

• A comment – “blessed be the person who will eat at the feast..”

Jesus liked to use opportunities for speaking about God's kingdom. Sometimes people would make random comments about some aspect of Jesus' teaching – and then Jesus would use what was said. We have already seen it in connection with Luke 12:13. Now there is another remark from the crowd^{□1} and again Jesus uses it. The man knows that the final reward of godly people will be like a great banquet and says, ‘Blessed be the person who will eat at the feast..’^{□2}.

□1 14:15
□2 14:15

• A parable..

Jesus takes up the point and tells a parable.

1. The kingdom of God is like a banquet with invitations which go out to many people

1. **The kingdom of God is like a banquet with invitations which go out to many people**^{□1}. The kingdom of God is like a party, a banquet! This itself deserves some meditation. The kingdom of God is not like a university – although in some places you might think so. The kingdom of God is not like a hospital – although in some places you might think so. The kingdom of God is not a mighty business empire. It is not a bank. It is not a welfare society. The kingdom of God is like a banquet! God is saying to us, ‘Come! I have got everything ready for you.’ There is free food – the rich food of the Word of God. There is Jesus as the bread of life! There is the Holy Spirit as the new wine of the kingdom! A banquet! The kingdom of God comes to us a gift with everything prepared^{□2}. God wants us to sit down at the table of the kingdom – the thought picks up from Luke 13:28–29 as well as 14:7–13.

□1 14:16

□2 14:17

2. Surprisingly -the people for whom the banquet is intended do not want it

2. **Surprisingly, the people for whom the banquet is intended do not want it.** Jesus is referring to the people of Israel. He still has ‘the leaders of the Pharisees’^{□1} in mind.

□1 14:1

In the parable, the first people to receive an invitation to the banquet make excuses. They talk about business opportunities and their heavy responsibilities. They have just married a wife, and so cannot come^{□1}. Jesus is still referring to the people of Israel. These are the ordinary affairs of life: business, responsibilities, getting married. These are the things that people are interested in all the time. Yet they are the kind of things that make people so preoccupied that they brush aside the infinitely greater matter, the kingdom of God.

□1 14:18-20

• Excuses - the ordinary affairs of life

• The very people who were the traditional people of God, wanting so much the coming of their Saviour, rejected Him when He came

It was a very surprising thing when the people of Israel rejected Jesus. For hundreds of years the nation of Israel had been looking for a ‘Son of David’ to be their Saviour. But Israel as a whole rejected Jesus. You would think that when salvation came the Jewish people would receive it. They had been promised that a Saviour would come to them. They had been praying for Messiah to come. Their scholars studied the Old Testament with great eagerness finding dozens of promises of the Messiah. Then one day the Saviour arrived! But then the very people who were the traditional people of God, wanting so much the coming of their Saviour, rejected Him when He came! ‘He came to what was his own, and his own people did not receive him’^{□1}.

□1 John 1:11

• History often repeats itself in this matter

Actually history often repeats itself in this matter. Often traditional ‘religious people’, God's traditional people, do not like it when there is a forward move in the kingdom of God. Just as Israel was not ready for God to send His Son, so often the ‘older’ church is not ready when God moves in His kingdom and does something unexpected. Every spiritual revival gets some persecution from the church! People like their

traditional Christianity and do not want God to do anything that disturbs it! People who were blessed in revival in one generation are traditional a few years later. They too dislike it when God does something new.

• Every spiritual revival rejected by some

Every spiritual revival is rejected by some of God's traditional people who make excuses and criticisms and refuse to join in what God is doing. What does God do when this happens?

3. When the first invitation is rejected, another invitation goes out to people who are entirely unsuitable!

3. When the first invitation is rejected, another invitation goes out to people who are entirely unsuitable! ^{¶1} In the parable the rich man giving the big dinner feels insulted that his original guests have declined his invitation^{¶2}. So he sends out his servants to invite the most unworthy and needy people, the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame^{¶3} – the kind of people who never get invited to banquets! (God Himself fulfils the principle of Luke 14:12– 13!) Even when these guests have come, the servants still go out looking for more and more of the needy and those thought to be worthless^{¶4}. Who does Jesus have in mind? The gentiles! The rich man giving the banquet remains angry with those who turned down the invitation. God remains angry with those who got the first offer of the kingdom of God but rejected it. The religious people who were not interested in Jesus will be left out of God's final kingdom. It was true then of the many Jewish people who rejected Jesus. It is true in every generation of those who love traditional 'Christianity' but have no interest in knowing Jesus Himself and receiving the salvation that comes only through Him. Meanwhile, the gospel comes to us. We who are so unworthy. We who are needy. We are like the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame. We have nothing with which to commend ourselves. We have been crippled in the things of God. We have been blind to God's mercy.

• Needy people, the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame

¶1 14:21-24

¶2 14:21a

¶3 14:21b

¶4 14:22-23

• God is still inviting us

Yet God is still inviting us. 'Come!' He says. 'Everything is ready.' 'Come! For there is still plenty of room!' The man who first spoke to Jesus was right: 'Blessed be the person who will eat at the feast...' ^{¶1}.

¶1 14:15

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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