

# THE MEN WHO MADE EXCUSES

Luke 14:16-35.

## LESSON 93 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: “Come; for all things are now ready” (Luke 14:17).

### At the Pharisee’s Table

Jesus often told short stories to the people who came to Him. All these stories taught the people important lessons. One day as Jesus was sitting in the house of a Pharisee, He talked to those at the table with Him. People sometimes found fault with Jesus because He ate with sinners, but He never passed up an opportunity to teach people who wanted to learn from Him.

One of the men at the table was very much interested in the stories Jesus told. No doubt he hoped that some day he could go to Heaven and be with Jesus there. He said that the ones who should some day eat bread in the Kingdom of God were blessed, or happy. But perhaps this man was putting off getting saved, and Jesus wanted to teach him a lesson. So Jesus told him a story from which we, too, may learn a good lesson.

### The Great Supper

He said that a man made a great supper and invited many people to come. When the supper was ready he sent his servant out to tell those who had been invited, to come. Each one to whom the servant went had an excuse for not going to the supper. The first one said he had bought some ground and had to go see it. He asked to be excused. The next one had bought five yoke of oxen and wanted to go and try them. He also asked to be excused from the supper. How foolish were these excuses! It was now suppertime, and these two men talked of going out to their farms! The third one said he could not go because he had married a wife. He probably did not want to leave his home.

How disappointed the man was who had prepared this great supper! Were your parents ever disappointed that way? Perhaps they have invited some friends to have supper with them. A great deal of work has been done, and the meal is ready to be served. You stand at the window and watch for the guests. Then the telephone rings. The guests offer an excuse: they have decided to go some other place; or they are too busy to come. How disappointed your parents are!

But in the story we read that the man who had prepared the supper decided he would not take “no” for answer. His supper had been prepared and he must have someone to help him eat it. He 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.” He knew that the poor and the sick people would appreciate his invitation more than the rich people did. And they did, too, for they came. The servant returned and said to his master, “It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.” The master did not want to eat until the house was full. So again he sent his servant out. This time he told him to go out into the highways and hedges, and compel people to come. He said that none of the people who had made excuses should taste of his supper.

### The Gospel Feast

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is like a table that is spread with many, many good things to eat. God gave the world His best – He sent His Son to suffer and die that we might be saved. Today you and I are invited to come to the “table” of the Lord and eat of the good things that are prepared for us. We may come to Jesus and be saved from all our sin. Great joy comes into our heart when Jesus washes away our sins with His Blood. There are other good things for us: we may be sanctified wholly; we ask Jesus for still more, and as long as we are “hungry”, He gives us more and more blessings. He baptizes us with the Holy Ghost and fire, so we may have power to go and work for Jesus. Then we can bring other people to the “table” of the Lord. Jesus also heals us when we are sick. He gives us all we need: food, clothing, homes, our kind friends. And we have the Bible that teaches us what to do and how to live. Best of all, Jesus promised to take us to Heaven with Him someday.

The man who had prepared the great supper felt sad because the people refused to come. Jesus also is very sad when people refuse His invitation to “come.” Did you ever invite someone to go to church or Sunday School with you and they began to make excuses? Perhaps they told you that they would rather not get up so early in the morning; or they think that they do not have good enough clothes to wear; or perhaps they want to go to some other place. They are just like the people in the lesson Jesus taught – making excuses.

## **Making Excuses**

We read in the Bible of other people who made excuses for not getting saved. Paul, that man of God, one day gave his testimony before Felix, the governor. Felix knew that Paul had been saved from his life of sin. As Paul told him about God and the Bible, Felix trembled. He said to Paul, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." But a "convenient season" probably never came for Felix. When the Spirit of God says, "Come," that is the time to give our heart to God.

A little later when Paul was again on trial, this time before King Agrippa, he told the king all about that wonderful day when he got saved. He told about the light that shone from Heaven at midday, brighter than the noonday sun. He told how he fell to the earth that day. He told about the voice that spoke to him. He told how he had been working for Jesus ever since, trying to win souls for Heaven. Then he asked the king if he believed. The king answered Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The king probably offered an excuse for not becoming a Christian that day. Do you think that when Felix the governor, and Agrippa the king, stand before God someday, God will accept their excuses? He certainly will not! It is easy to make excuses, but let us remember that an excuse is never as good as doing what we should do. It is the devil who causes people to make excuses for not getting saved.

## **Too Late**

A minister once told a story of a little boy who ran to the depot to catch a train. Just as he reached the station the train moved off and left him. He stood there panting and watching the train, now in the distance. A man said to him: "you didn't run fast enough!" "No," said the boy, "I ran with all my might, but I didn't make it because I didn't start soon enough." Many a one will rush up and find the gates of Heaven closed, and say, like the boy, "I didn't start soon enough."

## **"Whosoever Will"**

The "Gospel feast" is spread for us today – there is room, and all are welcome. God does not force people to come to Him; He merely invites. He says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17). If we know that we are not saved, we should get saved today. We must not make excuses, but go to the altar and get saved before Jesus comes. We all want to be ready to meet the Lord when He comes. Then we will be thankful that we did not make excuses, and will be able to sit down at the Great Supper with Jesus and all the saints.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What were some excuses for not coming to the supper? Luke 14:18-20.
2. How did that make the master of the house feel? Luke 14:21.
3. How many more times did he send the servant out? Luke 14:21, 23.
4. Did the poor and the sick people accept the invitation? Luke 13:21, 22.
5. When is the right time to get saved? Hebrews 3:7, 8; II Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 22:17.