

Date: 11.07.2004

Passage: Like 14:15 – 24 (Parable of the Great Banquet)

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What does the following represent in the parable?

Certain man: God  
Banquet: Kingdom of God/ Salvation  
His servant: Jesus/John the Baptist  
Initial group of invitees: Jews  
Second and third group of invitees: Gentiles

*Why are Jews the first group of invitees?*

Because Abraham, father of faith, responded to God's calling and obeyed God by faith. God promised Abraham that his descendents will be numerous as the stars in the sky and through his offspring, all nations will be blessed. (Genesis 12; Genesis 22:18; Genesis 26:4)

*Who accepted or rejected the invitation?*

Those who were initially invited turned down the invitations with weak excuses. They did not place the invitation as a top priority. The second and third group of people, i.e. the poor, crippled, blind, lame and those who were out on the roads accepted the invitation.

*Application:*

- What is our priority in life? Are we putting God in the first place, ahead of academics, career, relationships etc., so that we are following God's way in every aspect of our lives? Our priorities reveal our desires and lack of desires.
- God's salvation is not limited to the Jews, it's for everyone. (John 3:16 – 'For God so loved the world that He gave one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.') His kingdom has room for everyone (John 14:2 – 4). Christians are to follow the great commission (Matthew 28:18; Mark 16:15) – to spread the gospel and make disciples of all nations.
- Notice also that those who accepted the invitation are those in need, in poverty whereas those who rejected the invitation appeared to be self-sufficient and prosperous. Until we acknowledge our poverty, then we will be able to accept the invitation.

*Other points:*

- There is an urgency to 1) respond to and 2) issue the invitation because once the banquet starts, it represents that judgment has arrived and it'll be too late to join the banquet.
- What is our response to God's calling? Are we quick and ready in our response or are we giving weak excuses not to follow God's calling? In the parable, those who accept the invitation promptly received the blessings. Likewise, when we respond to God's calling, we will receive His blessings.
- See Luke 14:12 – Don't expect anything in return or harbor any expectations when you invite people to the banquet.