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# Parables: Excuses

By Bryan Hodge

"Excuses are the nails used to build a house of failure." ~ Don Wilder & Bill Rechin

"Don't make excuses - make good." ~ Elbert Hubbard

"He who excuses himself accuses himself." ~ Gabriel Meurier

"No one ever excuses his way to success." ~ Dave Del Dotto

"If you don't want to do something, one excuse is as good as another." ~ Yiddish Proverb

Let us consider the "excuse" parable.

## **The Great Supper (Luke 14:16-24)**

The setting (Luke 14:1-15): Jesus was a dinner guest in the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees. Note - He associated with all kinds of people: Tax collectors (Luke 5:29-30; 15:1-2; 19:1-2, 5) or Pharisees (Luke 7:36; 11:37; 14:1) - it made no difference to him - "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Jesus, after watching other guests maneuver to get the best seats, began to teach (Luke 14:7-ff). He taught them about the need for humility. He used a wedding feast for the scene of a parable.

Further, some there evidently were of the inclination to show kindness only to those who could benefit them in some way - socially, commercially, and politically. Jesus taught them that they should also show hospitality and kindness to those who could not repay them, or benefit them in this life (Luke 14:12-ff). He used a dinner and a supper in his teaching.

One of the guests spoke up (Luke 14:15). "Since we have spoken of a wedding feast, and a dinner, and a supper what about the feast to come in the kingdom?" Most likely, the man was thinking of an earthly kingdom (John 6:15; Luke 17:20-21; John 18:36). He may have had in mind the grand banquets earthly kings hosted (Esther 1:2-5), or the privilege of eating at the king's table (1 Samuel 20:28-29; 2 Samuel 9:6-7, 13; 19:28; 1 Kings 2:7; 4:27; 18:19; 2 Chronicles 9:1-4; Nehemiah 5:17-18).

The Parable (Luke 14:16-24): A certain man invited many to a great supper. The day of the great supper came. He sent out a servant who announced, "Come, for all things are ready." However, the guests all found an excuse not to attend.

One said, "I have bought a piece of ground and I must go see it." What a poor excuse! Could he not visit the property at another time?

One said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and am going to test them." Another poor excuse! Could not he test his animals on another occasion?

One said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." H. Leo Boles commented, "'I have married' puts this in

the past tense; it refers to an act gone by in contrast to a present action... Attendance of the feast did not entail the violation of any duty arising from this new relationship, but simply the holding it of inferior importance on a given occasion" (Gospel Advocate Commentary on Luke, p. 288).

The servant reported these things to his master. The master tells the servant to move beyond the guest list and invite others. He added, "None of those men who were invited shall taste my supper."

The application: The immediate context likely involves the Israelite elite. They thought they were on God's special guest list. However, others were accepting the invitation before they were (Matthew 21:31-32).

The more general application concerns excuses. Some will not make it to that heavenly feast to come (cf. Revelation 19:9) for the same reasons the characters in the parable did not make it to the great feast.

Moreover, some do not make it to the first day of the week church assembly for the same reasons. They miss the opportunity to partake of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). They miss the opportunity to feed with other saints from the word of God, the bread of life (Matthew 4:4; John 6:27a, 48, 53, and 63).

What excuses were offered? (1) Property, business, or material pursuit kept one away from the feast. Our affections should be first and foremost on things above (Colossians 3:1-2). Our first pursuit should be the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33). (2) Possessions, tools, toys, or animals can kept one away from the feast. Earthly things can be a great hindrance in our serving God as we should (Luke 8:14). (3) Family kept one away from the feast. Jesus said, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." (Matthew 10:37).

## Song

"All things are ready," Come to the feast!  
Come for the table now is spread;  
Ye famishing, ye weary come,  
and thou shalt be richly fed.  
"All things are ready," Come to the feast!  
Come, for the door is open wide;  
A place of honor is reserved for you  
at the Master's side.  
"All things are ready," Come to the feast!  
Come while He waits to welcome thee;  
Delay not while the day is thine,  
tomorrow may never be.  
"All things are ready," Come to the feast!  
Leave every care and worldly strife;  
Come feast upon the love of God,  
and drink everlasting life.  
Hear the invitation, come "whosoever will;  
" Praise God for full salvation for "whosoever will."  
Come to the Feast by Charlotte G. Homer.