

The Invitee

Series: The Invitation

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“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matt.11:28-30)

Thus far in our series we have considered the invitation itself in three parts:

- Come After Me (Follow)
- Take My Yoke
- Learn From Me

And we have understood the nature of the inviter:

- He is Meek
- He is Humble in Heart

Today our focus is on the invited.

Let's revisit the Parable of the Great Banquet in Luke 14:15-24

15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.” 16 Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ 18 “But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ 19 “Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ 20 “Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’ 21 “The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’ 22 “ ‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’ 23 “Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. 24 I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’ ”

Notice who eventually received the invitation: The poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. But notice what Jesus said before he told this parable:

Luke 14:12-14, 12 Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. 13 But when you give a

banquet, **invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind**, 14 and you will be blessed. Although **they cannot repay you**, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

Here is the point: Jesus invites those to His banquet who cannot repay Him. And, they know they cannot repay Him. Those at His table are there by grace. There is no quick quo pro, no influence peddling, no “you scratch my back and I will scratch yours” going on here. All who are invited have nothing to offer in return, nothing in their hands to bring, no ability to reciprocate.

In our text those invited are described as:

The Weary:

Notice it is “all” who are weary. Not just some. Doesn’t this describe everyone on some level?

The Greek word means tired and exhausted.

- It is part of the curse of sin. Men will work by the sweat of the brow and women will labor in bearing children. The curse makes us tired.
- When we learn to trust and not worry like the lilies of the field we will not toil in a weary way. Matt.6:8
- Many of us feel like Peter who told Jesus, “We have toiled all night and caught nothing.” (Luke 5:5)
- Jesus Himself got physically tired. (John 4:6)
- Yet many are not just physically tired, they are soul-weary. This goes deeper than the bone.
- It reminds me of my father’s words: If it’s hard, you are doing something wrong.

So how can we toil without being soul-weary? What is this invitation Jesus offers the weary?

- 1 Cor.15:10, “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God was with me.”
- Paul at times feared that his labor was for nothing, in vain. Gal.4:11, I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.” But, in Phil.2:16, Paul knew that if his students would continue to “hold out the word of life” then he would not have run or labored for nothing.
- Paul knew the secret that Jesus was offering to the weary: “For this purpose I also labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works in me.” (Col.1:29)

- Paul had a new goal for his labor: “for this we labor and strive, that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.”

The Heavy-Laden:

This word is only found here and one other place, Luke 11:46, “Jesus replied, ‘And you experts of the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourself will not lift one finger to help them.’”

- Burdens are loads we must carry. Each one has his or her own load. There is no equity in this.
- The ones invited are those who know they need help carrying their load unlike:
 - He who think he can “do it all by myself.”
 - The one who thinks no one will understand their burden-and lives a life of self-pity.
 - Or those who are too proud to accept help from anyone else because it seems like weakness.
- Jesus condemned those who would add burden on top of burden to someone, watching them bend and bow under the load, and instead of helping them, taking some of their burden on themselves, they continue to add more and more.
 - This is the Egyptians requiring more bricks with less straw.
 - This is Ebenezer Scrooge expecting more and more work from Bob Cratchet for the same amount of pay.
 - This is the rich man of James 5 who fails to pay the wages of the workmen.
 - This is the lawyer who requires adherence to one more rule, dot one more l and cross one more t in order to get justice-a justice that rarely comes.
 - It is the Christian leader who lords it over the flock, driving them to do more, give more, be more without providing any help or kindness in the pursuit.
- Gal.6:1-5, 1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person **gently**. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. 2 **Carry each other’s burdens**, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. 4 Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, 5 **for each one should carry their own load**.
 - Remember this is a yoke-we pull with Jesus (and others)
 - Burden-bearing is not an excuse for the person to stop bearing their own load.

Jesus is looking for those who are weary and heavy-laden. Those down, discouraged, distressed from increasing obligations and struggling against the traps of sin. Those who are losing meaning and purpose in life. Those who have low energy, and see life as a drudgery, something to be merely endured. He wants to supply the energy, the wind beneath your wings, the new perspective that renews zeal and enthusiasm for this new abundant life He has invited us to live.