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# Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

## “Parable of the Great Banquet”

Luke 14:15-24

**VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 14:15-24 (KJV, Public Domain)**

### Prepare

- How many scrapbook and keep special invitations or memorabilia from special events recorded in those books or by other means? When you sit back and look through it, what kind of feelings do you experience? (If you have any invitations from special events and such consider sharing some examples with your class and explaining those events and how they made you feel.) Use this example as a lead in to today’s lesson.

### Explore – Printed Lesson Available on pages 5-13

Every one of us will be faced with the decision to answer Jesus’ invitation to enter a wonderful relationship with God the Father through Him that will lead to eternal life. Everyone has the choice, but sadly all will not respond in a positive way (such as those found in the text of this lesson). God doesn’t force Himself on anyone. The decision is always ours, but in the end, we will reap the fruit of those decisions, be it good or bad.

Previously, I wrote:

*“The problem is so many are unprepared for what the end will bring...*

*Yes, we have the promise of heaven before us if we are living lives of righteous faith before God but on the other end of the spectrum, there is a very real, horrible place called hell. It is a place for judgment and punishment that will never see an end.*

*Too many are unprepared for an eternal future in one place or the other because they are not taught to be ready anymore. They are not taught that tomorrow is not promised, they could step into eternity at any moment. They are not taught that holiness matters and that God requires holiness for He said, “Be ye holy; for I am holy,” (1 Peter 1:16).*

*Instead, there is a lot of tickling of the ears. Messages that continually show us how to prosper here and tell us that we are next in line here even though this earth is not our final home. While I enjoy a good message of blessing myself, I and everyone else also need to know how to prosper and push for the eternal goal of heaven. Without it, what will you do in the end?” (What Will You do in the End?/WordForLifeSays.com)*

That question of “what will you do in the end” all starts with an opened invitation from Jesus today. How one responds to that invitation will determine what the end will be.

## Activities

- Use blank **Journal Pages** found on site to highlight and write about different things pertaining to the lesson.
- In the **Draw the Scene** section found on site, children can draw a picture of a banquet table with friends and family they wish to share it with. Explain, this can be a symbol of inviting people to Christ. God loves everyone of these people that they draw in the picture and wants to have a relationship with them through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Younger students can make homemade invitations/cards with construction paper and other crafting materials. Use these invitations to invite others to Sunday School/church or simply send messages of encouragement to friends, reaching out to them with the love of Christ.
- Younger students can also put together a **No Excuses Fan Craft** as a symbol to lay all excuses down and follow Jesus.
- Alternate activity such as **Word Search, Crossword, and more** are available on site for those who just want to work with printed materials.

## Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***“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.” Luke 14:23***
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 14)

## Life

For those who are in a relationship with Christ, let your life be a witness. Yes, we invite people to come verbally, but the greatest reflection of what you believe and drawing factor of people to Christ is how you live. Be a living witness. One that when others see what God is doing in you and through you, it compels them to want to be a member of that family; to want to receive their own invitation to His glorious salvation.

For those who are pondering their life path and eternity, look to Jesus. Today, He’s waiting just for you. Today, He wants nothing more than for you to be with Him in that grand



celebration. Whatever obstacles you may face, in faith, lay them all down at the feet of Jesus, and run into His welcoming embrace.

**TOPIC:**

## “Parable of the Great Banquet”

**Luke 14:15-24**

**VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 14:15-24 (KJV, Public Domain)**

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.

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## INTRODUCTION

“We Request Your Presence,” “You’re Invited,” “Let’s Party,” and “Join Us” are just some of the ways an invitation may express that you are welcomed to come to this special event. Not everybody is allowed, but you are because you received an invitation.

That’s the wonderful thing about invitations, they make you feel special because the event you were invited to is special. Once one responds with an affirmative answer that they will be there, the host of the event can start preparing for the number of people who promised and are expected to be in attendance.

But then the day arrives and those who said they would be there, aren’t. Rather, excuses are made to why each couldn’t follow through on their commitment to the invitation that was given, how is the host supposed to respond or feel about this sudden change of plans?

You see, excuses are exactly that, excuses. Barring any valid emergency or tragic calamity, most excuses are just reasons that people make up for not doing something they don’t want to do. Although they obligated themselves to be there, now they wish they didn’t, and want to be excused.

How many today is allowing their eternity to hang on the hinges of excuses? They have a lot of reasons why they can’t respond to God’s heavenly invitation through our Lord Jesus Christ, but eventually, the day will come, and that heavenly celebration will begin. All those who refused the invitation will not even get a taste of what it will be like at that glorious time in that heavenly feast.

Eventually, the time of all excuses will run out.

## LESSON SUMMARY

Leading up to today’s lesson text, Jesus finds Himself dining at the house of a certain chief Pharisee (Luke 14:1) on the Sabbath, where His actions were under a microscope (especially in regard to healing on the Sabbath – see Luke 14:2-5), as this was usually the case when He was in the presence of these men. They watched Him and looked for their own reasons of why Jesus could be dismissed and disregarded about whom He claimed to be.

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It was during this particular dinner when Jesus noticed how ambitiously people sought to sit in the greater seats of notoriety and position. How they wanted to be noticed and therefore fought to be the ones seated in the “chief rooms” (vs. 7). From that, He teaches a parable on humility (see vss. 8-11) and who exactly they should invite to a dinner or supper (vss. 12-14) and that anything they do for others, they would be “recompensed at the resurrection of the just,” (vs. 14).

Listening to Jesus’ illustrations about proper dinner etiquette and protocol, one in attendance couldn’t help but wonder and voice his opinion of what it would be liking dining this way with a heavenly perspective, “at the resurrection of the just.” He said, **“Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.”** Did he automatically assume that he, as well as those present at this dinner, were to be shoo-in residents of the **“kingdom of God”** because of their social status and natural heritage? Was this why he remarked in such a way? If that were the case, Jesus would shortly set his thinking straight.

Regardless of his motives for the statement, surely, he was right. The Bible explains repeatedly the rewards and blessedness of those who are in the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 2:9 tells us, “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,” and Matthew 16:27 tells us, “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works,” (in addition to many, many more biblical references).

In other words, that will definitely be a very blessed time for all who are invited to and attend that heavenly feast.

But who exactly will be there?

Using another parable, Jesus explains who it is that will be attending that heavenly feast. He says, **“A certain man made a great supper, and bade many.”** There was a great occasion on the horizon and **“many”** people were invited to come, which meant that this would be a grand affair.

I know you’ve heard the expression, “The more the merrier,” and it’s usually true. When one is celebrating, they want as many people possible in attendance. People want these special

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occasions to be full of fun, full of joy, and full of well-wishers, and that happens when the party is alive with people.

To invite so many meant there were also just as many preparations that had to be made. After all, a good host wants to make sure that when their guests arrive, there is enough food and places to accommodate everyone. To slight anyone in this area after they committed to come to your dinner would be wrong.

Therefore, when he originally **“bade many,”** that can be viewed at the first invitation. This is the one that would have been sent out plenty of time before the event was to take place. This is also the one that the proposed guests would have responded to, assuring the host of their commitment to come.

In this parable, after all the necessary preparations had been made according to how many people previously said they would be there, the host sent **“his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.”**

The day of the grand affair was now upon them. It was time for the **“supper”** to begin. The feast is in order, and now all that is needed is for the people **“that were bidden, Come.”** The only thing missing from this glorious event were those who previously received the invitation and promised to be there. With that, the servant was instructed to go out and collect the guests and let them know it’s time; let them know **“all things are now ready.”** The work has been done. The preparations have been a success. There is a seat for everyone. There is enough food and fun for everyone. It’s time for the celebration to begin and now all we need is you!

Can you sense the excitement in the air the host must have been feeling waiting for that first guest to arrive; that first knock on the door? But they didn’t show up. No one who said they would be there was there yet, and he was about to find out why.

**“And they all with one consent began to make excuse”** (compare Matthew 22:6). To put it bluntly, they all refused to respond positively to the second invitation that asked them to come because the time was now ready. Now that, my friends, was a serious social faux pas that had some serious consequences to it. Illegitimate excuses will take one out of step of what they were designed for or committed for, causing not only insult to the one who was welcoming

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them in, but it also breeds an opportunity for missed blessings as the latter part of our lesson will tell.

In regard to excuses, especially when dealing with our spiritual walk, the Bible reminds us, “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment,” (Matthew 12:36). Every excuse that flows from our lips will be answered for.

I don’t know the true, inner thoughts and reasoning of these excuses we are getting ready to explore, but regardless of what was behind their motive of not staying committed to the answered invitation, their reasoning was wrong and fell flat on the floor of useless excuses as they all had one mind, **“one consent,”** that they were not going to attend.

**Excuse#1: “I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it.”** The purchase of property is expensive, to say the least. In ancient days, as well as in ours. And, with the purchase of any property, there are questions that will have to be answered. Is the land good for building, planting crops, or whatever purpose he was looking for when considering buying that property? Is it near an area that one can readily reach resources that are needed such as water? Are there concerns with the property that he needs to be aware such as enemies, animals, thieves, etc.?

These and many more questions would have and should have been answered BEFORE even considering purchasing a piece of property. The best way to make sure the property has all you need before laying down a sizable amount of money on it is to go and examine it carefully PRIOR to purchase. To purchase sight unseen is not good business.

But, this man, with his excuse, tried to convince the servant that it is imperative to go and see land and examine it AFTER he already purchased it. This was a ridiculous concept and the mere thought of it falls flat on the floor of bad excuses as he refused the invitation: **“I pray thee have me excused;”** please let my poor reasoning be found sufficient in your sight.

**Excuse #2: “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them.”** Although in our modern day it is possible to buy a car without actually test driving it, it’s not a concept I’m comfortable with. Even if the car has everything it says and does everything it advertises, until I get into the driver’s seat to feel the fit of it on me, I won’t really know if it will do. I need to test drive it first.

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The same concept is behind proving the oxen. This excuse teller is laughably stating that he hasn't "test driven" his oxen before buying them, so on this day of this auspicious occasion, he must do so right now and cannot come to the affair that he had committed himself to attend. Thus, he refused the invitation responding as the first, "**I pray thee have me excused;**" please accept my excuse for standing you up.

**Excuse #3: "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."** Now, unless this wedding was an unusually hurried affair, this should not have been a problem. Just like the feast he is invited to, the groom and the bride would have spent a considerable amount of time planning and preparing for their nuptials. Ergo, this groom would have been aware of, way in advance, if his impending or new marriage and whether or not it would hinder him from attending a planned event he already committed to.

Again, we must remember, that in each instance given, they already accepted the original invitation which means they knew they would be free from other obligations that may have been a hindrance from attending. If that were the case, he and they would have or should have responded that they wouldn't be able to attend this time at the receiving of the first invitation.

Rather than praying to be excused as the first two responded, this third excuse user simply said, "**I cannot come.**" He just wasn't going to do it.

But now the that the time is at hand all of a sudden each has found a "reason" of why they can't come at the host's bidding. Everything mentioned could have been taken care of after the feast and was not a legitimate cause for missing this engagement.

Rather, they let other people and other things became a distraction against their commitment. These things vied for the attention of the men then, and people every day today and too often they win out, temporarily that is.

When the "**servant**" returned, he came bearing bad news: no one was coming. It's didn't matter that the host did everything He/he promised. It didn't matter the care that went into making this day special beyond belief – they refused the invitation and they were refusing to "**come.**"

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Upon hearing the news, the master of the house became very **“angry.”** It’s not even totally about the amount of time and money that went into getting such an event together, but it’s about the disrespect for the host, for the master of the house, when his kindness was thrown back in his face at their refusal to come.

So, he commanded, **“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.”** **“Quickly”** speaks of the urgency to find guests who would be willing to come because remember, everything was now ready. Time would not wait. Preparations would not wait. The party and all its trappings would deteriorate unless there be guests to fill the rooms, eat the feast, and partake in the event. And, since those who were previously invited refused, others would be more than willing to take their place.

This grouping of individuals was some of the same whom Jesus previously stated (see verses 12-14) should be invited to the banquet despite their inability to repay. This grouping of individuals all had something wrong with them (boy, doesn’t that sound familiar). They weren’t of the pious social order and they were definitely in a different social class than the previous invitees, therefore they would have been overjoyed at finally knowing what it’s like to be behind the doors of such an occasion; of being a part of and feeling like they belong. The others who refused the invitation were being replaced by people who had a receptive heart.

**Please Note:** Some believe or represent Christianity as some starchy, perfectly pressed people with nary a deficiency or mark on their record. This is so far from the truth. In God’s house, all are welcomed and invited to come. The rejects, the castaways, the last to be picked are all invited. Those who are not perfect, but have some faults are invited. Those who may not have been original members of the family but have now been grafted in are invited. Background, socio-economic status, race or ethnicity – none of that bars a receptive heart from being invited.

So, to the **“streets and lanes of the city”** the servant was commanded to go; to the places where the undesirables and the unlikely were usually found, he was to go and invite guests to this great banquet. **YOUR ADDRESS ON EARTH WILL NOT STOP YOU FROM GETTING AN ADDRESS IN HEAVEN WITH THE RIGHT HEART.**

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Once the servant did as he was commanded, it was found that there is still **“room”** for more guests. The supper is not yet full. Then, **“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.”** Go beyond the borders of the city, go beyond the borders of this people, and find others who are willing to come, who are willing to be receptive to the invitation the Master is giving.

**Please Note:** God established a relational covenant with His people Israel. It started with Abraham (Genesis 12-17) and traveled down through his family line. On Mount Sinai, God once again stated through the Mosaic Covenant His desire to be their God and for them to be His people; to be in a relational covenant with them (Exodus 19). He said, “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all the people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation...” (Exodus 19:5-6a). They accepted the first invitation and heard for centuries through the prophets to be ready for the second one; to be ready for when Christ comes on the scene. And, when He did, they refused the invitation. They refused Him and would not come.

**Also, Please Note:** This in no ways implies that God is officially and completely done with His chosen people because He is not. And, as was spoken to Abraham way back then, God always had a plan that all the world be reached (Genesis 12:3). So, let us not focus too much on the Jew/Gentile difference, rather let us focus on any, and all hearts, that say yes to Him and respond with a committed life.

So, we see in our lesson the servant reaching out to those who dwell beyond the borders. Many see this as the inclusion of the Gentiles who respond to the invitation with a receptive heart through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**“That my house may be filled.”** There is still room for more. Go out and convince and preach that others may accept the invitation and fill the streets of heaven (compare Matthew 28:19-20).

Those who were previously invited and refused the invitation **“none... shall taste of my supper.”** They will not partake of that heavenly feast. They have rejected Me, and now they are rejected, and those who put other things and people before Me shall lose out on their reward (read Matthew 10:33-42).

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## CONCLUSION

The invitation is still opened and, on the table, today. Won't you come?

It won't be opened forever. Today is the day to say yes to Jesus!

There is going to be a feast in that coming day; a great celebration for those who answered the invitation and responded with a commitment. There will be a celebration of the redeemed!

The idea of a feast correlating with the celebration of God's people in a future heavenly home is nothing new to us. When Jesus said, "That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven," (Matthew 8:11) He was referring to a heavenly feast (see also Luke 13:29; 22:30). In Luke's account, one who sat by said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," (Luke 14:15; as today's lesson notes).

John brought a similar picture to us when he revealed to us his vision of the marriage supper of the Lamb wherein, he says, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb," (Revelation 19:9). One after one, those images show the everlasting reigning of our God and the celebration of the saints with Him.

WOW! Saints of God, we have something very wonderful to look forward to. Jesus, through His death and sacrifice, has already made all things ready. All we have to do is respond properly to the invitation given.

I implore you, if you have not already done so, answer the invitation with a life of commitment today!

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**TOPIC:**

## “Parable of the Great Banquet”

**Luke 14:15-24**

**Please Answer the Review Questions Below**

1. **T or F.** Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.
2. “A certain man made a great \_\_\_\_\_, and bade many” (Luke 14:16).  
**A. Room      B. Supper      C. Party      D. None**
3. What were some of the excuses the people gave for not responding to the invitation?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who were some of the other people the servant was told to invite? (Luke 14:21).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. “Go out into the \_\_\_\_\_ and hedges, and compel them to come.” (Luke 14:23)  
**A. Highways      B. Streets      C. Lanes      D. None**
6. “Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is \_\_\_\_\_.” (Luke 14:22)  
**A. Spaces      B. Seats      C. Room      D. None**
7. Describe the greatest invitation you ever received? Jesus is inviting us something even greater, a relationship with God through Him that leads to life eternal. Have you accepted His invitation?  
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