

HEARTFELT INVITATIONS | LUKE 14:1-24 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 3/15/2026

I. Healing at the Table (1-6) | II. Humility at the Table (7-14) | III. Hesitation Towards the Table (15-24)

INTRO: In Luke 13, Jesus spoke of the "Narrow Door," highlighting the difficult and humble path to salvation. – In Luke 14a, Jesus is invited to Supper at a Pharisee's home where He teaches about Healings and Hypocrisy, Humility and Hesitations regarding a Great Banquet. – In this sermon, Jesus provides **HEARTFELT INVITATIONS**, which challenges us to set aside our excuses and embrace God's gracious call!

I. HEALING AT THE TABLE (14:1-6) – **READ:** *The Heart of the Savior who Heals* – Once again, Jesus accepts an invitation to eat bread in the home of a religious ruler, amongst Pharisees! – Jesus never turns down an invitation to meet with people! – *Regardless of their motives...*

A. The Setting of Suspicion (1-2) – **Religious Scrutiny:** Jesus enters the Pharisee's house and is **carefully watched** because their focus is Criticism, Not Compassion. – **They watched Him closely (1).** – **On six previous occasions** Jesus performed healings on the Sabbath (Luke 4:31–37; 4:38–39; John 5:1–18; Luke 6:6–11; John 9:1–41; Luke 13:10–17), so they waited to accuse Him *if He would violate it once again.*

1. **Their Silent Set Up (2)** – It "*just so happened*" that a man diseased with Dropsy was also at supper! – **Jesus saw the condition of the man: Edema** = A chronic liver and heart disease which causes fluid retention and painful swelling. – **P/A:** The main function of a **LIVER is to FILTER the blood** coming from the digestive tract, before passing it to the rest of the body for healthy nourishment.

2. **This Sick Man Needed Healing!** – His presence illustrates human need in the presence of hardened religion! *i.e., The Hypocritical Religion of the Pharisees.*

B. The Silence of the Scholars (3–4a) – To expose the coldness of their legalism, **JESUS questions the Pharisees about Healing on the Sabbath.** A question which challenged every Pharisee to consider: "*Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?*" – **P/A:** The same question was asked in (13:16)

- This time, **they were speechless (4a)** – (Micah 7:16) Describes nations covering their mouths and being ashamed of their own power when witnessing God's miracles. *Exactly what happened next.*

C. The Savior's Sympathy (4b–6) – **Jesus heals the man**, demonstrating that Mercy fulfills God's heart (4b) – Just like the Bent Woman of 18 years (13:12), **He healed this man and let him go** (*lit. He loosed him*) – Healing the sick man at the table **PROVED** that **Mercy and Compassion** will always **override** religious tradition in God's Eyes – **P/A:** Jesus brought Healing to the Table! *Then...*

1. The Pharisees were again questioned about their actions on the Sabbath (5) – **Showing Mercy to an animal** more than a human on the Sabbath was **Heartless** not **Heartfelt!** (*cf. 13:15*).

2. **This Time the Pharisees Could Not answer (6)** – **P/A:** How is it that any human would not answer correctly to the obvious. What holds a person back from recognizing Righteousness or Heartlessness?

- **Sin... Selfish Ambitions... Who then is really sick?** – The Pharisees were **Swollen with Religious Traditions** and **Unable to Filter Through Spiritual Truth** that could bring Healing to their lives! (*They are the ones who needed Healing at the Table!*)

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: Religion often **Watches**, but **Jesus always Works!** – Where Legalism hesitates, **LOVE INTERVENES!** – **C.H. Spurgeon:** "*Compassion is the truest evidence that the heart has been touched by Christ.*" **Segue:** While healing a body is one thing... **healing PRIDE** is another...

II. HUMILITY AT THE TABLE (14:7-14) – Jesus then addressed the **Hearts** of **Those Invited** and **The Host Himself**; about their need for **Heartfelt Humility** and **Hospitality**. – *He first warns the Invited of...*

A. Their Proud Positioning (7-9) – **READ**: In Jesus' day a **Seating Position** at dinner **portrayed a place of Honor**. – While at the table, **Jesus observed** that Some Guests Scrambled for the **Best Seats**.

1. **The Danger of Haughtiness (7)** – **The Truth is**, most of us naturally desire to be noticed or **made to feel important**. – But if this desire is not kept in check, **PRIDE begins to grow!** – The Bible clearly teaches that; **God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6)** – Jesus then *admonishes* these invited ones with: **The Parable of the Wedding Feast**, to expose...

2. **The Danger of Humiliation (8-9)** – As a wedding guest... **Don't sit in the Best Place!** – Jesus advises that **seat selections** should be approached with Humility because those who promote themselves are **Subject to Public Humiliation!** – **(Prov 11:2)** says, *When pride comes, then comes SHAME; but with the humble is wisdom*. – Save yourself the embarrassment by taking the **Lowly Place!** *which is...*

B. The Proper Posture (10-11) – **READ**: **A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor.** (Prov 29:23) ... Choosing to Take the **LOWLY PLACE FIRST**, is the **BEST COUNSEL** we can receive (10). – This practice invites honor from the host, not from yourself! – When practiced rightly it brings potential blessings both from God and man! (*Q: What do you bring to the table? ..ha!*)

- Jesus then gave **The Principle of Humility (11)** – A paradoxical play on words: *"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."* – Whoever **exalts himself** equates to: **The Inevitable Fall: (Prov 16:18)** states, *"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall"*. – But he who **humbles himself** experiences: **The Indemnifiable Rise, (James 4:10)** *"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up"*.
- Jesus is the **Ultimate Example of Heartfelt Humility!** – As one who **deserved the highest place**, **He took the lowest place** and was granted the highest place (*cf. Phil 2:5-11*).

P/A – Jesus' **HEART-FELT INVITATION** to Humility should be a **Common Grace** for every Christian! – **Wiersbe** said, *"Humility is the fundamental grace in the Christian life. Yet it is elusive; if you know you have it, you have lost it!"* – *Jesus then turns to admonish the HOST of the Sabbath Supper...*

C. The Pure Motivation (12-14) – **READ**: Jesus saw that **His Host chose guests out of Pride** and **Exclusion**, which **Lacked Genuine Love**. – So, **He instructed him of The Kingdom Way**:

1. **Don't Invite Familiar People (12a)** – There is **nothing wrong** with inviting your friends and family to dinner, but Jesus emphasized **it's Heartless to invite ONLY them!**
2. **Don't Invite for Repayment (12b)** – Jesus knew that the man's key motivation was to be REPAID! – There is **something special about** giving a gift that **CANNOT** be repaid. – This echoes the blessing Jesus mentioned when He said, **"It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35)**.
3. **Do Invite the Poor and Needy (13-14)** – *i.e., The ONES who cannot repay you (13)* – **Then you will have a blessing (14)** – When **Heartfelt Humility** motivates our **Hospitality**, blessings are promised to follow, and **You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.** (*This is an eternal perspective!*)
 - Jesus told the **RYR**, **"You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have Treasure in Heaven; and come, follow Me."** (Luke 18:22).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: **The Kingdom of God** operates opposite **The Kingdom of Self!** – Pride climbs upward but Humility kneels downward. – In God's economy, the way down is the way up!

Segue: *Yet the greatest barrier to the Kingdom often isn't pride... **it's EXCUSES!***

III. HESITATION TOWARDS THE TABLE (14:15-24) – **READ:** The mention of *the Resurrection of the Just* (14), somehow **prompted a man** to interrupt Jesus' instructions to the Host (15). – He said, **"Blessed is he who eats bread in God's Kingdom"** – **This man... and all Jewish people**, may have had envisioned their future kingdom as a grand feast, with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets as honored guests (cf. Luke 13:28; Isa 25:6)

- Jesus used his interruption to present **The Parable of the Great Supper** aka **Parable of Excuses**.

A. Invitation Extended (16–17) – The parable explains **A Generous Invitation** given by **A Certain Man** (16): **GOD**. – In the N.T. the **Great Supper** is known as the **Marriage Supper of the Lamb** (Rev 19:9), **'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'** – And the **Many Invited** is symbolic of the **People of Israel**, who were told to Be Ready for Messiah to arrive (17).

- **This Special Meal required Great Planning**, and the people invited would be thrilled to attend. – And as we shall see **Each guest has already agreed to attend** but would **INSULT the HOST by breaking their commitment**.
- **Come, for all things are now ready** (17) – At the right time God sent His Servant... Jesus Christ (cf. Gal 4:4-5), But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law... But instead of Excitement... Excuses came, as illustrated in the parable...

B. Invitation Excuses (18-20) – **The invited began to MAKE EXCUSES!** (18): **The First Invited Man** was preoccupied with Real Estate; **The Second Invited** (19), supposedly bought new oxen... "I have to test them!"; **BOTH** were material excuses. – **The Third Invited** (20), claimed to have just gotten married... "I cannot come". – (Deut 24:5) excused newlyweds from military service, **but not dinner!**

- **Land, Livestock, and Relationships** can become barriers to the Kingdom (**Idols**), but these were **INCINCERE EXCUSES** to defend the change in plans – **Spurgeon: "Excuses are Curses, and when you have no excuses left there will be hope for you."** – *Nevertheless, we see the Banquet goes on!*

C. Invitation Expanded (21–24) – The angry master did not want his feast to be wasted, so he **Expanded his Invitation** to those who would have no excuses to come (21a). – **The Servant** went to the places where people who would never be invited dwelt. – **And He Invited Them All**, whatever condition they were in (21b). – **This explains exactly what Jesus did!** – He went to the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, and the Blind... **Outcasts!** – **The Very Ones** that Pharisees thought unworthy!

1. **The Servant's Report** (22) – Even after some arrived, **there was still room for more to attend!** – **This teaches us that God has room for Everybody, but they have to Accept the Invitation** – But quite honestly, **God is more willing to save sinners than sinners are willing to be saved!**
2. **The Servant Sent Again** (23) – ...into the Highways and hedges. – Expanding the Invitation to include GENTILE REGIONS, **"Compelling them to Come!"** – The Reason: **That My House may Be Full!**
 - **The Outcasts needed to be convinced that they were welcome!** (*The servant compelled them by love*)

And finally, we see...

3. The Tragic Exclusion (24) – Those who Refused His Heartfelt Invitation would MISS the feast!

- God Desired for ALL the Jews to COME and partake of the great Supper with Him, **but they refused!** – (Rom 10:21), But to Israel He says: All day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.
- God therefore Expanded His Heartfelt Invitation to the Gentiles, of which *they are pouring into the Kingdom of God!* – In (Rom 10:20), God, through Isaiah says, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for me.”

CLOSING THOUGHTS: This sermon leaves every listener with one Unavoidable Question... The Table is Prepared, the HEARTFELT INVITATION is Given, but Your Decision is Personal! – Will you cling to Pride and excuses, or will you Come humbly to Christ?

(Rev 22:16-17) *“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”*

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.