

THE STORY OF THE GREAT SUPPER

Adapted from a Family Talk by Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss

Reading: Luke 14:16-24

In this parable the Lord told a story about a rich man who gave a beautiful dinner and invited lots of people to come to it. The people were invited, and then the rich man sent his servant to remind them about it. But they all said that they couldn't come. They knew about the party, but they decided that they wanted to do something else.

One of them had bought a field and he wanted to go and see it. Now, he could have seen the field any time, couldn't he? But he said he had to go on the day of the party. Another one had bought five pairs of oxen and wanted to see how well they would work, pulling carts and plows. He could have done that anytime, but he wanted to do it right when the party was taking place. The last one had just gotten married and said he couldn't come. He didn't even say that he was sorry! It seems so rude of them all, doesn't it? And it seems so foolish that they would give up the party.

Now what does this have to do with us? Well, the Word that the Lord has given us is like a wonderful feast. It is like great food and drink. You know, when your body is hungry it needs food and it needs drink. Otherwise it gets weak. Well, when your spirit is hungry, it needs food and drink, too. It needs the truths and the good things that the Word teaches it, so that it can have happiness. It is a wonderful feast.

But sometimes it doesn't feel like a wonderful supper, does it? Sometimes it seems like we want to do something else. We might think, "There's a show I want to watch on television, so I don't want to say my prayers or listen to the Lord's Word or go to church." This is like the man who had bought a field and wanted to go look at it, or like the man who had bought the oxen and wanted to see how they worked, or like the man who wanted to stay with his wife. Sometimes, it just seems as though anything else is more fun.

But what did the master of the house say? He told the servants to go into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind and invite them to the party. If you were a poor person and someone came and invited you to wonderful party, to the best meal you had ever had, how would you feel? You would be pretty excited, wouldn't you?

And there are times we are excited about the Lord's Word, too. Sometimes we are unhappy or we know that we are doing things we should not do. We feel as if we were poor or blind or lame. This is when we really need the Lord's Word. It is when we really want to go to church or pray to the Lord.

At the end of the story, the servant told his master that he had asked lots of people and they had come, but that the house still wasn't full. So the rich man told him to go out again and search and find more people and get them to come in. He wanted a full house for his party.

Well that's the way the Lord feels, too. He wants His heaven to be full. He wants to invite everyone in. It doesn't matter where people come from or what religion they belong to. He wants to give everyone the wonderful truths of His Word. And so He looks at each one of us and asks us to come to His supper.

Amen.