

EXCUSES!!!

"And they all with one consent began to make an excuse..." Luke 14:18a.

The Scripture above tells us that not all receive the invitation to eat at a table that Jesus has prepared. The account is a parable; which means, *"an earthly story with a heavenly meaning."*

So, what is the heavenly meaning? Without a doubt, the man that Jesus refers to is His Father inviting all to come and dine with Him. But, the many excuses; although, very flimsy, come in a rapid-fire manner.

The first flimsy excuse has a man buying some land **without even seeing it** (V 18). The second is about purchasing some **unproven oxen** (V 20). And, the third excuse is humorous, if it wasn't so serious! **"I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come"** (V 20). All the excuses in this parable deal with issues of the present life, of course. There the same ones we might have; or, the ones we have to invent.

Today, I hear one excuse of, **"I have to work on Sunday."** That one and, the million others like it, will dissolve away the second we see what Jesus is offering. It is then that we place the necessary heavenly importance on His invitation.

Putting God first and our lives second is the kingdom idea. When we do - in any degree, we find that any invitation coming from God demands the highest decision from us. When we see it correctly and Scriptural, faith kicks in and we begin the walk and bypass all those things this life offers.

The calling or invitation is a heavenly lesson revealing that only a few accept. Nevertheless, Jesus stated that His **"house may be filled"** (V 23b). So, if you or I won't go, there will be others, no matter what excuse is given. In this parable, et al, we know that God's kingdom plan is steadfast and sure. Once that truth settles in the heart, we rest upon a hope of the coming Savior and all excuses vanish.

In fact, all excuses become **dung-stuff** when we hear how Jesus preferenced His teaching in Luke 14. The call is now in the present; but, the blessing is future. And, listen to the future! **"Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God"** (V 15).

How could anyone trade this glorious supper for anything in the world? Consequently, everyone bidden ought to seize the opportunity. Everyone reading this passage ought to put all things aside and realize their future.

The future for a servant of God is not next year or two years away, it's when the Lord returns and sets His kingdom up on earth. Jesus was very clear on our faithful

attitude. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God...Take therefore no thought for the morrow..." (Matthew 6:32-33).

When Jesus establishes His Father's Kingdom on earth, then we shall eat His bread of fellowship then. It's future; but, the call is for today. And, no excuses!!!

Take heart! Exercise faith by letting your heart thrust forward to that day; for, a Christian lives today, as if he's already raised up in the kingdom.

Really, there is no excuse for anyone to miss the call or, miss the meaning of the call. **But, for a re-cap** - This parable, like most of them, deals with the time of the future Kingdom on earth. In Luke 14, Jesus is expounding on that day, inviting all faithful servants to be ready.

In some parables, the Lord tells us we shall inherit the earth and rule the nations, making the parables lessons of the Kingdom of God on earth. Seldom do the parables deal with the unsaved; except in the declarative sense of inviting all to come and announcing His plan to all mankind.

Based upon the future, Jesus invites us to receive the invitation and start moving toward the call. How can we not **squash all excuses** and get ready for that day?

And, the forward movement is within His New Testament Church. There is no doubt that the church has always been in the world since Jesus established Her. The church has never changed Her tenets.

Thinking on how to receive the invitation, the words of Paul are blessed. "Unto Him be glory in the church, world without end," Ephesians 3:21.

And, Jesus taught that we receive as we "Go ye therefore into all the word...and behold, I am with you all the way, even to the end of the age," Matthew 28:19-20.

For those of faith, Jesus gives us a glimpse of the invitation supper in Matthew 8:11-12, "...That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom (the Jewish nation) shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matthew 8:11-12.

Imagine the excuses one will hear coming out of outer darkness! I want to listen to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob while sitting in the kingdom of God and enjoying the fellowship supper. Its fragrance is sweet to my heart today. Amen!!!