

Parables of Jesus, pt.19

11.3.03

Luke 14.15-24

You're Invited!

Introduction: 1. The card going to everyone about the Grand Opening; 2. Bob's message about reaching the broken, wounded & poor
Read Text

1. God is having a party!

- a. When you think about "partying" what words come to mind - positive?
- b. Parties throughout Scripture. The Jewish understanding of Feasts - Feast of Trumpets, Tabernacles, Pentecost, Passover, Day of Atonement. They had a central focus and it had to do with your relationship with God. It reminded them time and again of God's purpose of Israel. At feasts you did things - making offerings, worshipping, partying, visiting - that you normally didn't do. It was a time of renewing friendships, enjoying one another, set aside work, eating together, over extended period of time, etc
- c. Wedding feasts and how they were celebrated over 7 days.
- d. Our equivalent - Fair week; Mardi Gras
- e. What does this have to do with our relationship with God?
This is one of the ways how God describes His kingdom - His activity among men: Matt.22, 25; Luke 13, 14, 15; Jesus performed his first miracle at a party; He gave the purpose of his life at a party - L.5.32 "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The Kingdom isn't just Heaven, but it's also God's activity on earth.
- f. The kingdom of God (the activity of God in the world to transform everything to His Son's likeness) is a party. If you say, God is boring & Satan is exciting, then you've either

never understood the kingdom or experienced it or you equate it with going to church.

- g. How is it like a party? It's exciting, enjoyable, fulfilling, peaceful, you get to do things that you don't normally do, ; to look back and see how God works in us and through us and around us is absolutely remarkable.
 - i. I'm not the same person I used to be. I used to be shy, introverted, lacked confidence, selfish, extremely impatient, terribly critical & judgmental, didn't believe strongly in the supernatural ability of God; rigid beliefs, but the King transformed and is transforming me. I am not the same person I used to be b/c of the kingdom of God working in me.
 - ii. Consider Renetta's mom and the influence of that godly woman upon your life and your children's lives. We grieve her loss, but we party over her faithfulness to serve the Lord and be used by Him.
- h. Consider where you would be without God; consider what God has done in your life; what he can do in your life.
- i. Experiencing God in personal ways is absolutely the most thrilling thing in the whole world; seeing God move in mighty ways is absolutely overwhelming and to know you had a part.
 - i. Northwood work – explain relationship; Afghanistan work – Mobile Medical Unit; 4 schools; 3 clinics; governor of Kandahar given Bob the duty of finding 50 emerging Afghani leaders and bring to US and expose them to leaders, & officials that would help them change their countries; Vietnamese ambassador to UN and they are working to give NW diplomatic status in Vietnam; Egyptian ambassador at UN

2. And we're invited! – 3 invitations

- a. God has called us to participate in His activity of transforming the world.

- b. It begins with the king transforming us – thru circumstances, relationships, instruction, refining. We participate in His activity of transforming the world, by letting him transform us. It's an invitation to be with God and let him transform us.
- c. Illustration: Use an extension cord. God's kingdom activity working in & thru us. It's giving me power to live as God intended (there is another power source which actually; drains & destroys) CALL OUT 4 PEOPLE. 1 person I pray for & God's kingdom touches them; 1 person I help at school & work; 1 person just watches; 1 person I tell the gospel to; all together in a group the king is touching them; connect one to the power supply. The power supply is coming from the throne of God to me and touching others.
- d. Illustration: Renetta's mom & her influence in this congregation.
- e. You're invited to this party! This party isn't just for a few or those who supposedly have it all together. You're not too far away to attend.

3. Missing the party is missing the boat – 14.15–20

- a. NOTE: You can miss this party. These guys Jesus was talking with literally missed the party. The king and his kingdom was among them and they missed it. They were literally a few feet from the power source and didn't get connected. They thought they knew best.
- b. ILLUSTRATION – How many of you turned off the TV early in the 4th quarter on Monday night football a few weeks ago that was between Tampa Bay & Indianapolis; NLCS game # 6 betw the Cubs & Marlins before the 8th inning.
- c. The reason some of you turned off the games is because you thought you knew the outcome but didn't. It's like so many people who think they know what the king is and miss it. They equate the king with church going and moral behavior. But it's much more than that! It's being changed by the love,

power, joy, peace of God and then being an extension of His transforming power in the world.

- d. These 3 guys just thought it's another party – Big Deal! They simply made excuses b/c they didn't want to come.
 - i. Invitation process
 - ii. Jesus is making a direct criticism of the religious leaders.
- e. There are many groups of people who will miss the party (some Christians will except a substitute; lost will spend eternity in Hell)
 - i. Satisfied – don't need anything
 - ii. Busy – don't have time; isn't a priority
 - iii. Religious – think they have it all together
- f. You miss the party and you miss everything!
 - i. You either go the party and let the King transform you or He moves on to someone else. His patience runs thin towards those that know the truth and either don't do anything or reject it (v.21, 24)
 - 1. For the believer – you miss God's best.
 - a. Preaching Today – Stumbling Over God's Gifts by John Piper
 - 2. For the unbeliever – you miss God's best but spend eternity separated from Him.