

Missing the Banquet

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[0 : 00] Luke chapter 14, and we're going to go from verse 15 down through to verse 24. Luke 14, 15 to 24. I'll give you a moment to find that.

Luke 14, 15 to 24.

Come, for everything is now ready. But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, I have brought a field, and I must go out and see it.

Please have me excused. And another said, I have brought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, therefore I cannot come. So the servant came and reported these things to his master.

Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame. And the servant said, Sir, what you have commanded has been done, and there is still room.

[1 : 27] 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.

Let me pray for us. God, I pray that you would open our hearts and minds this morning, that we would be receptive to your word.

I pray that your presence would be with us in this room, that your Holy Spirit would be tangible, and that we would know that it is you who is directing us through your scriptures.

I pray that you would put your words on my tongue. In your name we pray. Amen. Okay, so it's the parable of the banquet, which is, might even be my favorite parable, actually.

If that's a thing, you can have a favorite parable. And what's wonderful about this parable is it just captures the gospel in a nutshell. And I always love when there's just a little portion of scripture that can do that for us and can give us this.

[2 : 32] This is incredibly simple but powerful image of what the gospel is. But what I want to do this morning is hopefully allow us to really rediscover this parable.

Because one of the things that I noticed as I was preparing the message this morning is that the context in which Jesus speaks this parable is itself a banquet or some kind of fancy dinner.

And all of the people that are at the banquet are Pharisees. They're all teachers of the law. And so when Jesus speaks this parable, we often have a sense that he's kind of saying two things to us.

He's saying that the gospel is wide enough to take even the poor and the crippled and the lame. And there's kind of always room for the lowliest people.

And that you can be a Christian no matter how kind of lowly you are. That we're sort of to identify, I think we often do in this parable, by saying, I'm just so thankful that I'm not like those stuck-up Pharisees, Lord.

[3 : 42] You know, here I was just innocently on the roadside and you've welcomed me into the kingdom. But in fact, Jesus is not really speaking this parable to the poor in the story.

His audience for this parable are the Pharisees. And so his message is actually a rebuke towards the Pharisees. And I think effectively what he's saying to them is this.

You're wallowing in your own sense of importance at being invited into the banquet. And in so doing, you're creating this presumptuous attitude.

And let me tell you some things about what the consequences will be for that. Okay, so we're interested as we look at this passage this morning about not so much the fate of the poor and the crippled and the lame in the story, but we're focusing on what becomes of the original invited guests.

So why should we identify them? Just because they're the ones that Jesus is speaking to in the story. Why does that mean that that's us that he's talking to as we read this passage? We want to understand what Jesus is saying to the Pharisees.

[4 : 54] But we also want to understand what Jesus is saying to us, of course. That's the whole point of reading Scripture or one of the points. So why are we the Pharisees?

Let's just zoom out a little bit. I want to talk about how we approach the Gospels even generally before we talk about how we approach this one passage. I put to you that there are maybe two ways that most people read the Gospels and what they kind of take from it.

I don't think anybody dislikes Jesus. Very few people, when they read the Gospels, when they talk about Jesus, say, Oh, I just can't stand that guy. Even people who, you know, atheists will often say, Well, he actually was a good man.

You know, people who just have the most vague interest in Christianity, maybe very critical of the church, still say, Oh, but I love Jesus. Everyone seems to like this character of Jesus.

I mean, there's just something irresistibly lovely about him, I think. But we can have a different view about who we identify with in the story.

[6 : 01] We can have the view of, Oh, I hate these Pharisee characters. I just hate them, Jesus. They were the nasty ones. You know, I'm just so thankful that I'm not like those Pharisees. I'm just so thankful that I'm like this, you know, the humble kind of poor person that got healed or that just, you know, I would have been one of those just weeping at the cross kind of thing.

That's one way of looking at the Gospels. Another way of reading the Gospels, which I think is the way that it has the intent that we read them, is by saying, like, look how awful these Pharisees are.

Oh, my word, I'm one of them. I think that's truly what it means to identify as a sinner is, I'm the kind of guy that if Jesus knew in real life, wouldn't like and would call a brood of vipers and sons of the devil.

That's what he said about the Pharisees. And so I think as we approach this text, I think we need to think very carefully.

Is there stuff in my life, is there stuff in my attitude that matches that of the Pharisees? And I think there can be. And none of this is meant as any kind of criticism of church or the evangelical church.

[7 : 23] But I think as we consider our own place as Christians, particularly those like me who have grown up in the church, and we just, we know what to say and what not to say, or what to only say in our thoughts, and, you know, all the kind of the in the club type activities that we kind of, we just know how to act like Christians or be Christians.

So we feel like we're really in the club. We feel like we're among those who really belong in the church.

But it's easy to forget that actually none of us belong in the kingdom of God. That this is not our book. This is not our history. These are not our people. We were descendants of who knows who.

Like people that aren't even mentioned in Scripture maybe. We're the outsiders. We're Gentiles. We are, we're not a part of the people of God.

We're just not. So there's this weird thing where we've kind of, almost forgotten that a little bit, if we're honest. And where it feels like we're just so naturally a part of the people of God as evangelical Christians that we've, it's easy to let that slip that actually we're outsiders.

[8 : 49] Furthermore, even if, even if we were invited as churchgoers and good Christians, we would have disqualified ourselves with our sin anyway. Just, just as, as those who were, were the people of God by ethnicity, who were, who were Jews, but not, not the people of God in heart.

So we aren't just outsiders because we're Gentiles. We're outsiders because we aren't even good Christians. Like if, if we, if the people here knew what, what really goes on in our hearts, if the people sitting to your left and right, even like really, if we knew, you know, one another, like the game would be up.

Like we would, we would realize like we're not even good Christians, let alone, you know, the original, original people of God. So that, that really is the, the main point of this morning is by way of very long introduction that I hope is, is helpful is that there is huge damage done in having a presumptuous, of course, I'm in the club.

Of course, I'm invited to Jesus's banquet attitude. And I'm going to look particularly at the way that this impacts our mission and how, how it can, it can stale us as we do that.

Um, one, one further point before we get kind of stuck in properly, um, is that there's this kind of weird flip side of it, as I said. So in one sense, I want us to identify as, as Pharisees, but yet also, uh, as I've been saying, we're, we're kind of outsiders.

[10 : 18] So we're like, if you, to, to kind of get back into our banquet metaphor, we're like those who are actually on the streets and the lanes and the poor and the crippled, who got confused about who they were, thought they were among the original invited and still had this kind of pompous presumptuous attitude.

If we're going to be nice and critical of ourselves, cause it's nice to do that sometimes, um, that, that can be, uh, the danger for us as we go into this. So what's Jesus saying to us, uh, in this passage?

I just want to make, um, uh, three points that I think are the dangers of this presumptuous attitude. Um, the, the first is that in, in, in having this attitude, we don't realize that the kingdom of God is here now.

That's my first point. The second point is that having that presumptuous attitude makes us not value the kingdom of God, value being invited to that banquet and what it really means and what a great honor it is.

And thirdly, having that presumptuous attitude ultimately, eventually means we'll, we'll miss out on it. Okay. So let's talk about the kingdom of God being here.

[11 : 26] Uh, verse 15, look at verse 15 with me. Um, blessed is everyone, the Pharisee says, who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. What statement is that? Why does he say that? Well, this banquet is a really awkward banquet going on.

The actual one, not the one in the parable, the dinner that he's having with the Pharisees. Um, he's, he's, he's healed someone in front of them on the, I think on the Sabbath, implies it because he's asking, is it wrong to heal on the Sabbath?

Um, and then he's, he's rebuked them saying, you shouldn't have sat in all these fancy seats. You should have sat in the, in the lower seats and been invited up. Uh, and he said, you shouldn't have invited all of these, uh, these, uh, guests who could pay you back.

You should have invited people who couldn't pay you back, um, and get your reward in, in the kingdom. And I mean, it's just like, it's almost like kind of Christmas dinner with a, with a family like this, there's, this kind of a bit of tension in the room.

Like Jesus isn't, isn't pulling any punches. He isn't wasting time with these guys. He isn't kind of glad handling them. And, uh, he's, he's being, being very upfront about, about where they need to change.

[12 : 29] And so the Pharisee says this phrase in verse 15, almost seems like he's trying to break the awkwardness. Like, you know, Jesus is talking about the kingdom of God and he says, well, blessed is everyone who will eat kingdom of God, right?

Cheers. Like, can I get a, an amen? Um, but what do you notice about the tense of his remark? Like the Pharisee is speaking of a future thing. He's speaking of a future thing.

Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. And so this is the, the kind of launch pad from which Jesus said, okay, let me tell you a parable. Let me tell you a story that fixes that.

Okay. So the Pharisee's presumption in this remark, it seems is firstly, that he and the others are just more than deserving of bread in the kingdom of God. Blessed, blessed is us, it might say, not blessed are they as if, oh, I wonder who that may be.

It's like, there's, it's clear that Jesus has, has this view of them that, that they, they have, they've presumed that not just as Jews, but as these strict religious Jews who obey all the rules.

[13 : 26] They even obey the bonus rules that they made up, um, that, that they are in the kingdom of God, but that, that it, it's a future thing. Blessed are those who will. Okay.

Hold that thought in your mind and we'll read verses, uh, 16 and 17. Jesus begins to introduce his parable. He says, 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.

So you see, there are two invites that they're given. The first one is the, the advance notice. Like, I'm throwing a banquet, you're invited, this is the date that it's happening, make sure you can come.

Then he sends his servant out as a second invite on the day saying, okay, everything is ready, it's time, come, you need to come right now, it's, it's happening. And, and this is common practice in, in Jesus' day.

This was how they would, how they would do this thing. So this is the first thing we can notice about the accusation Jesus makes against these presumptuous guests, is that they didn't realize it was time.

[14 : 34] That, that, that, in effect, he's saying the guests within this parable, they, they got mixed up on the dates. They, they got so preoccupied, um, with what was going that, that they, they, they missed out.

And so Jesus is saying, you're saying, blessed are those who will eat bread, who will eat bread in the kingdom of heaven. And I'm saying to you, the kingdom of heaven is here. It's happening. It's right now.

It's going on in front of you. And you're missing out because you have just been so not bothered with this invite. You've been so presumptuous about your place in it that you fail to, to pay attention to the fact that it's here.

So what's the message for us in all this? It's that those that, that wallow in their standing as a good Christian and focus entirely on this great personal reward that they receive in paradise are not alert to the fact that the kingdom of God has begun with its rewards and with its responsibilities.

So pressing this, this banquet metaphor a little bit, uh, further, their, their only responsibility was just to turn up. But for us, it's this weird thing where, um, we are, we are, we are, I mean, we are invited, but we also are like the servant who goes and does the inviting, right?

[15 : 51] As those who are, who have mission, who are, who are going and spreading the gospel invitation with followers of Jesus. And we are, we are those who, who are charged to invite others, um, to, to do the same thing.

So this, having this, um, presumptuous snobby attitude to our place in the kingdom of God, it makes us miss our mission. It makes us miss our destiny. That's really sad.

That's something to weep over. How can we, how can we take this role of, of, of the servant that goes and, and invites others if we don't even realize that this banquet is time, that it's happening now.

It's happening today. When we're invited into the kingdom of God, we're invited to participate immediately. The gospel news is not like the first invite in this parable.

It's like the second invite. The gospel is not a save the day. The gospel is a call to immediately be a part of something. It invites you, um, to, to, to be something different, to have a new community, to have a new set of priorities, and ultimately to have a new mission.

[17 : 04] We cannot file our gospel invite away somewhere and have that ready for, for, um, the day we die. I can't tell you how many people where I've, you know, taught them about, uh, about Jesus and try to, in my own kind of ham-fisted, clumsy way, tell them about the gospel, um, and, and have them say, well, like I, it makes sense.

Like, I, I, I like Jesus. I like the idea of, of all this. Like, it's, it's all good stuff. But, you know, I just, I just think I'll find my faith later in life. It's just more a thing. Like, you know, I'm young. I'll just, I'll do my thing now.

And at some point down the road, like I'll, I'll, I'll, I'll become a Christian. Now, you can say, well, you can criticize that however you like, but we have to turn that on ourselves and saying, well, how, how are we preaching the gospel such that people, um, take that, take that away, that message?

Like, would they say that if they knew that they were being invited to something as awesome as the kingdom of God that is happening now? That's, they're already missing out on it. They've already missed all their life that they've lived so far.

They've, they have, they've wasted, if I can be so bold, because they haven't, they haven't been a part of this awesome and wonderful privilege of being invited into the friendship and company of Jesus.

[18 : 20] So I really do think there is this correlation, very direct between our feelings of being this good kind of church-going Christian who kind of banked his or her place in the kingdom of heaven and, um, uh, our lack of understanding the kingdom is, is actually here and happening now.

And I think there's a correlation between that, having that, that lack of understanding about the kingdom being here and now, and our mission in inviting others into it.

It simply does not make sense to say, uh, I want, I want to have the kingdom of God. I want to be a part of the kingdom of God for eternity. I want to participate in the mission of God for all time, but I don't want to do it now.

That doesn't compute. So that's the first thing I think Jesus is, is, is kind of stabbing at, uh, in this, in this parable that you've, you've been invited. You, you should know that it's happening right now.

Okay. The second thing is this. When you have a presumptuous attitude to, to being invited at, at the kingdom, uh, table, um, you don't value it.

[19 : 25] You just don't value it. Let's read on from verse 18 here. Verse 18 in our text. But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, I have bought a field and I must go out and see it.

Please have me excused. Another said, I've brought five yoke of oxen and I go to examine them. Please have me excused. And another said, I've married a wife and therefore I cannot come. Okay.

So what do you notice about these excuses? I mean, they're all just terrible excuses. They're bad excuses. Like you bought a field and now you have to go and see it. You can't come. You bought a yoke of oxen and you want to inspect them.

Why did you not inspect them before you bought them? It's too late now. Or, uh, married a wife. That doesn't make sense. Why would you not be able to come to a banquet? I was trying to look to see, like, is there some cultural thing where like, if you've married, you can't attend.

I don't think there's anything there unless I've missed something. Like, they're just bad excuses. Second thing I noticed is that they're all just distracted by other parts of their life. They're just, you know what? I've got stuff going on.

[20 : 24] I just can't make it. But at the end of the day, whenever we say no to something, if we're honest, it's because we just don't really value it. Like, whenever something is going on that we're not at because we say we are, there's some reason.

It's, we, that time still exists. We're awake and alive in that period of time when it's happening. We just have something better to do, really, isn't it? That's how we, I mean, we just prioritize our time.

And if we don't turn up to something, it's because we think there's something better for us to do. So just imagine being invited to dine with someone really important, like your favorite sports star or like a world leader or just someone you really look up to and respect.

And you know that there's going to be all kinds of other people who are, like, you really are, like, honorable people who you would just love to be among and be invited to. If you've got an invite like that, you would just be so honored and so humbled.

And you would know exactly, you would make sure, okay, what date is that? What time is that? I'm going to double check all these things, make sure nothing is going on at that time. And you would make absolutely sure that you knew when it was coming up.

[21 : 29] You'd count down the days and you would make very sure that you put it before anything else and that you were there. But that's not what the Pharisees, sorry, it's not what the invitees in the parable did.

And so that's the second danger of a presumptive attitude. And that's what Jesus was saying to the Pharisees. You just don't value it. You don't care. Like, you know, I'm in the club and I just, you know, I know it.

And, you know, it's just I've grown up with it and it's just always been the way and it's no big deal. That's what it can feel like. They didn't realize, and maybe we don't realize, the true awesomeness of being among the people of God.

Like, really, you? Like, me? Like, among the people of God? Sat at a banquet with Jesus? Of all the people who could be present in his kingdom?

All the people that would show up to a church on a Sunday morning? It's you and me? Do we get that sense of just what a great but weird thing it is?

[22 : 35] But the kind of loss here in having that attitude is enormous because we miss out on the most awesome experience ever, which is that true feeling of being under grace and just realizing what it means to be truly forgiven, being under the grace of God.

Another consequence of them and of us not being humbled for their place in the kingdom of God is that the Pharisees, they didn't worry too much about opening wide the doors for all to enter in.

In fact, they made them narrower and narrower and narrower. They added burden upon burden upon burden. People saying, these are all the things you have to do. I mean, already the law, we know, almost the big point of it is that it's like there's no way that anyone is able to do this.

It's not because the law is impossible, but because of human sinfulness. And yet the Pharisees are just adding more and more to that to kind of prevent people from entering the kingdom of God.

So it has a huge effect on their mission and in turn on our mission. If we have this incredibly particular attitude about our presumptuous place, that has the effect of saying, like, we don't really value it.

[23 : 55] Like, it's not a big deal to be a Christian. People are different things. They have all kinds of different beliefs. I'm a Christian. Like, it's just, you don't have that sense of, this is the most wonderful, amazing thing that I get to know Jesus and be in his company and follow him.

And I'm just desperate that this friend I have, this family member I have, these people that I care about and love, I just, I know that the one thing they need, greater than anything else, is to have this same relationship with Jesus and have that feeling of being at his feet and in his service.

So that's the damage it has to our mission. But in actual fact, of course, being a part of his fellowship is the most wonderful thing that can ever happen to someone.

Having his approval and his love and acceptance. By way of example, we know that, you know, if somebody doesn't have, you know, a parent, a mom or a dad that really approve of them, and if they're lacking that love from their parents, particularly growing up, there's no amount of love that anyone else in their life can provide to them that fully heals that wound.

There's just something about that having a father who loves you and accepts you and approves of you, that is just so essential to a true and good sense of being valued.

[25 : 30] Or the same maybe with a spouse, you know, women whose husbands don't seem to really love them. There's no friendship that can heal that. And in an even more extreme way, with our maker, with God in heaven who is in charge of all things, our deepest longing is that we would be approved and accepted and loved by God.

And having that and knowing that is just wonderful. It's just amazing. It's a beautiful, awesome thing. And we need to return, if we're not there, to that state of being absolutely humbled and in awe of what a beautiful thing and a wonderful thing that is.

And that is a real fuel for mission. That we value it deeply. Not, we're the chosen people of God and I 50% care whether you are too, kind of thing.

Okay. Okay. The third thing, I think, that Jesus is saying to the Pharisees in this message and to us, is that the ultimate cost of an attitude of presumptuousness into the kingdom is that you miss out.

That you actually, it's not just that you're sat there bored, but you're not even there at all. Verses 21 to 23. Let's have a look at them. Verse 21 to 23.

[26 : 50] So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his, he became angry and said to his servant, go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.

And the servant said, sir, what you commanded has been done. And there is still room. And the master said to the servant, go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in.

And that my house may be filled. And I'll do 24 as well. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. So there's these two waves of invite.

He goes, invite the poor, the crippled and the lame. There's still room. There's still room. Go to the highways, to the hedges. Invite people in. It's just like, there's so much room, but not for one type of person.

And that's those who were originally invited, who turned their nose up. They missed out on the kingdom of God. And that's the ultimate point of the parable. Jesus is saying that the banquet host would rather have anyone than people who think that they are so prestigious, who just are so ignorant of their sin, that they think that God would be glad to have them present because of who they are instead of what he has done.

[28 : 15] And these are powerful words. These are words that say, understand this. If you think your place at my table comes because of how great and how good you are, there's no place for you at my banquet.

And we know as Christians all too well that we're saved by grace alone. This is the anthem, right, of what we believe.

In fact, if you have any other attitude, essentially what this is saying, that you haven't truly repented and you haven't put your faith in the work of Jesus.

But what's unfortunate is how this can easily become watered down in our minds and we forget really what we're declaring when we say that.

It's almost a bit like when, you know, if I were to say up here from the pulpit, I'm a sinner. That almost comes across as pious. It's just so normal in Christian kind of parlance.

[29 : 15] You know, if I say, you know what, I'm actually a nasty guy, which is exactly the same thing as saying, but suddenly that's like, it's like that's different. And so when we, there's this ironic pride that comes, that can come if we're not really letting this message steep in our minds.

When we say, you know what, I'm saved by grace alone. We're like, you know what, I know, I'm saved by grace alone. That's what I believe. That's my theology. Those people over there, this group and that group, they think they're saved by their works.

I'm such a better theologian than those people. God just must be so glad to have somebody who is such a good theologian at his banquet as me. Like, in fact, you know, I better check my calendar because I don't even know if I can turn up to it.

Because probably there's a lot of people vying for my, you know, presence at banquets because I'm such a great theologian. Like, do you see how that cycle of pride gets in, even to this message?

Like, we're not saved because we have a certain theology about anything. Just in the same way, exactly the same way, I think, that the Pharisees were not saved just because they were children of Abraham.

[30 : 22] Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not making a case for universalism or anything like that. Like, we're saved by grace. We're not saved by having the theology that we're saved by grace, right?

Do you see the very, like, the difference between those that seems so similar? Like, there's just no place for that presumptuous attitude.

So the final verse of this passage is the stinger, isn't it? For I tell you, none of those men who are invited shall taste my banquet. So rather than just saying, like, that we are the kind of poor, impoverished outcasts who are eventually invited to the banquet, what this parable is saying to us is something much sharper.

It's saying, you're on the barred list. Like, you're banned from the kingdom of heaven. That's what sin does. It's saying, kingdom of heaven, there's no place for you.

There is a, your picture, your name is behind the bar. Do not pour this man a beer. Like, you are, we are barred. We are banned.

[31 : 34] We are on the don't come in list. Like, that's the force of this passage that he's saying to, I just really believe to all sinners.

I think every sinner must identify themselves as a Pharisee. I think that's, that's always what we do. Even if, even if we don't have a religious piety, we have some kind of, of piety that we're not religious or that we are.

It's just, it's all the same thing. And Jesus is saying, look, that, that sin and that disqualifies someone from the kingdom of heaven. But, the kingdom of heaven is so wide and my grace is so wide and my love for humanity is so deep that there is even room at my table for those who are banned, for those who are on the barred list.

That even, even those who have been Pharisees, even those who I've called, who are, who are, who are really out of the club, can, can come in humbleness and in repentance and say, Jesus, I was so wrong to have, to have done that.

I don't want to trust in my own piety, in my own holiness. I want to trust instead in your work of holiness, in your, in your beauty and your, your righteousness.

[33 : 03] And your sacrifice for us on the cross and not in my own churchiness. So, returning back to the way that I think we can read the gospels generally.

How do we process this then as we, as we kind of get to, get to the end of the whole story of, of Jesus? And we realize that all this time, this wonderful character that we love, that we just thought was so wonderful, so nice and just so attractive to us.

This Jesus character, if we're honest, would look at us in our, in our kind of piety and, and, you know, say of us what he said of the Pharisees where, and I don't mean us as, you know, whether you're a Christian or not a Christian.

I just mean us as, as sinners and say, you guys are a brood of vipers, sons of Satan. Like, oof. I mean, that's just heartbreaking. And, and, and to, to, to kind of look at that, I think the response is, is, is, should be like that of Peter.

He, he, he wept bitterly at what he, he had done when he, when he denied Christ on his dying day. And, and, and, and, and, and top, when he saw the risen Christ standing at the shoreline to embrace him and welcome him and accept his repentance.

[34 : 38] You can just imagine what an emotional moment that is. You think you've just betrayed someone on their, to their, to their, to their death, denied them. And now they're alive and they're saying it's all forgiven.

And that's what grace is. Like, that's, that's what it means to be saved by grace. That's, that's what it means to just love and value the kingdom of, the kingdom of God. God is realizing I am just the last person that should be here.

And yet, because of who Jesus is, and absolutely not because of who I am, even I have been invited. Even I eventually now have been, have been welcomed. And it's just, it's an incredibly humbling realization.

And it changes our attitude to, I think, to how we, how we approach church. How we approach, like, how we criticize things. Like, if we really had that attitude, would we, would we start going around with a very haughty sense of, of how we think everything should be done around here?

Or how we think other people should be, should be what they should be saying? Would we judge each other the way that we do if we, if we really understood that? And ultimately, I think it has this incredible impact on the way that we do mission.

[35 : 52] Like, wow, even I was, was welcomed into the kingdom of heaven. And even this friend or that friend, this family member, even that guy can be too. I think it has a huge impact.

And I think that that's what we need to do as, as, as a church. It's just return to this, to this, if we've left it, this, this humbled view of what it means to be in the people of God.

That of all people, it is me. Let me pray for us.