

# THE GREAT BANQUET

## Everyone is Welcome

Did you know that God loves to celebrate special occasions around food? There is so much symbolism and so many important celebrations that are tied up with feasts and banquets all throughout the Bible.

Did you know that God has invited you to a great wedding banquet? It is a great wedding banquet that God the Father is inviting people to where those who are in relationship with Him through Jesus celebrate the coming together of the church and Jesus in an eternal union (Revelation 19:9; Isaiah 25:6).

### The Great Banquet – Luke 14:15-24

The reason Jesus told this story was so that people would understand that everyone is welcome to God's celebration, but just like any invitation to a celebration, you need to accept the invitation in order to go.

### Two Responses

In this story Jesus tells, the rich man who is hosting the banquet describes God and then there are two main types of people to portray the two basic responses to God's invitation to eternal life.

Those who are too caught up in their own stuff and who turned down the invitation. The wealthy, self-sufficient, busy people.

And those who probably never thought they were worthy of being invited. The vagabonds, the poor and the sick.

The original guest list of people are so caught up in their own way of life that they ignored or turned down the invitation. Then there are those people who would never have even thought they could be invited to something so special. There's was an internal wrestle of if they were worthy of such an invitation.

## **There's Plenty of Room**

The desire of the master is for everyone to come. Compel them to come in, that my house will be full (Luke 14:22-23).

Jesus uses the word 'compel' to indicate God's great desire to fill His house, and because these wanderers and outcasts needed to be convinced that they were welcome, they are compelled by love.

There is plenty of room for everyone in God's kingdom.

## **Free Entry**

You eat at His expense. This is one of the most beautiful things about God's invitation, and yet it is one of the most difficult things for people to accept because it means that we cannot take any credit for ourselves.

There is only one way that God offers His salvation: He pays for it all and all you can do is come and receive it freely. Any other way would bring glory to man (Ephesians 2:8-9). God's way brings all the glory to Him and His grace.

## **What's Your RSVP?**

Will you accept the invitation or are you more pre-occupied with material things and a self-sufficient lifestyle or perhaps you are letting your past define you?

What Jesus did on the cross for you and me is the invitation to an eternal celebration with Jesus. The extent of His love shows you that you don't have to be defined by your mistakes or rebellion or pride, He steps into your current situation and invites you into a relationship where God can deal with all that stuff (Romans 5:6-8). Jesus wants us to know that everyone is invited into this great eternal celebration with our heavenly Father, but none of us will be there if we don't accept the invitation, if we don't accept Jesus' sacrificial death on our behalf to pay the price for our sin.

The Bible says all have sinned and fallen short of God's required standard (Romans 3:23) and are so worthy only of death or eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23) – our works are never sufficient for salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). Our only hope for both eternal and abundant life is in Jesus (John 3:16). Only Jesus saves!