

Sunday Morning Message

June 6, 2016

Looking unto Jesus and His Parable of a Supper

Text for Today's Message – Luke 14:1 - 24

Congregational Reading – Luke 14:21 - 24

Our theme for the year is *Looking unto Jesus*

Our theme verses are Hebrews 12:1 – 2

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience 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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

This year, we will be preaching messages from the 4 gospel accounts in the New Testament and we will be closely examining the life of our Lord Jesus Christ while He walked the earth, learning the principles that He teaches us, specifically looking for ways to apply His life to our own.

Introduction

Read the text from vs. 16 - 24

The context surrounding our text today is found in vs. 1 – 7. Jesus was invited to the home of a Pharisee for dinner on the Sabbath Day.

Read vs. 1 – 7

It is important for us to realize that Jesus was most likely not invited to this man's house because he wanted to enter into a relationship with the Saviour. He was probably trying to trap or trick Jesus into doing something or saying something that would get him condemned in the eyes of the Jewish people. The Pharisees were a very legalistic sect within the religious leadership of Israel.

Jesus had a lot to say about this group of people.

Turn back to Luke 11:37 – 44

These Pharisees were manipulators of the Law. They observed (at least publically) the strictest interpretation of the Law. They cared a lot about how they were seen in the eyes of the people, but little about what they really were on the inside.

The Pharisee that invited Jesus to dine in Luke 11 was critical of Him because He did not ceremonially wash His hands as the Pharisees thought He should.

And, the Pharisee that invited Jesus to dinner in Luke 14 was trying to trap Him into healing on the Sabbath day, which was contrary to their strict interpretation of God's Law.

Notice in v. 1 – they were watching Him. The Pharisee was setting Jesus up. Notice that the man with “the dropsy” was also coincidentally invited to the Pharisees house. “Dropsy” is what we would call edema today. It is an unnatural accumulation of water in the body, which causes swelling to the entire body or just to an affected area. It is sometimes caused by a heart problem, or a kidney or liver condition.

Jesus had already violated their interpretation of the law regarding healing on the Sabbath on many other occasions. Wiersbe points out:

Keep in mind that Jesus had already “violated” their Sabbath traditions on at least seven different occasions. On the Sabbath Day, He had cast out a demon (Luke 4:31–37), healed a fever (Luke 4:38–39), allowed His disciples to pluck grain (Luke 6:1–5), healed a lame man (John 5:1–9), healed a man with a paralyzed hand (Luke 6:6–10), delivered a crippled woman who was afflicted by a demon (Luke 13:10–17), and healed a man born blind (John 9). Why our Lord's enemies thought that one more bit of evidence was necessary, we do not know, but we do know that their whole scheme backfired.¹

Jesus pointed out the ludicrousness of their thinking. They would be fine with helping an animal on the Sabbath, but not helping a fellow human being that was hurting.

*"And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? **Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.** Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him." (Matthew 12:10-14)*

"And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:" (Mark 2:27)

In vs. 7 – 11 Jesus teaches those that were present at this dinner about humility.

Read vs. 7 – 11

Illustrate – Reserved Parking for Pastors; “Shotgun”

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 228). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

In vs. 12 – 14 Jesus continues along this same line of thinking and teaches them about reaching out and being a blessing to people who cannot do anything for you.

Read vs. 12 – 14

Verse 15 brings us to a statement made by one of the guests at the feast. I am not sure if it was one of the Pharisees that said this, or one of Jesus own disciples; but, it seems that it was made by someone who was trying to put an end to the conversation by trying to say something really spiritual.

The specific text that I am preaching on this morning is the parable that Jesus taught in response to this man's statement. (Remember, a parable is an earthly illustration that teaches a greater spiritual truth.) Jesus tells them about a man that hosted a great supper and invited many people to come, and at first, those invited guests had agreed to come. But, when everything was actually ready and it was time for them to gather together for the dinner, those that were invited began to come up with every excuse as to why they couldn't make it.

Transition – This morning I want to look at this Parable of the Supper and examine the underlying underlying spiritual principle regarding Israel's rejection of the gospel, but I also want to consider the many practical truths that can be applied to us today.

I The Original Invitees (vs. 16 - 17)

In Bible days, when someone was having a banquet or a feast they sent out the invitations and the guests would know the day of the feast, but often they would not know the exact time that the feast would begin. Much time was necessary to prepare for these suppers, and it was not an exact science as to how long it would take. The point is that when the invitations went out, many agreed to come when the time was ready. But, as we will see, when that time had come and the servants went back out to inform those that were invited that it was time to gather for the feast, they had changed their minds.

The spiritual truth here is about Israel. The people of Israel were the invited guests to the Lord's Supper, but they rejected the invitation.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11)

Jesus came as the Messiah of Israel, but Israel did not receive Him; they rejected Him.

God made a covenant with Israel and Israel initially accepted God's invitation, but when the time came for the arrival of their Saviour, Israel changed its mind.

II The Offered Excuses (vs. 18 – 20)

Israel rejected their Messiah, but the excuses offered in this passage are the same excuses that are offered today by people when they reject the offer of salvation through the gospel. And,

they are also the same excuses offered today by those who are saved as to why they cannot serve God.

A Possessions (v. 18)

The temporary stuff that this world gives people can keep them from ever coming to Christ in the first place, but it can also keep Christians from fulfilling the will of God.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy 6:10)

Money buys stuff – possessions, lands; money buys popularity; money buys power.

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Luke 16:13)

B Work (v. 19)

I have no time for God. I am way too busy.

I have to work on Sunday. I can't come to church.

C Family (v. 20)

Illustration – You were born a Presbyterian you will die a Presbyterian.

Family pressure can keep some folks from getting saved, and it can keep some folks from obeying God.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:26)

III The Invitation Extended (vs. 21 – 24)

Since the original invitees rejected the invitation, the host extended the invitation to different people.

Notice that the people who are now invited are the group that Jesus taught about back in vs. 12 – 13.

A The Extended Invitation is Urgent – v. 21 "go out quickly"

Practical point – we are commanded to go, and go quickly with the invitation of the gospel.

You see, the supper is all ready, the food is getting cold, time is running out.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" (Matthew 28:19)

*"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
(Mark 16:15)*

B The Extended Invitation is Compelling – v. 23

Time is running out – they must come, and they must come now.

There is no more time for salvation.

*"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
(James 4:13-14)*

If you're not saved, you need to get saved today. If you are saved and there are people that you need to get the gospel to, you had better do it today.

"...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" (2 Corinthians 6:2b)

There is no other way to salvation but through Jesus.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

The good news is that we are not limited to a certain group of people in a specific place. We can now go anywhere to anybody and offer them an invitation to God's great supper.

Conclusion

If you are unsaved - God's got a great supper, a wedding feast prepared for those who accept his invitation. Don't put off accepting his invitation. Don't offer up any excuses. Just receive the free invitation that He is offering you.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20)

If you are saved – Get out there – don't dawdle -into the streets and lanes of the city, the highways and hedges of our town and find some lost folks. They are everywhere. They might be rich and educated, but their likely to be poor, maimed, halt, or blind. With a sense of urgency, and with some passion and compassion in your heart, give it your very best effort and along with the power of the Holy Spirit, invite them to God's supper.