

# The Lord's Invitation

By Jefferson Sole

Before Jesus told the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24), a man who had heard His teaching said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:15). The Lord's invitation to become part of the kingdom of heaven, which is the church, is a *blessed invitation*. The word translated "blessed" is joy that is not dependent on outside circumstances and is derived from one's relationship with God. To be invited is a joyful moment, but the benefits of the invitation are only realized if the feast is attended. This man knew that blessings resided in the kingdom of God. In fact, all spiritual blessings are found in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). How does one get "in Christ?" One is added to the body of Christ by submitting completely to the Word of God (Romans 6:3-4). When the choice is made to attend, there is reason to celebrate (Acts 8:39; 16:34).

The invitation to attend the feast is a *royal invitation*. In a similar parable that Jesus spoke during the week prior to His death, the "man" who sent forth the invitation was a king (Luke 14:16; Matthew 22:2). The king in Luke 14:16 represents God the Father. Very few people would reject an invitation extended by royalty to attend a banquet. Perhaps even fewer would reject an invitation to attend a meal with their favorite actor or actress. Yet, the God of heaven desires all to attend His feast (John 12:32; 1 Timothy 2:4) and has invited them (Revelation 22:17), but only a few will attend to enjoy the bountiful blessings (Matthew 7:14). The King of kings has invited you. Have you heeded the invitation?

The Lord's invitation is a *timely invitation*. The servant said, "Come; for all things are now ready" (Luke 14:17). The establishment of the church was prophesied (Daniel 2:42), and God waited for the opportune time to send forth His Son to establish the church (1 Peter 1:20; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:3-4). Jesus promised that His church would be established "with power" (Matthew 16:18; Mark 9:1), and that power came on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-11). The feast is now ready! The church has been established (Acts 2:47)! For what are you waiting?

It is evident from the Scriptures that God calls mankind to "attend the feast" through the Word of God (2 Thessalonians 2:14-15). Don't wait for a special event to serve as God's invitation; it will never truly come. Don't make excuses for disregarding or delaying your attendance (Matthew 22:5-6; Luke 14:18-20), there is nothing in this world worth the price of your soul (Matthew 10:35-37; 16:26). Instead, answer the Lord's invitation that has already been extended in the Gospel of Jesus Christ by submitting to Him (Mark 16:16). **It is a blessed and royal invitation, and there is no better time than now to accept it!**

## **Are You Searching for the Truth?**

**By Ronald Bartanen**

Are you searching for truth? Some are not searching because they don't believe in absolute truth—everything to them is relative. Others are not searching because their church tells them what the truth is, These feel they already have the fullness of truth. All should heed Paul's warning: "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things" (Acts 20:30). Others seek the truth in their own hearts, though the Bible warns, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9). The importance of seeking truth is emphasized in Scripture. The wise man Solomon advised, "Buy the truth and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). In the marketplace of ideas one must be careful to distinguish the true from the counterfeit. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32).

How will we know the truth when we see it? Ultimate truth is found in Jesus, who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Truth is found in His word, the Scriptures, of which Paul wrote, "All scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Where are you searching for truth?

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