reasonable - work duties, family responsibilities, financial considerations, etc. God's invitation is the most important event in our lives and we only have a short season to respond. What will our response be?

### LEARNING FROM GOD'S WORD

1. What did the pious man in Luke 14:15 believe about the "feast in the Kingdom of God?"
2. In the parable, why was the banquet held? What were the excuses of the guests, who were originally invited, for not coming (Luke 14:18-20)? What was so surprising about their responses? What happens to these people?

3. Why do you think there is an urgency in the host's "new" invitation (Luke 14:21-23)? On what basis is one invited now? Who eventually comes to the banquet?
4. What does this parable teach you about the Kingdom of God?

### OUR WALK WITH GOD

1. From your experience, why do so many people reject the invitation of God to attend His banquet? What might you say or do to help people you know overcome this hesitation or reluctance to take this step of faith?
2. How does this parable illustrate the Father's mercy, grace and judgment? How have these truths personally impacted your life? What response does this call you to make?
3. For you, what would be the cost of following Jesus on His terms? What would be the cost of "not" following Jesus on His terms?

