



**2019 YEAR OF SCRIPTURE**  
**Monthly Devotions**  
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Luke 14:15-24

In Luke, Jesus is invited to, and attends, a banquet. One of the guests says to him, "Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" He uses the statement as an opportunity to share a parable story.

Jesus tells the one who spoke how dinner party invitations had all been sent out in advance by the master of a house. Everyone, those of nearly all social status in town, we invited. As the day of the banquet arrived the master of the house sent his servant to those whom had had invited. It seems unlikely, but all these invited guests found pedestrian excuses to miss this gala event. Upon hearing that all who were invited were not coming, the owner of the house became angry and sent his servant into the streets and back-alleys of the town to invite "the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame." The servant complied, and they came, but still there was room for more guests in the banquet hall. Next, the master sent the servant into the countryside to "Go out to the roads and county lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full." (verses 22-23). He says those who don't come will "never taste" my banquet.

Jesus came preaching that "the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 4:17), but He was rejected. In this parable, the kingdom of God was prepared as a banquet for the invited guests. Those who ignored the invitation to the banquet missed out. Is the Kingdom where God reigns where we want to be? Or do we follow our own self-centered agenda? Where are our priorities? Who of us has not written a letter expressing "regrets" when not wanting to accept an invitation? Is this after all, different?

Will we be ready to come as we are, invited by Christ? Are our excuses as flimsy as those listed, or have we invented more socially acceptable ones? Do we even find it difficult to believe that God is so generous? God's call to us is urgent. The Banquet, the Kingdom of God here among us, is ready. Are we tasting it?

We are *chosen* to accept His loving invitation. We are reminded in this parable that God's love for us is so wonderful, so great, that he wants us to be saved even more than we want to be saved.

In our Sunday morning worship, we are invited to be in the company of saints and the living God in Word and Sacrament. Christ has opened the door of salvation to everyone. May we never be too busy to come to the banquet, for all is ready!



## Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We pray that we might receive the gracious generosity of the Divine Host, You Lord, who threw the doors to the banquet open. Help us to consider how we can accept and embody Your loving welcome that offers the goodness You have extended to us all. Through Your son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen

## The Invitation

I'd not considered God so much, although His voice was clear  
Caught in the clamor of life, I guess I failed to hear  
At first, he called me softly, when life was going well  
Then slightly louder as I found myself unsettled for a spell  
His voice grew even greater as my own could hardly speak  
And rolled out-loud like thunder, when my prayers became weak  
He's been with me through times of joy, of loneliness and fear  
And showed me very faithfully, that He'd be ever near  
He sends an invitation, then, directly to my soul  
To come and dine with all His saints, and make His banquet full  
I answered, yes, I will be there, in wanting Him to see  
Myself, unworthy, grateful though, that He invited me

*~Scott Blackford*

