

■ There's Still Room. | ■ Luke 14:12-24

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Date: 30 March 2025

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we are encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ.! I'm Pastor Patrick Daly, and each week I share sermons that balance the grace and love of Jesus Christ with the truth of the Word of God.

Together, we'll explore Scripture using observation, interpretation, and application. This helps us discover practical ways to live out our faith every single day.

Let's dive in together into God's Word. Alright, well good morning everyone. What a fun morning we've had so far with all the kiddos and all the energy.

You know, one of the great things I really appreciate just about our church family, our church community, us coming together, is knowing that kids can run around and be kids.

You do not have to raise your hand when I say this, but I'm sure for a lot of us, we've been in churches where if a kid runs around or screams a little too loud, they might want you out the door.

[1 : 04] Let's be honest here. But we have to be reminded of how important it is for children to come to know the Lord, even at a young age. To learn the basic Bible stories, right?

Like the creation account, or Noah, and the flood. Or even how, well, the Pharaoh, Moses, right? The story of Joseph, and of course the story of Jesus Christ.

I'm reminded so much of how when Scripture says, let the little children come to me, when Christ is saying that. And even as we, as adults, we have our moments where we're like, ah, they're a little too loud.

But it's so important for us as a church community, as the body of Christ, to let children be children, but also to instruct them, to show them what it means to love Jesus.

Amen? So I want us to go ahead and, today's sermon is titled, There's Still Room. And we had this activity here where we had the pitcher of water, the bread basket, and all these different things that are going on.

[2 : 11] And, you know, I got to tell you, I was planning on doing this parable of the great banquet for a while. Well, God's timing is better than my timing kind of thing. So it wasn't, it was the hand of God that we were doing, already planning the great banquet, and tying this in with children is just a wonderful thing.

So go ahead and turn your Bibles to Luke, chapter 14, verses 12 through 24. And as you're turning there, you may turn to, it's on page 1038 in your ESV Bible, or you're welcome to use whatever Bible of choice, the KJV, NIV, et cetera, et cetera.

We use the English Standard Version here. And as you're turning there, I'm going to go ahead and, let's open in prayer, and let's ask God to bless this time together, that we will know Him, grow in Him, and be moved to do good in His name.

Dear Lord and Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us this time and this opportunity for us to gather together to sing these wonderful songs, lifting Your name on high, for Your name is the name that is above all names.

We worship You, and we praise You, and we thank You. We are in awe and in wonder of who You are, making the heavens and the earth, knowing that the heavens declare Your glory, and that You made each and every one of us in Your image, and You call each and every one of us to this great feast, to this great banquet, is something that is extraordinary.

[3 : 47] We thank You that we can open Your Word and read it. We can observe what's going on within the pages of Scripture. We can learn the lessons, and also we can be moved to live out this faith.

And Father, I pray, if there is anyone that needs healing, let there be healing. If there's anyone that needs comfort or understanding, let it be done according to Your will.

Father, may we be reminded that no matter where, what our background is, what our backstory is, You call each and every one of us to know You, to believe in Your Son, Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life.

And upon that salvation, receiving the free gift of salvation, You call for us to grow in You, to live it out every day in our everyday world.

And so be with us this morning as we go through this parable of the great banquet. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Can I get an amen? Amen. All right. So are we all there? All right.

[4 : 53] The parable of the great banquet. Kind of the thing to know is that this is obviously right after the parable of the wedding feast, right? Talking about humility. And then we also look at what's happening after, which is also talking about the cost of discipleship, which is also going on about humility.

So that might have something to do with what's going on here. Right? So the parable of the great banquet. So starting at verse 12, he also said to the man who had invited him, when you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

But when you give a feast, invite who? The poor. Who else? The crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed.

Why? Because they cannot, what? Repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just. Then you go into verse 15 here.

When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. It's kind of a random statement, but it's a statement nonetheless.

[6 : 14] Because Jesus is going to clarify this in a second. He said to him, A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. And at the time for the banquet, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, Come, for everything is now ready.

But they all alike began to do what? Make excuses. They said to him, one of them, right, I've bought a field and I must go out and see it.

Please have me excused. And another said, I bought what? Five yokes of oxen, right? And I go to examine them. Please have me excused.

And another said, What happened? I married a wife and therefore I cannot come. So the servant came. And I mean, life happens, right?

So a little humor in there, right? And the master of the house became, or so the servant came and reported these things to his master. And then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, Go out quickly to the streets and the lanes of the city and bring in who?

[7 : 27] The poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame. There's a pattern here. We can see that. And the servant said, Sir, what you commanded has been done. And there is what?

Still room. And the master said to the servant, Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.

Why? Because they rejected the invitation. What a very interesting parable. Right? When we're thinking about it, we already had the parable of the wedding feast, right?

Where it's talking about everyone who exalts himself will be humble and he who humbles himself will be exalted. We have what appears to be a dinner scene that's going on. There's a man that's inviting him to this, kind of this dinner party that's going on.

There's a distinction here between a dinner and a great banquet that we find later on in the verses. You see, we live in this kind of world where, well, how many of you have taken someone out for coffee before?

[8 : 44] Or you had lunch together, right? We live in this culture where it's very common, you scratch my back, I scratch your back, right? You buy me coffee, eventually you're going to buy me coffee, kind of thing, right?

That's the kind of world that we live in. But that's not what Christ is talking about here in this scene. He's talking about something that is far greater than just buying coffee or having lunch together. I know some of us may not have had breakfast, so we might be hungry when I'm mentioning food. I apologize in advance here. But it's so interesting that one of the things that we can see when we are thinking of parables, when we're thinking of how Jesus is talking to the Jewish people and their

understanding of the world, it was very common to talk about things that were small that gets magnified into the larger, from the lesser to the larger.

That was very common. And so what you see here is a smaller dinner compared to a great banquet. And in here, it's saying here, Jesus attends the dinner party, right?

He challenges the norm. He's going from that cultural meal, having a meal together. We all love having meals together. I sure hope that we do. Or at least with people that we like, right?

[10:05] Especially our family. We all love our families. Amen? Right? Talking to a kingdom invitation, though. So there's a difference between the common dinner, the common luncheon in our own context, or a common meeting up for coffee and a banquet.

So in this world, we buy each other coffee. But when it comes to the kingdom of God, there's still room for everyone. So when we think of this table that Amber had set up, that's something that we can initially see right away within the text.

And this isn't the only time that Jesus was using a banquet to talk about the kingdom. If you think of Matthew 22 and the wedding feast, right? Some rejected.

Then all was invited. Right? It's starting from something small and it goes to something much larger in scale. When you think of Luke chapter 15, the parable of the prodigal son, where the father throws a banquet for all, even the unexpected.

You see a pattern that happens within Scripture because let us remember, we look at the context within what's going on within the story, within the pages of Scripture, but we also look at where else do we see this in Scripture?

[11:28] In Matthew 25, when I did the message on the parable of the ten virgins, there's the wedding feast where the virgins are waiting in anticipation for the bridegroom to come onto the scene because there's a celebration that's going to be happening.

And so, what do we see here? Jesus is saying, don't invite people who can repay you. Instead, invite the poor, invite the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

Well, we can think even back then, it doesn't take much for us to think that these are the outcasts of society. They weren't viewed upon very favorably back then, and sadly, it still happens today.

Are there not people in society and in everyday living that you just don't want to deal with them? You just don't. They may not smell right.

They may not. They may look funny. They may be the outcasts of society. But yet here, it's talking about when it goes into that parable, when you give a feast, invite everybody, even the misfits, even the outcasts of society.

[12:41] And perhaps you have had moments in your life where you have felt like you are an outcast. Maybe there's something that's unique about you where you just don't fit within the cultural norms of society.

And so, true hospitality is when you're giving to someone without the expectation of receiving in return.

When we think about it, we get in the habit of it. I give you something, you're going to give me something back. But the ability to be able to give without the expectation of receiving is something that's far more powerful.

And that's what Jesus is calling here in the text. And so, we see in verses 14 and, excuse me, in 15 to 17, a very interesting thing that this guy is saying.

When one of them reclined at the table, he's saying, blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. It's kind of like saying, praise God. Amen.

[13:48] We're going to eat at the feast in heaven. So, he's not saying something that's wrong, necessarily. He's saying something that needs to be spoken to, though.

So, Christ wants to elaborate a little bit more on what exactly is going on. He's responding with the story. Yes, that's true.

We praise God for being able to eat in heaven, so to speak. But he's showing the importance of inviting people to the banquet.

That there's something that's much greater. Is it possible that this person might have been, well, I'm in. I'm already good to go. I'm going to the banquet.

Well, there is some debate on that. We can certainly come to an easy conclusion that Christ is saying, look, that's great. You're going to eat bread in the kingdom, but you've got to invite people.

[14 : 45] That's the lesson here. And so, we see in this parable that many are invited. We have three rejections here.

Three of them. Right? Right? We have the excuses that are made. One person bought a field. He's too busy. Does this remind you of the Good Samaritan? Think about it, right?

They're too busy with their everyday obligations that they couldn't help someone in need. But here, it's, I'm too busy to respond to an invitation. I'm going to give you an excuse because I've got other things to do.

One bought a field, one bought an oxen, and one got married. The thing is, it's not the reason, it's the fact that they're refusing to go.

Do you understand the difference here? There's a very big difference, right? We all got reasons, don't we? But a refusal to the banquet in this context, there's consequences to that.

[15 : 47] And so, what Christ is saying here, yes, praise God, but are you going to respond, number one, to the invitation?

And number two, are you going to extend that invitation to other people? Are you going to make excuses? Are you going to show up? And so, when we think about it, the invitation then widens, and we see this with many different parables, many different things in Scripture.

I've mentioned, what is it, Daniel chapter 2, verse 35, the stone that hits the big statue, and the statue crumbles, and the stone goes into a great mountain, right? That which is small expands, right?

Lesser going to greater. In this case, we are seeing salvation being made available to a select few, listen to me, from a select few to everybody.

Does that make sense, church? That's what we're seeing here. The invitation saying, you know, I'm going to only invite five people here. That's it.

[17 : 00] They said, no. I'm still going to have a party going on here, and I'm going to invite everybody. I'm going to invite the misfits. I'm going to invite the lame and the blind, the crippled, the poor.

So the servant goes out into the highways, into the hedges, and it's so fascinating when the master is saying, so that my house will be filled. Well, you got a lot of room if you're going to invite everybody, but it goes to show the abundance of God's grace.

That's actually what leads us then into the interpretation, right? We read the text, we look at what's going on initially, we then go on for our own spiritual walk and our growth in the Lord.

What are the lessons that we can learn? Number one is that God's kingdom is abundant grace.

Knowing that Christ died for the ungodly, as Romans 5, 6-8 mentions, or even Isaiah 55, many of you know that verse, come all who are thirsty, right?

Without money, without price. The invitation is, look, you don't have to have money. You don't have to be in perfect health.

[18 : 17] You don't have to be married, right? The invitation is for everyone to respond to the call that Christ has for every single one of it. And what does that response look like?

Believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Making that decision to say yes to Christ, that Christ is what you need, is all that you need when it comes to eternal salvation.

And consider that when I talk about abundant grace, it's extended, it doesn't run out. Now we know there's time that ends, sure, but we know that, well, saying things like, well, salvation's only available to an exclusive group of people, a certain demographic, or a certain culture, or a certain race.

No, it is available for everyone. The second thing then is, well, a little more blunt here, don't make excuses.

Respond. Because Christ is showing the, right at the very end, I tell you, none of those men who are invited shall taste my banquet. That's not the easy thing, but it is the truth nonetheless.

[19 : 38] Maybe you identify as one of the people who's been making excuses. Knock it off.

Respond. Say yes to the invitation. In Luke chapter 8 verse 14 where there's reference that's talking about being choked up by life's worries, right?

Riches or possessions. Well, there's a famous saying, you can't take it with you. We have to remember, our soul is what we have to consider.

That which is eternal. Philippians chapter 3 verse 8 when the apostle Paul is saying, I consider everything a loss compared to knowing Christ.

Knowing Christ is the greatest treasure, right? Just like we talked about the pearl of great value or the hidden treasure that we are to seek Christ with everything that we are in the same way as X marks the spot and you are to go after that treasure.

And so in this, ask yourself that question, are you making excuses or are you not? Maybe you identify and say, you know what, I have been making excuses.

[20 : 57] I'm ready to respond to God's call in receiving salvation or even further, I'm ready to respond to God's call for my life. Maybe you're wrestling with something that you've been wrestling with for a while.

You know God's calling you to do something or to stop doing something. And you say, not yet, God. Maybe you identify with that.

Or if you don't, maybe you've had a moment like that. I know I have for sure. The third thing then is that God's heart is for all, even what?

The misfits. How many of you watch that? There's that old Christmas story. You guys know where I'm going with this. The island of what? The island of misfits, right?

And the one that always stuck with my mind all these years ever since a kid is the train that had the square wheels, right? And it's a cute, if you haven't watched it, you should watch it sometime, right?

[22 : 03] The island of misfits where they're the cast outs of society, right? Nobody wants a train that has square wheels. Are you kidding me? That's kind of the attitude you see in the movie.

But in the same way, for a lot of us, we may have felt like we are on the island of misfits, as it were. Some of us have had those moments where, you know, I don't fit the square hole.

Maybe I don't fit that. Maybe there's something that's different about you or whatever. We are all different and maybe you just stick out. And that's okay.

Knowing the fact that God's invitation for salvation is for everyone, including the misfits, is remarkable. Because I'm sure that in our own lives, many of us have felt those moments where we felt isolated, where we felt like we just don't, we don't know where we fit in.

It's just like what I've told you, and I'll say it before, and I'll say it again. Man will fail you. God will never fail you, though.

[23 : 19] And no matter what hurt, or what people say, or what people do against you that has affected your life, God remains as the constant, everlasting to everlasting.

Our Lord remains the same. He does not change. We certainly do. And I'm certainly glad I'm not God. Aren't you glad you're not God? I'm glad that God forgives me of my sins.

I'm glad that the Lord loves me. And he's still offering that invitation. We think of how often, how quickly for us, we might say, you know what, I don't love you anymore because you did me dirty. You did me wrong. But to know that God's love is much greater, continuing to extend that invitation. And even if you are, well, living in sin, as it were, or you're distant, or you're in darkness, or you're separated from the presence of God, you can still come back to him.

[24 : 32] And that's what's powerful. No matter what you have been through, or what you are going through, or what people have said, or what people have done, the invitation is still there.

Let us remember, the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine for the one. Let us also remember, it's a Luke chapter five, where Christ is saying, I came not for the healthy, but for the sick.

And the idea of that is, well, are any of us actually healthy? But we think about that. That God is doing so much for us to respond.

This leads us, then, into the application, then. Right? We observe the text. We look at what's going on within the context. We look at the connections.

We look at the lessons we can have in our own spiritual walk. And what do we do about this? And number one is to remove the what, church? The obstacles or the excuses.

[25 : 44] Doesn't this remind you of the parable of the soils? The four soils? Some of the soils had weeds. Some of the soils had other things in it, rocks and stuff that needed to be removed.

Do you see how it's connected here? Remove those obstacles. Remember, the weeds representing sin. The obstacles, well, in this case, representing excuses.

Think about that. Remove the obstacles and remove the excuses. Right? Hebrews 12, 1, throw off everything that hinders you. Or Matthew 10, 39, whoever finds his life will lose it.

Whoever loses his life will find it. We know about that. It's about surrender. Remember, when we're considering those other, the cost of discipleship and the parable of the wedding feast, it's about humility and recognizing that Jesus Christ is what you need.

You can't do it on your own. It's about recognizing who Christ is. So maybe you need to ask yourself, what's keeping you from the table that God has set before you?

[26 : 57] Only you can answer that. I wish I could answer on your behalf. Maybe not. But in any case, only you can answer that. The second thing, then, is to accept the invitation and what?

Respond. Right? Many of you know the Revelation 3, 20, right? Where it's, I stand at the door and knock, and we see so many pictures of Jesus patiently knocking at the door when we're realizing that it's referencing judgment that's about to happen.

But it's still a good thought nonetheless. Right? The imagery of the Lord knocking at the door. Are you going to open it? That's fine. That's consistent with how we understand the Lord.

How is that any different than an invitation? We think about that. Or in 2 Corinthians 6, verse 2, that now is the time for salvation, just like we talked about last week.

God gives us time, but not forever. And it's up for us to respond, well, you better do it now. Better do it now, because you don't know what tomorrow will hold.

[28 : 15] So in other words, don't RSVP later for something that is ready for you now. And third and final, be a servant who extends the invitation.

What's so remarkable about this parable is when it talks about the servant, right? The servant that's extending the invitation. Now, some will argue that this is a representation of Christ.

That's fine. In the same way that Christ has extended the invitation to many and then to all, we should think about how we can do that in our lives.

Who can we extend the invitation to in our own lives? Start small and go big. Think of your friends, your relatives, those that you are very close with.

And think of how God calls for us to go out and to make disciples, declaring the name of Jesus Christ. And let's not forget, we still live in an everyday world where we have to work, we have to go to school.

[29 : 19] Well, that's why it's important for us when we consider being an ambassador for Christ. Thinking about what we say to others and how we conduct ourselves and what we do, all of these things are important.

And so maybe you need to ask yourself, how can I extend the invitation through words and even through actions? Let us not forget Ephesians chapter 2, verses 8.

Many of you know 8 through 9, for by grace you are saved and not by works, lest any man or lest anyone boast. Verse 10, don't forget that.

That we are created for good works. Not saved by what we do, we are saved so that we can do. Does that make sense?

Do we understand the difference here? Because that's, little word can make a huge difference in that, especially when it comes to salvation. And so, let us remember this specific parable.

[30 : 28] Think about the activity we just did. How awesome it was for us to go through these kind of, what is like a puzzle kind of thing, right?

The invitation is still going out. And the idea is that let us remember, if there's anything to take away from today, is there is still room.

Respond. There is still room for you. There is still room for your friends and your family and those that you know. Let this be a call for them to respond as well.

And so, the question is, will we respond accordingly? The table has been set. There is an invitation for all of us. Let us respond to God's call for salvation and God's specific call for our lives.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for this time for us to gather together as the body of Christ. Father, I pray that we may all take to heart the importance not only of the great banquet that you have set, but also may we appreciate the importance of the invitation that your Son has given to all of us.

[31 : 55] Father, I pray that if anyone is making an excuse or there's an obstacle or whatever it is, that they may have the tools or someone to talk to or whatever it is to be able to no longer have obstacles or rocks or weeds for their soil, but they will respond to you.

They will respond to your salvation. Father, I pray that we as a church, will grow in a healthy manner, much like I pray, Father, that each and every one of us will grow as an individual.

And through growth, may we bear fruit, may we extend the invitation, and may we live out this faith in what we say and what we do, especially when we consider the world that we live in.

And Father, I especially would like to pray for those who attack the misfits of society. We know that your heart is for everyone.

And we know as a culture, we tend to, well, we have our own biases towards people. And you love each and every one of us, even the misfits.

[33 : 15] May we have a heart that reflects you, balancing the grace and love that you give us and the truth of your word.

We say all of this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Thank you for listening for this week's message from Ontario Community Church. I pray that you are encouraged and strengthened in your walk with Christ.

For more sermons and resources, visit OntarioCommunityChurch.org. May God bless you as you live out his grace and truth every single day.