

A Family For Who?

OCTOBER 16, 2022

“BUT WHEN YOU GIVE A RECEPTION, INVITE THE POOR, THE CRIPPLED, THE LAME, THE BLIND, AND YOU WILL BE BLESSED...” LUKE 14:13-14A

PROPS: 4 Salt Shakers, Hard boiled Eggs, Plate

KIDS SERMON:

Who knows what this is? An Egg , that's right. And why was this egg made? To be eaten! But can you eat it like this? No, because it has a hard shell. We gotta get rid of that hard shell, but it can't get rid of itself alone. It needs someone's help. Who wants to help? ... and have you ever tried to eat one of these things plain? Yuck! What does it need? (Salt). Okay, so I'll just set the salt right here... so it's yummy now, right? ... No... what do I have to do to the salt? Should I just set it by this salt shaker here? What does the salt need to do? Get out of the shaker, and make this egg yummy!

Well today, your parents and I are going to talk about people who are like hard boiled eggs... some people are hard and prideful on the outside, God has to come along and break their shell off, so that a Christian, who is the salt of the earth, can sprinkle them with the Gospel so they will be yummy... and saved. And your job is 1st, to accept Jesus' invitation to crack the hard shell off of you. And then once you're a yummy egg, your job changes to being salt and you get to go around sprinkling salt on people and telling them about Jesus.

MOVE 1: Care

I was 26 when I met him. And I had a lot more time on my hands than I do now, so I often spent my days walking around Kailua town talking to homeless men. And this one particular day, I met an elderly man in his 50s, sitting outside the Goodwill store on Oneawa, and I offered him a sandwich. We got to talking, and he shared with me that he used to work for Boeing as an airline engineer. Had a wife, and two sons, whom he divorced and hadn't spoken to in years. So from that that place of brokenness, he flew out to hawaii with 2 suitcases containing everything he owned. His ID, credit card, some clothes. And the first night off the plane, he didn't have a place to stay, so he went to a local bar with all belongings, and spent the night drinking, doesn't remember a thing. He woke up the next day under a tree, with literally only the shirt on his back. That was about 5 years before I met him. He said he's been trying to get his ID back ever since.

I was heartbroken. At the time I had been reading a lot of passages like the one we'll read today that talks about helping the poor, and so I decided G Golly, I'm going to go get him an ID right now. Because that's definitely the biggest need he has. So I pull up my car, help him into the passenger seat, I look up the closest social services office, and drive him there. He didn't have the strength to get out of the car, so the worker comes out to the parking lot, and tries talking to him. But he kept falling asleep, so the worker told me to come back.

So there I was. With a sleeping, homeless man in my car. Was I just going to give up and shove him out on the sidewalk? Didn't seem very kind, so I did what any inexperienced, Jesus-loving newly wed husband, would do. I brought him to my house, carried him to my couch, let him sleep, and when my wife came home from work, I met her outside to tell her about our visitor. I don't recommend you do the same.

He slept for 24 hours straight. We made him a meal, gave him some coffee. And I gave him the invitation of a lifetime. I would take two weeks off of work and do everything in my power, to get him an ID, find him a job, and get him a home... because that was MY plan for his life.

What would he do with my invitation?

REVIEW

Today we're in our 6th meal with Jesus from the Gospel of Luke, and Jesus is giving His final invitation to the Pharisees.

Go to Luke 14. And remember, whenever you come to Scripture, you can't read it in isolation. You've gotta know what's going on. **My Auntie Terri says that anytime you walk into a conversation, you probably shouldn't speak for at least 60 seconds so you 1) you don't make a fool of yourself, and 2), so you can get caught up on what's going on.** And we want to do the same for Scripture. So the 60 second context of Luke 14 is this. Get your watches, someone start a timer, and ding me when I'm out... ready set go.

Jesus is on His journey to Jerusalem where He will endure the justice of God and the Glory of His ob-jective on the cross to Justify you and I from our de-Generate gestures.

And He's going around getting rid of all the things that come between people following Him. People like Martha who've let God's Work distract her from God's Word. Are you like Martha? Don't get so caught up working for God that you forget to be with God... Maybe you need to "Grow in Your No." Just say No to that 6th volunteer commitment.

People like the Pharisees and experts of the Law who've let Good things take them away from the God things. Do you do the same? Have you found yourself so caught up in doing all the Good things... running your kids to youth sports, remodeling your home, saving for a new car, that the Good things have taken the place of the God things like taking a true, Sabbath rest, being in a Bible study, loving your next-door neighbor as yourself... Don't let good things became Bad things. Instead, Say Yes to God Things.

The common theme we've discovered in these 6 meals is that Nothing matters more to Jesus than the salvation of every man woman and child that He comes across.

—> Luke 19:10 (unknown translation) "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost."

Jesus came so that the Dead would find Life. The lost would be found. The Damned would be Redeemed. And in Luke 14, Jesus is having a 3rd meal with his enemies, the pharisees, and He again gives them an invitation. What will the pharisees do with Jesus' invitation?

MOVE 2: Explain

We'll pick the story up halfway through the meal. To catch you up, Jesus went to a leader of the Pharisees house on the Sabbath to eat, and right at the start of the meal, the pharisees were laying a trap for him. In 14:1 it says the Pharisees "were watching Him closely" because they put a man with a sickness called dropsy, you and I know it as swelling or edema... the retaining of excess water in your body because of the shutting down of your organs. They wanted to know if Jesus would heal again on the Sabbath... it was against their cultural laws to do so, but it wasn't against God's Law.

So Jesus answered the question they never spoke aloud, and He grabbed the man, literally the word that's used gives the idea of grabbing with passion, Jesus grabbed the sick man, healed Him, and sent him away that's verse 4. And this silenced the pharisees They couldn't respond.

So with their jaws hanging there, embarrassed by Jesus' wise, kind, and powerful words and deeds, Jesus begins teaching them about the importance of a good invitation.

We'll pick it up in verse 7

—> Luke 14:7 And He began speaking a parable to the invited guests when He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table, ~~saying to them~~"

When the Jews ate together, they arranged tables in a horseshoe setting... this image only has 1 table, but you can get the idea. And the person at the head of the table in the middle, in this case Jesus, was the person of honor, and the people next to him had the next seats of honor, and the further you went down the sides of the table, the lower and lower honor you had.

And the other pharisees who had been invited were scraping for seats by Jesus. Claiming honor for themselves. So Jesus goes on to say.

—> Luke 14:8-11 When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this man,' and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place. But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher' then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Jesus is saying you don't have to fight for your own rights. You don't have to live to claim honor for yourself. Jesus didn't.

—> Philippians 2:8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by become obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." Jesus didn't live for His honor. He lived FROM His Honor. He didn't demand honor, Instead He lived honorably.

—> Philippians 2:9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name.

Being invited to Jesus' table is an honor in and of itself! But in order to accept that invitation, you have to let go of your pride!

—> Let go of your pride and accept God's invitation.

You have to let go of your pride to accept God's invitation to you. And it doesn't matter if its your 1st time or 101st time. Jesus is always inviting you into deeper life with Him. He is infinite, and you will forever be walking toward Him, invited to live more and more inline with His invitation for your life.

But if you don't let go of your pride, you'll spend your efforts making sure that you appear strong, like you have it all together. Someone asks to pray for you "No I'm good." You don't need anything from anybody because you can do it on your own.

And you'll never be able to open your hands to take hold of God's invitation because you're clutching onto everything else.

Let's skip down to verse 15

—> Luke 14:15 When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, 'Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!'

This phrase, eating bread in the kingdom of God, portrays a repeated theme of the Jewish Scriptures of the Messianic Banquet.

God started His covenant relationship with Israel through a meal on Mount Sinai with Moses and 70 elders in [Exodus 24:11](#). And King David, when composing His greatest Psalm, declared trust that God would prepare a

table before Him in the presence of His enemies [Psalm 23:5](#). And in the book of Isaiah, turn there now, the Jews would often remember this prophecy.

—> [Isaiah 25:6-8](#) The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, aged wine. And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all the peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken”

Hallelujah! I want to be at that meal! And that’s what this man is speaking of...

—> [Luke 14:15](#) When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, ‘Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!’

This idea of feasting with God, with the Messiah, was very prevalent in the mind of the Jewish people. And the Pharisees are actually doing it! The Messiah is with them, but they’re so spiritually blind they can’t even see it! So Jesus looks at the men before Him, and He desperately wants them at fullness of this meal that you and I know as the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. In Revelation 19, we learn of this culminate wedding supper when an angel is talking with the disciple John. .

—> [Revelation 19:9a](#) Then he said to me, ‘Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb...’”

And this is the supper Jesus eagerly desires to share with the Pharisees, and with you, so He invites them to it with a parable saying

—> [Luke 14:16-17](#) But He said to him, “A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’

It’s similar to when you get engaged and you send out “Save the Date Cards” ... and then once you get all your stuff together, the venue, the reception, the food, the attire, you send out your formal invitation... same thing going on back then, except back then, you RSVPed when the first invitation came so the host would know how much food to prepare. So for the slave to go back a second time and tell the invitees that everything was ready, means they had all RSVPed “Yes” ... I’m coming. BUT...

—> [Luke 14:18-21a](#) But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ Another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ Another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.’ And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry...

Of course he’s angry. This is not normal practice in their culture or ours. No one buys a field before looking at it. No one buys oxen without trying them out. And no one marries unexpectedly. These are lame excuses. So the host

—> [Luke 14:21b-24](#) ...and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ And the slave said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.’”

This is a line in the sand moment. Because this is something Jesus is really passionate about. You either accept His invitation, or you don't. We know He's passionate about it because He talks about this repeatedly! Right before this meal, Jesus was giving this same teaching to the crowds

—> Luke 13:24-28 Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' Then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets'; and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.' In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but yourself being thrown out."

And its with this brutal warning that the text of our meal ends. And Jesus looks at the men around the table with complete love and desire to save their lost souls. The men who laid a trap for Him at the start of the meal. Men who had been climbing over one another, trying to exalt themselves, while Jesus is willingly going to Jerusalem to lay down His life for them. And in the most loving and truthful way possible, He warns them that unless they stop making excuses, they won't get to share in Jesus' lavish banquet, in the Kingdom of God.

And notice what kept them from getting there... the 3 excuses

- I have bought land
- I have bought oxen
- I have married a wife

Three areas where people usually hold onto their pride

- Look at my land... what I own... my house is in the right neighborhood. My yard perfectly manicured. My car has got really shiny tires. I keep it super clean. I pay like \$600 a month for it.
- Look at my oxen... my job... I'm the best at what I do. My job is so important that I have to work more than I should. Everything would fall apart if I wasn't there.
- Look at my wife... my family and friends... I have all the right social connections. I even shook hands with someone famous once... and my Insta has 30 new followers a day.

And we see our 2nd truth of today's passage:

—> Don't let fame and fortune or family and friends distract you from heaven, or you'll get hell.

< Having seen that fame and fortune, family and friends can distract you from heaven, and having let go of your pride, and accepted God's invitation, what responsibility remains on you, as a recipient of God's invitation?
>

MOVE 3: Apply

Jesus isn't the only one who invites people to a meal.

—> Luke 14:12 And He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment.

It's easy for me to invite my friends and family over for dinner, or to hang out at the beach. I like them. They like me. They've returned the favor a thousand times. And in the business world, you invite people for a meal, or join a social club to make business contracts. And in Jesus' day, they were even more regulated by social contracts than ours is. So who you had over for dinner really impacted your social credit score.

But all these reasons we usually invite people into our lives... if we're being honest, are self-centered. And are really all about what YOU get out of the invitation... your enjoyment, your growing business, your social standing... That's the American Way... but you're not a follower of America's way, you're a follower Jesus' way. And Jesus says

—> [Luke 14:13](#) But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.

But who are the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind?

When I was a younger man, as I was telling you at the start of the sermon, to me the poor were the homeless. And that's it.

You see them when you're driving to Walgreens, going to Costco, driving on the West Side. And many homeless people need Jesus. Please hear me, many homeless people need Jesus! But if homeless people are the only people you think fit this bill, the only people you feel compelled to minister to, then you've been blinded like the prophet Samuel.

In 1 Samuel 16, God tells Samuel to go to Jesse, and anoint a new king of Israel. And Samuel's got in mind Israel's first king, King Saul, who is tall dark and handsome, very regal looking, and he goes to Jesse's house, looks at the first born, Eliab and because he looks like a king, Samuel thinks he's the one! But God chides him

—> [1 Samuel 16:7](#) “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him (from kingship, not from salvation) for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’”

The Lord looks at the heart... it doesn't matter if your outward appearance is regal, like Eliab, or if it's feeble, like Mo the homeless man I invited into my home. The kind of heart that God desires is a broken spirit and contrite heart [Psalm 51:17](#)... a heart that lets go of pride and accepts God's invitation... and that heart can live inside a homeless person or your next-door neighbor.

Who are the poor, the blind, the crippled, the lame that Jesus wants you to invite into your life? I'm going to be so bold as to say

It's your next-door neighbor who is spiritually poor and can't offer anything for their salvation. It's your kid's friend from school and their parents who are spiritually crippled and powerless from sin. It's your co-worker who is spiritually blind and can't see the truth of Jesus. It's your barista at Morning Brew who is spiritually lame and unable to come to God on their own. Those are the people you invite into your life...to the beach with your family next weekend. Your birthday's coming up, a holiday is around the corner... invite your next door neighbors to your house for a BBQ.

Any excuse will do, just invite those who don't know Jesus into your life, otherwise we're stuck here in this holy huddle and God's Word doesn't go out. Jesus put it this way in [Matthew 5:13](#): [You are the salt of the earth!](#) And Salt doesn't do any good unless it's poured out. In the tech booth, someone made a little post it note while one of our missionaries was speaking one day, and it says “Get your salt out of the shaker!” It does no good in here! What if we all carried around little salt shakers and sprinkled them as we went every day. Its a good idea... We'll have a pile of salt shakers in the back, grab one on your way out :)

Best research says there are **75** homeless men and women in Kailua at any given time. Some of them have a broken spirit and a contrite heart, and ready to accept the Gospel. Let's go find them!

Best research says there are **50... THOUSAND!** people who live in homes in Kailua and the Marine Base. Such a bigger mission field! And some of them have a broken spirit and a contrite heart and are ready to accept the Gospel. Let's go find them!

But how? How are we going to find and invite the spiritually poor of the 50,000 homed people, plus 75 homeless people, of our community... how can we invite that many people? 2 Things. 1) We're not alone. It's not KCC against all the spiritually dark forces of Kailua. Google tells me there are 22 churches in Kailua, and our chaplains tell me there is a chapel on base which is also a church. So that means that each Kailua church only has to invite 2174 people. But you can't invite 2,174 people into your life. But there's about 7-800 of you who are already here, and currently call KCC your church ohana. Now not everyone comes to a service every weekend... shocking I know... but if each of us, just invited 2.3 people into our lives and showed them Jesus. And every other church in Kailua did the same, then every resident of Kailua would be invited into the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen!? Invite 2.3 people into your life, that's all it takes. But it takes all of us.

A Family for _____

13 years ago, my wife and I moved to Kailua, and the first Sunday we were here, we sat down in those seats, and heard Pastor Perry say "Good Morning" "Happy Sunday" And he said that as a Church, we want to be a family for you. And having just moved 4,000 miles from most everyone I knew. That meant a lot. And I inserted my name into KCC's motto "Kailua Community Church... A family for Pete... a family for Liz... a family for us." And we received the invitation of this church to join this family, and over the course of the last 13 years, we have reaped the benefits of accepting this church's invitation.

8 years ago, I was invited to work for the church, and have served as a pastor and have received my income from this church family. 3 years ago, a member of this church offered to rent her home to us, and now our residence comes from being a part of this family. At the same time, I began renting my 2 bedroom condo out to a member of this church, so I have had an honest tenant, because of this church. 2 years ago, a member of this church offered to sell his van to me, and now my transportation is because I've accepted the invitation of this church. And when that van breaks down, I invite a member of this church to fix it, and I pay him, and he receives some of his income, from members of this church who's cars he fixes.

You see how that works? It's a good invitation to be a part of God's family. But it can't end there. KCC can't just be a family for YOU... because then we're back in our holy huddle again. Everyone get out your salt shakers... once you're a part of this church, a part of the family, you join in our mission of being a family for all the YOUS out there that aren't yet in the family of God. You become a family for THEM. For the them in Coconut Grove, Enchanted Lake. In Kaneohe. And for you guys who come from Kapolei, God bless you, you get to be a family for all the THEM in Kapolei!!

And you be a family for them by revealing Jesus' love and truth through how you live and speak. You reveal Jesus' love and truth through how you live and speak.

And then they become invited into the family of God. And if they let go of their pride, and they don't let fame, and fortune or family and friends distract them, then they too become part of the family, and invite others to become part of the family. And this is how it works.

As Pastor Perry reminded us in his last sermon, we are a church that has mission that matters. It's the Great Commission. And we're dreaming Big, godly dreams. And it's going to take all of us, relying on the Holy Spirit to accomplish it.

And step 1 is for you to let go of your pride, accept God's invitation yourself. And then when you do, share the invitation with those around you by being a family for Them, by revealing Jesus' love and truth through how you live and speak.

—> Let KCC be a family for _____ and go and be a family for _____.

And by the way, when I say let KCC be a family for you... I am not KCC. Pastor Perry is not KCC. The rest of the staff... we can't possibly be in close relationship with all of you. I wish we could, but we can't. We're too limited. So when I say KCC is a family for you... It's all of us, we, together are KCC. And we're a family for one another! You're a family for me. I'm a family for you. The person you're sitting next to is a family for the people sitting next to them.

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The story of the homeless man who I invited to live in my house for two weeks didn't end up so good. He looked poor, because he was homeless, and I found out he was very spiritually poor, but as far as I know, he never let go of his pride and he died tragically without accepting Jesus' invitation. But that's not a good way to end a sermon.

So the other day, my son Truitt and I had the joy of talking with a different, elderly homeless man named Duane. For those of you who've been around long enough, you may know him as Spider. He used to be the man who would throw shopping carts and traffic cones and yell and scream at you on the Walgreens Hardware Hawaii intersection. Not a safe homeless man to invite into your life. The 50,000 people with homes in Kailua would be a much better choice to invite.

BUT for the last year or so, the strength of Duane's body has failed him, so he's become safe and sane to talk with. And he sleeps on my walking route from home to church. He and I talk a couple times a week, just a couple minutes. Super brief. A few months ago he said that he didn't believe in Jesus. He knew about Him but didn't follow Him.

But since then, he's begun accepting me to pray with him. I've been reminded of Bible stories and he lets me tell them to him. And the other day, Truitt and I were talking with him and I asked him if he's changed his mind and believes in Jesus now... and he said he does. He said He believes that Jesus died on the cross for His sins, and He's asked Jesus to forgive Him.

And I think that's the reward Jesus had in mind when he said

—> Luke 14:13-14 "But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The repayment is the joy you'll have of seeing your spiritually poor next-door neighbor, becoming rich in the love of God. It's the celebration you'll have when your spiritually crippled boss begins to wait on the Lord, and their spiritual strength begins to rise. It's the hope you'll see actualized when your spiritually blind surfing buddy gazes into Jesus' face at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, and you're sitting right next to him at the table.

Church, let's live out our mission. And be a family to all the THEMES we come across, and reveal Jesus' love and truth, by how we live and speak.