

# Trinity II

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Preacher: Father Randall Russell

[ 0 : 0 0 ] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Years ago, an Anglican priest friend of mine once told me how he saw one of his members who he hadn't seen in church for quite a while, and he asked the man why he hadn't come, where have you been?

To which the man replied, peanut butter. Peanut butter? The priest asked. Yeah, peanut butter, the man said.

Peanut butter. Because I figure one lame excuse is just as good as another. Which brings us to this morning's gospel, which is really all about poor excuses.

In this morning's gospel, Jesus tells us the parable of a certain man who gave a great supper and invited many to come. But one by one, they all began to make excuses.

Now, I'm not going to get into the specific reasons why each excuse really was a bad excuse. Except to say that in our Lord's day, a great supper such as the one in this morning's gospel would have been planned months and months in advance, and everyone would have known about it.

[ 1 : 2 8 ] So the person who recklessly buys a piece of ground without even seeing it, or the person who carelessly buys five yoke of oxen without even testing them, or the person who hastily gets married around the exact same time as the great supper, well, none of these people really had any intention of going.

It would be like if I told Father Miller, I'm sorry, Father, but I just can't help you out until around Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter this year, because that's when Lisa and I plan to get married and have our honeymoon.

So, out of luck. No, an excuse like that just wouldn't fly, and for good reason. For the truth is that none of those people who were first invited to the great supper had absolutely any intention of going.

So what does the man in this morning's parable do when he hears all these poor excuses? In typical Jesus fashion, the man serving the great supper doesn't beg.

He doesn't chase. And he doesn't say, Oh, I'm sorry. Let me rearrange all my plans, or completely change the menu, or do everything in my power to accommodate you.

[ 3 : 0 5 ] No. Instead, the man, the master of the house, gets angry. And simply tells one of his servants, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, and the maimed, and the lame, and the blind.

Which fits in very well with what our Lord told both the Pharisees and his disciples, only a couple of verses before this morning's gospel, where Jesus said, when you give a dinner or supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

In other words, our Lord was explaining how ministry in God's house is supposed to be done. And among other things, that ministry is supposed to involve a great supper, the feast of our salvation, or holy communion, in which many are invited, but some will not come, because, you know, peanut butter.

But what's our excuse? Why have we come? Why are we here this morning? Who do we identify with in this morning's parable?

[ 5 : 0 0 ] Are we the ones who consider our heavenly master's great supper cheap? The ones who can either just take it or leave it, and who are just so rich and so well-to-do that we can find every excuse why not to come to the Lord's Supper?

Or do we identify more with the forgotten of the world? The rejects of society?

The poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind? Those hurting, those struggling with the effects of sin, who are earnestly searching for a refuge for the lost?

Do we identify with them? Because if so, then let us be of good cheer. For today, we have found our refuge.

Today, the master bids us all to come to his supper, to eat forgiveness, to taste righteousness, and to drink salvation for the preservation of both our bodies and souls unto life everlasting.

[ 6 : 1 6 ] And look, look, there is still room. The master's house is not yet full. So let us go out into the highways and hedges and compel many more to come in.

Let us not make thoughtless excuses, but thoughtfully invite as many as we can to come. Yet let us also remember, not everyone will come.

Some will outright tell us no, while others might just simply tell us peanut butter. But there will be those who hear and believe, and they will come, and they will pray, Almighty and ever-living God, we most heartily thank you.

For you have fed us with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And thereby assured us both of your grace and favor that we really do belong, that we really do have a holy purpose, that we truly are members of the mystical body of your Son, which is the blessed company of all the faithful of God.

For today we hear that the kingdom of heaven is like a certain man who gave a great supper and invited many to come. So welcome, for this is the gospel of our Lord.

[ 8 : 1 0 ] In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen. Thank you.