

**“Invited!”**

April 7, 2024

Good days folks! Welcome to another message brought to you from “*Discovery Crossroads Ministry*”.

Being that the message title is “**Invited**”, we Invite you to think deeply upon this message, and to gauge for yourself “Where you might find yourself, in today’s story”.

Let me take you back to “High school”. Do you remember what those days were like? You know: “Dealing with those who were considered “the who” (*the big deals*) around school and those that were NOT “a who”? Don’t you remember how the “words and actions” of people could so quickly, either “build you up, or deflate you”?

I greatly remember, that if you got invited to the “muckety-mucks” parties, then you were considered “some-body” around the school. Because the truth was average, uncool, and unpopular, kids just did NOT get an invitation! Some of you, know it is true! Did I hit the truth right, here?

Yet God (*unlike the “muckety-mucks”*) is All-inclusive. He invites EVERYONE to live with Him forever including the broken, average, uncool and unpopular people! However, NOT everyone will accept His Generous Offer!

Some folks are too Financially wealthy (*trusting in their money to save them*)– too Popular *-(relishing on the praise of other people)* – too Filled with their own perceived Power and Control *-(trusting in themselves)* – too Intellectual (*believing they have the whole universe figured out - and thinking they are so smart, that there's no way that they can have the child-like faith, needed to be saved*) – too religious *-(depending on their traditions and rules, to save them)* – too Good *-(depending on their "good-works", to get them into heaven (into God's Kingdom),etc. - etc.*

Let's look at this, through one of the story's that Jesus told **Luke 14:15-24** *–(The Parable of the Great Banquet), "15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God". 16 Jesus replied: "A certain man (speaking of God, The Father), was preparing a great banquet (the opening of Heaven) and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet, he sent his servant (speaking of Jesus), to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' (Come on ya'll). 18 "But they all alike, began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' 19 "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' 20 "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.' (Ouch.... These are Not good reports, for Jesus to have to send back to The Father.) 21 "The servant*

*came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house (again, God the Father) became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'* 22 'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' 23 "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. (Then, Jesus added this warning) 24 I tell you not one of those who were invited, will get a taste of my banquet.'" NIV Jesus is saying: Not one of those who were invited and REJECTED God's Invitation will ever get to taste of God's Kingdom!

So, there is a lot happening here. Let's look at 2 groups of people.

First: WHO are the stated people that **REFUSED** to accept God's Invitation to the Great, Heavenly Kingdom, Banquet?

The passage said: Two were dealing with money issues, while the third was dealing with a relational issue.

The first two people bought something BEFORE they had even seen what they bought. I mean, Who does that? (*Kind of foolish. Foolishness – causes many troubles*)

The third person said that they just got married and couldn't attend. So wait, What kind of marriage is this? Marriage should

never “Dissuade” anyone from being able to enter the Kingdom of God and in fact. A married couple, that is equally yoked (*of the same Biblical culture*), would “Encourage” each other to enter! (“*the 2, are 1*”)

Maybe YOU can relate to these stated (*money and relational*) issues? Maybe YOU have a thousand other issues besides these that KEEP YOU FROM accepting God’s Gracious Offer, of joining Him in His House, for all of eternity? What is YOUR issue?

Secondly: WHO are the stated people that we are sure **ACCEPTED** God’s Invitation to His Great, Heavenly Kingdom, Banquet?

The passage said: those who were in the streets, alleys, country roads and lanes. In other words, they were out in every corner of society “in the city and out in the country”. These people were the broken, average, uncool and unpopular people! As the passage said, these were the poor, crippled, blind and lame. In other words, they were NOT the “muckety-mucks of society” – they were too busy trying to get ahead in this earthly economy!

Society can be BRUTAL on people! Human living is a tough business. The term “natural selection” has been used to define the idea that only the strongest will survive, while the weak will be killed off, or cast aside. We use this term for the animal world,

but it is highly at work in the lives of human beings as well. Truth is: the strong, courageous, and outgoing groups of people in our society can put their collective thumbs down on the weaker, timid, and more inward groups of people of our world. This can and does, naturally happen!

Maybe YOU can relate to being someone, who has felt oppressed and excluded by other people? I know that I have often been left to feel broken, average, uncool, poor, unpopular, crippled & blind, humanly-selected to be removed from the best that this life can offer! I have often felt Excluded left outside of the popular groups. Left feeling kept down, and not allowed to rise to the heights that others have been allowed. (*left outside of life's high and mighty social clubs*) (*Socially left behind*). Have you felt this way too? Have you felt "Uninvited" to the rest of life's greater social arenas? Human beings do it to each other both intentionally and unintentionally, every day. BUT, Thanks Be to God that He invites EVERY single human being into a loving, caring, **impartial**, relationship with Himself! Thanks Be to God that He DOESN'T SEE us, as people see us! Thanks Be to God that He DOESN'T JUDGE us, as people judge us! Thanks Be to God that He DOESN'T JUDGE US on the ugliness of our inner spirit and soul, as people will do with our outer being. (*Yes, Thanks Be to God that He sees the beauty of the image of "Himself", that He put into us – the beauty of who He knows, that we can become*). What A Praise

that God DOESN'T just up and decide that some of us are worthy of heaven, while others are not! EVERYONE gets an EQUAL CHANCE at accepting Christ, and therefore receiving His Kingdom (*or Heaven*) forever! Thanks Be to God!

"God is All-inclusive" offering every person of every sociological make-up the opportunity to accept His offering of salvation (*His new birth and creation*), through all that His Son (*Jesus*) accomplished on the cross. The Point of the message is: God DOES NOT care about (*nor respect*) our human social hierarchies, human statuses, human standards, human rules, or who "WE" think should be prized, more than others, of our society, etc., etc., etc. What He DOES care about is the "salvation of our soul" (*our very being*), for eternity – and that salvation, ONLY comes through accepting all that He did on the cross, through His Son Jesus Christ! There is NO other name, or way, through which our soul may be saved forever! Now, I may sound like I am harping this last thought WELL, I AM. Our Eternal Salvation is the greatest HOPE that God has FOR US! And yet there is more: We are, as the scriptures say, "**His Portion**". **Deuteronomy 32:9** says, "*For the LORD'S portion, is His people*". This means that We become "His portion", the minute that we accept Jesus' Offering on the cross. (*We become God's inheritance - we become a part of Him!*)

Those who love the Lord, and place their Eternal Trust in Him, are

like: **1)** the Finest (*Best*) **Fruit**, ever picked, from all the earth's crops. They will be like: **2)** the Finest (*Best*) **Jewels**, that the earth ever produced. They will be the Finest Fruit & Jewels, who are prized by "The One" who finds them (*namely, to "God"*).

Seriously, God is on a "Treasure Hunt" to find the BEST OF humankind; who are those who HAVE Jesus' Name imprinted on them! **Malachi 3:17**, "*On the day when I act (the Day of Wrath), says the LORD Almighty, they will be my treasured possession (My Portion). I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him.*" May you & I CHOOSE today, TO BE one of the earth's Finest (*Best*) Jewels that God is Searching for, Finds, and Keeps forever!

Notice: Two of the three guests asked the Banquet-giver (*God*) to, "Please excuse me". The third guest outright told God, "Sorry, I CAN'T come" – or "I WON'T come".

This parable is told by "The Lord of all Life (*Jesus*)", telling us that NOT everyone will choose to enter The Great Banquet, in the Kingdom of God! Many souls will just "opt out" of entering because of things they are chasing, or things that they have going on in this life. Things that they THINK are more important, at the time! Oh realize that we ALL CAN THINK that our: money, fun, politics, sports, sociological-positions & priorities, life-titles, adventures, careers, worldly - purchases, etc. are MORE

IMPORTANT to us now - then deciding to accept Jesus Christ, as Savior and Lord today! (*Let it NOT be so!*)

So really, What/Who stands in the way of YOU making that decision for Jesus today? Time is flying by, you all. Don't miss the "Time of Grace" that God is offering us now, before He brings everything to an end!

Please, Please RECONSIDER today. How Amazingly Wonderful it is, that God has "extended an invitation" TO US to live with Him forever, in His Kingdom!

So, as it relates to YOU making a decision about Jesus BEING your Savior and Lord - What do you need to do, to GO FROM where you are with Him today to GET TO where you need to be with Him, for Eternity? Even NOW, God's Invitation still stands!

Seriously, some people need to Quit telling God, "NO, I can't or won't, come to Your Great Banquet!" With these folks, there still needs to be Forgiveness for the trespasses, that they have committed against God and His Word (*Seek Peace with God today*). Yet, other people, who have walked away from God need to Return back to Him, with a genuine heart of desire, so that they can walk closer with Him, again!



Please know that God's Invitation to His earth ending Banquet is "Personal" (*He, to you*). **Malachi 3:17** said, "*At the time of the banquet, he sent his servant (speaking of Jesus), to tell those who had been invited - 'Come, for everything is now ready'*"

The Point is: God The Father, sent HIS OWN SON (*Jesus*) to Invite us. Understand the significance... Jesus is Royalty, and for Him to leave His Throne, travel to earth, to "Personally Invite YOU" to join Him in Heaven - is a Big Deal - and one that I hope you do not miss out on!

Jesus IS "The Invitation", and HE must be presented at the gate! (*No vending-machine ticket will get you into Heaven*). HE must be "in hand" (*or "in your heart"*), when you seek to enter through Heaven's Gate! The Invitation must be EMBOSSED with "the Mark of Christ's Cross" (*Marked/Sealed with His very Name and Blood*)!

SO, Is "The Invitation" in YOUR hand/heart, today? HE can be with just a prayer.....

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### **Discovery Questions:**

**1)** "High school".... Do you remember what those days were like; who was the popular and who wasn't? If you landed on the unpopular side, how did that make you feel?

- 2)** According to Luke 14:18.... Have you ever “made excuses” for NOT doing something, that you knew God told you to do?
- 3)** In Luke 14:15-24.... What is the real difference between those who made excuses for NOT doing as God said, and those who lived out in the streets, back-alleys & country-roads, who DID do as God had asked?
- 4)** What do you think about the Truth that: “God is inclusive” (*or, that God is impartial; treating everyone the same*)?
- 5)** According to Malachi 3:17.... Does it impact your soul at all, knowing that “YOU” are one of God’s treasured possessions?
- 6)** How does it make you feel knowing that God has extended a personal invitation to “YOU” to come to His Home, to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, to live with Him forever?
- 7)** Here's the deal: God has almighty sent His Grand Invitation to you (*all the way when Jesus came and died on the cross for you*). But, for the Invitation to be fulfilled – YOU have to RSVP. So that’s the question today: Have YOU humbly & honestly RSVP’d to God’s Invitation? And if not, why not?