

Lesson 154 Three Parables about Dinner Guests

I. Scripture Text

Luke 14:7-24 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. 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 hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto 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 unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Matthew 22:1-14 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

II. Bible Story

CG1-1 Jesus dines with Pharisees

Jesus often dined with Pharisees, as well as publicans and sinners, and He used parables on such occasions to teach.

Jesus said when you are invited as a guest at a wedding, don't choose the best, most important and honored seats, because if there is a more honorable guest than you, you will be embarrassed to be ushered to a less honorable seat. Jesus said it is wiser to take a lower seat and then, should you be ushered to a higher seat,

everyone will admire you. But you will not be admired if you take a higher seat and later are ushered to a lower seat. Jesus taught that we should not push ourselves ahead of others. He said that whosoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

Jesus also said that those who entertain dinner guests should not invite only their kinsmen, neighbors, and rich friends who could return their invitation, but they should also invite poor people who could not return their invitation. Jesus was not saying that it is wrong to invite relatives, neighbors, and rich people, but we should not neglect someone just because he is poor.

That is good to think about when you have a birthday party, a slumber party, or a cookout. Is there someone you could invite who is not popular and never seems to get invited anywhere? Jesus would be very pleased if you included such people in your invitation. There are many people who are going through hard times; maybe you can invite them to your party.

CG1-2 Parable of the great supper

Jesus told three parables about dinner guests. In one parable Jesus told about a man who made a great supper and invited many people to come. He sent his servant to tell his invited guests that the supper was now ready and they should come. The servant went to each guest and said, "Come; for all things are now ready."

To the servant's surprise, the guests did not want to come to the supper. They made excuses. The first man said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused."

The next man's excuse was equally ridiculous. "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused." Would a farmer buy oxen without carefully trying them out first? Of course not! This man also was only making an excuse to get out of going to the supper.

The third man's excuse was as silly as the other two. "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Why couldn't he bring his new

wife to the supper? He could, of course, but he did not want to come; this was his excuse.

The servant returned to his master and reported that the invited guests would not come; they all made excuses. How would you feel if you prepared a great banquet and the people you invited did not want to come? You would be disappointed, hurt, and maybe angry. The man who made the great supper was very disappointed and angry. He told his servant to go quickly out into the streets and lanes of the city and to invite the poor, the handicapped, and the blind to his great banquet.

The servant did so. These people made no excuses. They were delighted to be invited to the wonderful banquet. After all of those were invited, there was still room at the banquet for more. 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. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Can you guess the spiritual meaning of this parable? The man who prepared the great supper is symbolic of God! The great supper is fellowship with God now and forever in eternity. His Son came to provide salvation and a wonderful home in heaven for those who will accept His invitation. When Jesus came to earth to announce God's great salvation, many rejected His invitation. They wanted nothing to do with Jesus; they made excuses for not receiving Jesus. Today, there are also people who make excuses—excuses like, "I'm too busy to come to God," or "I'm having too much fun and don't want to come to God," or "I may have to quit doing some of the things I'm doing, so I don't want to come to God," or "I'm too tired on Sunday because I was up late Saturday night," or "I want to go to a party."

God extends His great invitation to all. But only those who receive Jesus as their Savior will partake of the glories of heaven. Those who do not believe and make excuses will be left out. The people who were invited represents those who have been brought up from the time they were children hearing about the Bible. They have all the reason in the world to accept Jesus

because they have learned all about Him. However, many people who have had the advantage of learning about Jesus from the time of being a child don't appreciate the opportunity they have to get saved and so they don't choose to accept Christ as their Savior. The people who are halt and blind and otherwise handicapped represent those who are well aware of their spiritual condition and that they are sick with sin. They can appreciate their need for a Savior much more quickly and so they will come quickly to accept Christ. Then there are those who are out in the highways of life—they are far from the gospel and don't even know it. When we send out missionaries or go out to get kids into church with the bus, it is just like getting those who were in the highways and hedges. We should make sure to quickly come to Jesus and not make excuses.

CG1-3 Parable of the king's wedding feast

Jesus told another parable about a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son and invited many guests to the wedding feast. He sent his servants to bring the guests to the great wedding feast for his son, but those who were invited made light of the invitation and would not come to the wedding. The king sent other servants to tell them the feast was all ready and urged them to come at once. But they ridiculed the king's servant and went on with their daily business. Some of them beat and killed the king's servants. When the king heard of this, he became furious and ordered his armies to kill those murderers and burn their city.

He said to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. " Thus the wedding feast had plenty of guests.

Can you guess in the parable who the king represents? It is God the Father, and the king's son is Jesus. The first invited guests were the Jewish people of Jesus' day who refused to believe on Jesus. Those who were later invited were the poor, the sinners, the Gentiles, and anyone who would believe on Jesus and receive Him as their Savior.

There is a second part to this parable.

CG1-4 The wedding garment

When the king entered the banquet room of his son's wedding, to his surprise there was one guest who was not wearing a wedding garment. In those days people wore special clothes to weddings, even as today we dress up special for weddings. The one guest who was not wearing a wedding garment stood out among all the other guests; it would be like someone in our day wearing dirty jeans and a ragged shirt to a fancy wedding. In those days the host provided outer wedding garments for each guest. "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" asked the king. The man without the wedding garment had nothing to say. He is like some people who think they are good enough to go to heaven without receiving the righteousness that Jesus provides. God gives a spiritual robe of righteousness to each saved person when he is saved. The Bible tells us: "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). We can never go to God's heavenly wedding feast in the filthy rags of our own righteousness. We certainly need the righteousness that God gives to us when we are saved.

The king ordered the guest without the wedding garment to be taken and cast out of the banquet hall into the darkness. He was removed from the warm, attractive banquet room.

This was like the Pharisees who refused God's righteousness, and it is like many people today who depend on their own goodness and refuse to come to Jesus to be clothed in God's righteousness. They will not go to heaven, but will be cast out into everlasting darkness.

Some young people from Christian homes believe that because their parents are Christians, that makes them Christians, too. Do not let Satan deceive you into believing that lie, for each person must personally decide whether or not he will receive Jesus as his Savior. Jesus is ready to give anyone the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness to prepare him for heaven. All you have to do is believe on Jesus Christ as

your personal Savior and receive Him into your heart, and you'll have God's wedding garment that makes you acceptable for that great banquet in heaven.

III. Activity 1

Age 3 through Grade 1

Materials needed:

- ☐ a plastic spoon for each child
- ☐ a bowl with 1/4 cup of Cheerios cereal for each child

Have the students pair off and try to feed each other the cereal. Explain to the students that it is difficult, but that if they cooperate with each other then they can do it. Remind them about how at the dinners that Jesus described, it was important to put others first; that is what it means to cooperate: we have to not put ourselves first but to think of others.

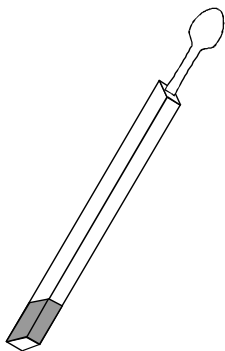
IV. Activity 2

Grade 2 through Grade 7

Materials needed:

- ☐ a plastic spoon and stick (1" x 1" x 36") for each student
- ☐ a bowl with 1/2 cup of Cheerios for each student

Before class, drill a hole in the end of the stick and insert the spoon in it. Mark the end of the stick so that the students can tell where they must hold it. The assembly should look like this:



Have the students pair off for a race to see which pair can finish the Cheerios first. Tell them that they will be disqualified if they do not use the spoon to eat the Cheerios or if they touch any other part of the "spoon" other than the handle. Do *not* tell them that they should feed each other; it is for them to discover that team work and cooperation is the only way that they will be able to accomplish this task.

After they are done, or if they don't get it, point out to them that if they had put each other first and not tried to feed themselves that they would have found it easier. This is the lesson that Jesus tried to teach them: don't put yourself first and you will find success with God.