

A Feast For Everyone Luke 14:15-24**~Other Speakers S-Z: David Servant:**

This important story was told by Jesus while He was dining with a group of Pharisees. Just after He had said something about the resurrection of the godly people, one of the diners expressed what a privilege it would be to share in the Kingdom of God. The man was, perhaps, conveying the heart-felt feelings of everyone present, and Jesus recognized His opportunity to tell them who will and who will not be one of those privileged people.

Amazingly, the point of Jesus' story is that it is not God who determines who gets into His kingdom. People themselves determine their destiny. God has sent an invitation to everyone, but unfortunately many are making excuses to decline His offer.

Their excuses, as Jesus so wonderfully illustrated, make no sense to anyone with good sense. One man in Jesus' story had just purchased a field and wanted to inspect it. Not only was he rude for declining the invitation, but his reason for declining was insulting to the host. He considered the inspection of his field, something he could do at any time, to be more important than his invitation to the feast, which he would never have another opportunity to attend. He also appears foolish not to have inspected his field before he bought it.

The second man was equally insulting, conveying that he would rather spend time with his new oxen than with the host and his guests.

The third man stated that he'd just been married so he couldn't attend. Perhaps this man represents the person who lets other people make his decisions for him, in this case, a wife.

The wealthy host was angry when his servant returned, informing him how his invitations had been denied. So he instructed his servant to go to the streets and alleys of the city and invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind, and all of them gratefully accepted his invitation. But there was room for still more, so the host instructed his servant to go to remote places where few people lived to urge anyone he could find to come to his feast. He wanted his house to be full. He was obviously a very gracious man. He clearly represents our God, who has extended His salvation invitation to everyone.

Q. Many of the people of Jesus' day considered the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind to be cursed by God, assuming they were deserving their of plight because of their sinfulness. As a result, they had little compassion on such people. What does Jesus' story teach us about that viewpoint?

A. It teaches us that it is entirely wrong. Although we may not understand why some people are born with birth defects, or why some people suffer tragedies in their lives, we should never assume that it is because they are greater sinners than the rest of us. God loves every one of them, and He wants them to accept His invitation to be saved.

Q. Jesus wanted to point out in this story that people who reject God's salvation invitation are very foolish. What could be more foolish than refusing eternal life and living forever in heaven, and choosing to spend eternity in hell? Can you think of any foolish excuses that people use today to decline God's invitation?

Application: The wealthy host in today's story finally told his servant to go to the remote, less-populated areas to invite people to his feast. God loves people in far-away places, and all Christians should be involved in helping those kinds of people hear about God's invitation. We can do that by praying for God to send people, by giving money and praying for those who are taking God's message to far-away places, or by going ourselves. Are you like the servant of the wealthy host?