

“That My House May Be Filled”

Luke 14:15-24

Verse 15 serves as the introduction to this particular episode in the life of our Savior. Jesus was still at the dinner that He had been invited to by “one of the chief Pharisees” and, after seeing those that were there and how they acted, and after healing the man with the dropsy, the conversation turned to a greater feast that was yet to come. He addressed it in the first parable in vs. 7-11, and He is brought back to it here by one of the guests that was there with Him at the meal.

It was common for the Jews to consider the kingdom of God, and they were aware that there was going to be a great supper there, and this man, hoping to change the subject from the negative that Jesus had given to the guests as well as the master of the house, mentions what a blessed thing it will be for those that “eat bread in the kingdom of God.” And, that is so very true – however, Jesus wasn’t so interested in what they thought of Him, nor of how the conversation was going – He just wanted them to consider how many there were that had not heard, and how much of a responsibility there was for them to hear.

The principles being taught in this parable are still so very relevant today. This deals with those that have heard and don’t believe; with those that may have heard, or at least wanted to hear, but have been rejected; and those that have never heard and never had opportunity to believe. It is the last group that Jesus seems to be the most concerned about when He said to “compel them to come in that my house may be filled” (vs. 23).

I. HE BADE MANY – VS. 16-20

A. Represents the Jews of Jesus' day

B. By application today, it represents those that think they are okay without Christ: (remember these – they will come up again)

1. The religious crowd
2. The rich crowd
3. The self-righteous crowd

C. This group didn't want to come the right way – so "they all with one consent began to make excuse." These excuses are broken into two basic categories – and they are the same two basic categories that keep people from believing in and following Christ today:

1. Vs. 18-19 – possessions
 - a) These two verses point to a custom the Jews had, as well as many people of that day, that they would not use a team of oxen or use a piece of farm land until some ritualistic things had been done – that is what is being referred to here.
 - b) To many, their possessions are their life and they just don't have time nor concern for anything other than that.
2. Vs. 20 – family

Let it be said first that loving family and making them very important in our lives is

biblical – this text is not contradicting that teaching. Jesus is using a comparison, as He was prone to do – our relationship with Him is first and foremost, and if it is then all other relationships will be proper.

- a) The OT Levitical Law had guidelines for “newlyweds” and that is what is referred to here

Deuteronomy 24:5

⁵ When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

- b) For some, their family is the most important thing in their life, and it is even more important to some than their relationship with the Lord

D. The word “bade” means to invite

1. Jesus invites all in one sense but that is not what is in view here.
2. Here He is referring to those that He came to first – to His own people – they were the first to hear, they were the first to have opportunity to believe – and they rejected Him.

John 1:11-12

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Acts 3:25-26

²⁵ Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

²⁶ Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Galatians 4:4-5

⁴ But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

3. So, He went from inviting to bringing, or leading, and from there to compelling – Jesus wants all to be saved – but they can't be if they haven't heard.

II. HE BROUGHT MORE – VS. 21-22

A. Represents the Jews of Jesus' day that were not holy – that were not qualified to worship in the synagogue – they were "unclean."

B. By application today, it represents those around us that don't feel welcome (and this describes many churches, and many people in those churches):

1. They don't feel welcome by the religious crowd
2. They don't feel welcome by the rich crowd
3. They don't feel welcome by the self-

righteous crowd

C. Vs. 21a – The words “bring in” literally means to “introduce” – to “lead to” – it is the phrase we use when we refer to bringing people to Christ, to introducing them to Christ.

D. Vs. 21b – The servant (which represents the believer) was told to “go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city.”

1. Indicates time was short – and it is getting shorter – demonstrates urgency.

John 9:4

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

Romans 13:11–14

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

2. The “streets and lanes of the city” is referring to a little broader view than the first point where the message from the Master was given to those that were

bidden to the supper – just a select group, so to speak – this is pointing to enlarging the scope of our outreach to include the areas closest to us.

E. Vs. 21c – It was the duty then, and it is the duty now, of those that believe in Christ to do what we can to introduce Him to others by “bringing them” to Him – and here they are represented by those that no one else cared for – “the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind” (these were not allowed in the Temple worship of the Old Testament – that’s why this is so significant).

F. Vs. 22 – But, although they accepted the invitation, there were still more that the Master wanted there.

III. HE COMPELLED OTHERS – VS. 23

A. Represents the Gentiles of Jesus’ day

B. By application today it represents “the world” – the ones that have never heard the gospel. They haven’t heard:

1. Because the religious crowd doesn’t want to be bothered
2. Because the rich crowd doesn’t care
3. Because the self-righteous crowd doesn’t think they need to

C. The servant was told to “go out in the highways and hedges”

1. The servant was then told to broaden even further his seeking for those that would come to the supper.
2. The Master tells him to go where the people are – to go wherever he could to get people to come in – to go everywhere he could to get people to come in.
 - a) The “highways” were the public roads of the day, but, in contrast to roads today with cars on them, then the public roads were where the majority of the common man was, including the beggars of the city. It was a place of hustle and bustle – a place that the rich would avoid. This is referring to the highways outside the city itself.
 - b) The “hedges” was a place where the poorest slaves would be found. “A hedge is the inclosure around a field or vineyard. It was commonly made of thorns, which were planted thick, and which kept the cattle out of the vineyard. ‘A common plant for this purpose is the prickly pear, a species of cactus, which grows several feet high, and as thick as a man’s body, armed with sharp thorns, and thus forming an almost impervious defense’ (Professor Hackett, ‘Scripture Illustrations,’ p. 174). Those in the hedges were poor laborers employed in planting them or trimming them - people of the lowest class and of great poverty.” (Barnes)

[Ephesians 2:11–22](#)

¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

D. The word "compel" in this context means to use as much compelling persuasion as we can to get them to listen.

"That is, urge them, press them earnestly, one and all. Do not hear their excuses on account of their poverty and low rank of life, but urge them so as to overcome their objections and lead them to the feast. This expresses the 'earnestness' of the man; his anxiety that his table should be filled, and his purpose not to reject any on account of their poverty, or ignorance, or want of apparel. So God is earnest in regard to the most polluted and vile. He commands his servants, his ministers, to 'urge' them to come, to 'press' on them the salvation of the gospel, and to use all the means in their power to bring into heaven poor and needy sinners." (Barnes)

1. It's not enough to just invite them – we need to do what we can to persuade them to hear.
2. The group under consideration here represent those that have never heard, and it may take a lifetime of work and effort and persuasion before they will accept and believe.

Conclusion: What about us? Do we care about those around us that no one else does? Do we care about those that have never heard the gospel? It is up to us to get the message of hope to them. How compelled are we?

Verse 24 serves as a fitting conclusion – Jesus is giving in this parable the terrible truth that many

that have heard the Gospel message will not accept it and they will not “taste” of the “supper” to come.

How sad it is that those that have been invited will make excuse and will then be refused entrance.

Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher, told a story about a goose who was wounded and who landed in a barnyard with some chickens. He played with the chickens and ate with the chickens. After a while that goose thought he was a chicken. One day a flight of geese came over, migrating to their home. They gave a honk up there in the sky, and he heard it.

Kierkegaard said, “Something stirred within the breast of this goose. Something called him to the skies. He began to flap the wings he hadn’t used, and he rose a few feet into the air. Then he stopped, and he settled back again into the mud of the barnyard. He heard the cry, but he settled for less.” — Leighton Ford, “Hope for a Great Forever,” Preaching Today, Tape No. 96.

Have you settled for less than heaven as an unbeliever? Or, have you settled for less than what Christ wants as a believer? Either way, the outcome is not a good one.