

The Story of Jesus

Published by Evangelist Van Billingsley

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Be Thankful!

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

-- Psalms 100:4

With summer behind us and the holiday season approaching, let's not forget to be thankful. Thanksgiving is an American tradition, but only the child of God knows the one to whom thanks is to be given!

The Call to Supper

by Evangelist Van Billingsley

(Luke 14:16-24) “Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry 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. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.”

After healing a lame man on the Sabbath day at a Pharisee's feast, Jesus gives instructions on how one should conduct himself as a guest and what one should do when inviting guests to a feast. Then one of the guest said to Jesus, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." When this guest brought up the subject of feasting in the kingdom of God,

Jesus responded with the parable in our text.

This parable illustrates the call of Jesus to His marriage supper,

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Our Ministry News...

This has been the busiest year of my ministry on the road. In our combined ministry with the Redmond family, we did seven tent revivals this season beginning in March on the east coast near Myrtle Beach, SC, then to east central Alabama which were both church planters. Then we did a combined three church tent revival with some of my supporting churches in Cullman, AL, two of which are struggling churches in relation to attendance. Our next tent revival in Illinois was cancelled due to health issues in the pastor's family, but it was quickly replaced by a pastor I was already scheduled with the week before. That was a merger between a church plant and a church about to close down, which is doing well now. From there we went to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan for a tent revival with a small church then back down and across to South Dakota for our third tent revival with a church plant which this year included a VBS each morning

under the tent. Our final tent revival this year is a classic example of this work being a missionary endeavor requiring mission support; we travelled to the St. Louis area to a church planter who was just trying to keep the doors open in a difficult area. We did this tent revival 100% at our own cost including the professionally printed flyers I paid for out of pocket and no offerings were taken. I do not say this as a complaint or to boast, but as an example of the need and why this work requires support. This is the purpose of this ministry! The fact is, several of the places I helped were without love offerings including some of the churches I travelled great distances to preach for. I thank God for the support as well as individuals along the way who gave donations to help. God has been good!

As always, when not doing tent revivals and a few other events, the Redmonds and I travel separately doing our own works. Besides the tent revivals, I took part in several other revivals and missions meetings and preached and worked with several other church planters. I spent time in Minnesota helping a new church plant distribute

packets leading up to their first service then returned to support their start up revival and help. During their preparation they knocked on virtually every door in their county with exception of one town we were unlawfully ran out of by the city police (we will deal with that later and return there). We also covered part of a larger town in the neighboring county. I enjoyed working with other church planters and small churches in Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri. I also had the privilege of preaching a church revival in another suburb of St. Louis (Overland, MO), where I also spent a week knocking on doors before that revival.

As I write this, I am

preaching in a mission conference in South Carolina and will work back into north Alabama over the next few weeks as I complete my schedule before returning home for Thanksgiving. As in recent years, I will spend the winter months reporting back to churches in my home area and also trying to gain additional support, all while doing necessary maintenance, planning and scheduling. After the new year I will venture out to some meetings before time to head out with the tent for a new season.

Please pray for more open doors, much needed support, and health and safety as I travel.

A Servant of Christ,
Evangelist Van Billingsley

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(...continued from cover) *Call to Supper* or to salvation, and our duties as His servants in gathering the guests. There is a deeper picture portraying the rejection of Christ by Israel and the grafting in or inclusion of the Samaritans and Gentiles, but quite simply, it pictures the lost who reject His invitation and

the scope of his bidding to the feast.

At first we see **the sinner's excuse**. "The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused" (v.18). Here we see the excuse of priority. Most people place other things before

God in their lives and sadly, this sends many to hell. “And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused” (v.19). This is the excuse of possessions. Trying to gain more possessions or more toys will turn masses away from Christ. People are pleasure seekers and this society of entertainment is sending multitudes to hell. “And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come” (v.20). This one doesn’t even ask to be excused, he emphatically states that he cannot come! I could joke about the wife in this excuse, but the simple fact is, so many of us use others as our hindrance; this is the excuse of our peers.

Next we see **the Savior’s grace**. As the bidding turns to the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, we see His saving grace. The poor

cannot afford to go, the maim cannot get there and the blind cannot find their way. It is a sufficient grace, as he bids all classes everywhere in the lanes, the streets, the highways and the hedges. It is a satisfying grace as it fills the needs of the guests who come and it fills His house.

Last we see **the servant’s witness**. It is to be a compelling witness as we are told to compel them to come in. It is a compassionate witness, as we are to bring those who require help to come. It is to be a continuous witness, as we are told to go quickly and keep seeking the lost because there is still room.

The bidding and invitation is to all and it is supper time. Will you come to the supper?



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proclaiming

The Story of Jesus

-- A Missionary to our Homeland --

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