

The King's Desire - "A FULL HOUSE"
Citizens of God's Kingdom – Pt. 6

(Luke 14:15-24 NKJV) "Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, **"Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!"** {16} Then He said to him, **"A certain man gave a great supper and **invited many**, {17} "and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' {18} "But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' {19} "And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' {20} "Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' {21} "So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.*' {22} "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' {23} "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and **compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.** {24} 'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'""**

I. For the last 5 sessions our focus has been the Kingdom of God

A. In this familiar story Jesus is dining in the house of a prominent Pharisee.

- 1. From the story as recorded earlier in the chapter there are many guests who are experts in the law... most likely the house was full of Pharisee's.**
- 2. It was a very religious bunch who had gathered for this social event**
- 3. They had invited Jesus with the hope of finding something that they could accuse him of and thereby ruin His credibility among the people**
- 4. Jesus didn't disappoint them. He gave them plenty of reasons to accuse him.**

B. When you follow Jesus's story in the gospels, you find Him often confronting religious attitudes in the hearts of people.

- 1. Legalism is a deadly thing, and it can seep into the heart so easily.**
- 2. In our zeal to be God followers, we can find ourselves like the Pharisee's... Knowing the letter of the law but missing the Spirit behind the law.**

3. Here is Jesus in a room filled with people who knew the laws of God

4. But in their zealous adherence to the legalist requirements of the law, they could not see God who was right in front of them
5. Jesus confounds them as He heals the sick man which in their eyes was a violation of the law...
6. Instead of rejoicing that the sick man was healed their legalism blinded them and they could feel no compassion
7. At the dinner one of the guests hearing Jesus speak, expressed a view held by many Jews that only Jews would be invited to the great feast of the Messianic kingdom.

C. They were content to maintain their mutual admiration society with its good ole boy club mentality.

1. They could care less about the growth of God's kingdom or embracing anyone different from themselves.
2. Jesus speaks to this attitude through a parable of a great supper.
3. This parable not only addresses the attitude of the guests but presents three truths that can be applied to us today.

II. First, take note of God's Gracious Invitation - verses 16-17

(Luke 14:16-17 NKJV) "Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and **invited many,** {17} "and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'"

A. The invitation was sent out to inform "many" people of the upcoming supper.

1. In those days you should know that when a person was going to host a banquet, invitations would be sent out to the guests.
2. The exact timing of when the feast would occur was not a certainty.
3. Invited guests would accept the invitation, then they would wait till they were called that the banquet feast was now ready.
4. Guests had to be prepared to go at a moment's notice...
5. Once the banquet was made ready messengers were sent, and people were called to the table.

B. And this is what the Father has done for all of us...

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

- 1. Many hear the invitation... TV, radio, preaching, witnessing believers, or by reading.**
- 2. Many hear and many respond**
- 3. Many say a prayer and ask for forgiveness**
- 4. Some come to an altar and make a public profession...**

C. In the parable Jesus tells us that the initial invitation is accepted by all.

- 1. Note that the servant was sent "to them who were invited" (those who had accepted the initial invitation).**

(Luke 14:17 NKJV) ""and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'"

D. The initial invitation called only for an acknowledgement, whereas the second invitation calls for commitment and action.

(Rev 22:17 NKJV) "And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

E. Father God extends His love and grace to all who hear the gospel...

- 1. Anyone who believes...**
- 2. So that none would perish...**
- 3. This is God's heart**
- 4. He is a God of grace and mercy and forgiveness**
- 5. Take note of God's gracious invitation**

III. Notice Man's Callous Rejection - verses 18-20

(Luke 14:18-20 NKJV) ""But **they all with one accord began to make excuses.** The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' {19} "And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' {20} "Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'"

A. Everyone who was invited and initially accepted the invitation now reject the call to come.

1. Israel is the prime example.

(John 1:11 NKJV) "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him."

2. They looked for the Messiah but when He came, they rejected Him.

B. Excuses...

1. It's the only time I can work in my yard.

2. I'm too busy at work.

3. I have family obligations.

4. Excuses are the cradle ... that Satan rocks men off to sleep in. - D. L. Moody

5. Anyone can find an excuse if they really want to find one.

6. The excuse may even seem justifiable on the surface, but the end result is the same... it's saying "no" to Jesus

(Mark 7:6 NKJV) "He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with *their* lips, But their heart is far from Me.'"

IV. God's Command - verses 21-23

(Luke 14:21-23 NKJV) ""So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' {22} "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' {23} "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'"

A. Go Out

1. To the streets and the lanes of the city

2. "We must evangelize our community.

3. For if we do not do it then who will?

4. And if we do not do it here, where will it be done?

5. And if not now, when?"

B. Go to those with needs

1. Look around and see who is near you

2. Someone near you needs the Jesus who lives in your heart.

3. They need to know of God's love and forgiveness for their sins
4. They need to meet Jesus, and God lives in you...
5. You can touch them with the hand of God, because God lives in you.
6. A simple act of kindness can turn a life around
7. We must "go"

C. Whenever the topic of evangelism is raised, some think that they are not prepared to share.

1. They are afraid they don't know enough to share.
2. Listen dear one, evangelism is just one **beggar** telling another **beggar** where to get food.
3. We don't have anything to offer anyone that will make an eternal difference in their lives...
4. But we can do this one thing... we can invite them to come and sit at the Master's table and join in on the feast.
5. That's the heart of evangelism

D. "go" To the highways and hedges

1. Go to the strays, the outcasts and dregs of society

(Mark 16:15 NKJV) "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

2. The church is under orders.

E. BRING In

1. God wants His house to be full.
2. Our God with His burning love for people will never settle for His house half full.

(2 Pet 3:9 NIV) "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but everyone to come to repentance."

3. When you read the parable one thing is certain... God wants His house full

4. He wants His banquet table full

5. Jesus is clearly not pleased with:

a) an empty banquet table (Luke 14:15-23)

b) fishing without catching (Luke 5:4-11)

c) sowing without reaping (Matt. 13:3-9)
- a fig tree that bears no figs (Luke 13:6-9)

d) lost sheep that are not brought into the fold (Matt. 18:11-14)

e) a lost coin that is sought but not found (Luke 15:8-10)

f) a ripe harvest that is not reaped (Matt. 9:36-38)

g) a proclamation without a response (Matt. 10:14)

6. The love of God is great; it requires a multitude of guests and will not tolerate empty seats.

F. At first glance it may appear that Jesus is very much concerned with numbers.

1. The fish in the miraculous catch were counted.

2. The leftovers after the feeding of the five thousand were counted.

3. And the five thousand themselves were counted!

4. Converts at Pentecost were counted.

5. And in the parable of the lost sheep, the shepherd would never have known that one of his flock of one hundred was lost, unless he had counted them!

6. It's not about numbers, it's about people

7. God loves people, and if we love God then we need to love them like He loves them

G. Compel them to come in...

H. **Compel** - to constrain by threat, entreaty, force, or persuasion

1. If we can convince people that we are onto something that's full of joy and meaning, they'll stampede one another to follow us in.

I. We need to compel people to come in...

J. But how?

V. Here's a few ideas of how we can be compelling

A. **Our Facilities ought to be Compelling**

(Ezra 7:27 NKJV) "Blessed *be* the LORD God of our fathers, who has put *such a thing* as this in the king's heart, **to beautify the house of the LORD** which *is* in Jerusalem,"

(Hag 2:1-4 NKJV) "In the seventh *month*, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: {2} "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: {3} 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, *is this* not in your eyes as nothing? {4} 'Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the LORD; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the LORD, 'and work; for I *am* with you,' says the LORD of hosts."

1. Let's beautify this house
2. Let's do what we can together to make this house of worship compelling for people to want to come in.
3. Let's clean it up, fix it up, paint it up and do what we can within our means to make the physical building look appealing.
4. When a new person walks into the house where you worship is it compelling? Clean, Tidy, inviting? Do what you can to make the house of worship look appealing.

VI. Our **Worship** ought to be Compelling

A. Worship is the language of adoration addressed to God in the heart language of the worshipper

1. We live in a postmodern culture.
2. We cannot expect to operate the same as we did in the 40's and 50's or 70's or 80's, 2000's
3. Worship without creativity is like inviting a congregation to come and chew on Kleenex for an hour.

4. I thank God for our worship leader and our worship team members
5. The Spirit of our worship is growing, but it's not up to worship leader and the worship team alone.
6. Worship is an attitude of the heart.
7. All of us must come with hearts that are filled with faith to worship
8. We must come and give ourselves in worship
9. To sing with all our hearts to the Lord
10. To abandon ourselves in wholehearted devotion to the Lord.
11. Our worship ought to be compelling

B. Our FELLOWSHIP ought to be Compelling

(John 13:35 NKJV) ""By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.""

(Gal 5:14-15 NKJV) "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." {15} But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!"

1. People join churches more because they want warmth than light.
2. We like to think it's our stunning proclamation of the truth that keeps them coming.
3. Good sermons and exciting worship may hold people for a while but what keeps them coming are friendships that foster a sense of belonging
4. A church newsletter mentioned a man who visited eighteen different churches on successive Sundays.
5. He was trying to find out what the churches were really like.
6. He said, "I sat near the front.
7. After the service, I walked slowly to the rear, then returned to the front and went back to the foyer using another aisle.
8. I smiled and was neatly dressed.

9. I asked one person to direct me to a specific place: a fellowship hall, pastor's study, etc.

10. I remained for coffee if served.

11. I used a scale to rate the reception I received.

12. I awarded points on the following basis:

13. 10 for a smile from a worshiper

14. 10 for a greeting from someone sitting nearby

15. 100 for an exchange of names

16. 200 for an invitation to have coffee

17. 200 for an invitation to return

18. 1000 for an introduction to another worshiper

19. 2000 for an invitation to meet the pastor

20. On this scale, eleven of the eighteen churches earned fewer than 100 points.

21. Five actually received less than 100 points

22. The conclusion: The doctrine may be biblical, the singing inspirational, the sermon uplifting, but when a visitor finds nobody who cares whether he's here, he is not likely to come back."

23. Our fellowship needs to be compelling

C. Our **WITNESS ought to be Compelling**

1. There is a road winding over a desert waste and through barren hills where for many miles the only water is a spring that flows from a rock at the summit of one of the low mountains.

2. At best it was only a pencil-like stream, but to those who traveled this road before the days of automobiles it was most welcome.

3. To help people get the water someone had left a tin cup there.

4. But as time went on, the cup became rusted and filthy.

5. Many a person did not try to get a drink because of the repulsive condition of the cup.

(Acts 9:15 NKJV) "But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel."

6. How we live our lives really does matter

7. We, like the Apostle Paul are chosen vessels

8. We are called to bear the name of Jesus before all who don't know Him

9. People will hear us when they see that we really do live what we believe.

10. Let's take an honest assessment of our lives and our lifestyles...

11. Let's ask the Holy Spirit to clean out the cup if it's grown rusty.

12. Our witness needs to be compelling.

(Luke 14:23 NKJV) ""Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.'"

D. According to Jesus, God wants us to compel the lost, the disenfranchised, the weary, the un-churched...

E. He wants all of His servants to go out and begin to compel people to come in to the house, so the house will be full.

F. This is the Kings desire

G. From time to time, we hear statistics about how people first came into church membership.

1. These figures trace back to the Institute for American Church Growth, which asked 10,000 people about their pilgrimage.

2. What led them in?

3. Answers were:

4. Special need, 2 percent;

5. Walk-in, 3 percent;

6. Pastor, 6 percent;

7. Visitation, 1 percent;

8. Sunday school, 5 percent;
9. Evangelistic crusade, 5 percent;
10. Program, 3 percent;
11. Friend/relative, 79 percent. - Wayne Zunkel, Leadership, Vol. 5, no. 3
12. If you want your neighbor to know what Christ will do for him, let the neighbor see what Christ has done for you. Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887)
13. When Christians live the gospel, sinners will listen to the gospel. Let's reach out to a world in need with the Word it needs.

(Mat 5:16 NKJV) ""Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

H. Let's fill this house

I. Let's work together and compel people to come in.

VII. Get the "go" back...

A. This is the word the Lord has been speaking to me about for the past few months or more.

1. The Lord really stirred me to get the go back in missions
2. We need to get back out to the field
3. We need to pray, give and go
4. Pray about going – let's get the go back in our missions

B. We need to get the go back into this community

1. What can we do to make a difference in our community and with our neighbors?
2. Together, let's get the Go back and see this house filled for God's glory

VIII. Citizens of the Kingdom Live to fulfill the King's Dreams and Desires

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(2 Pet 3:9 NIV) "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but everyone to come to repentance."