

Don't Waste Your Life

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One Sabbath, when He went to eat at the house of one of the leading Pharisees, they were watching Him closely. 2 There in front of Him was a man whose body was swollen with fluid. 3 In response, Jesus asked the law experts and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" 4 But they kept silent. He took the man, healed him, and sent him away. 5 And to them, He said, "Which of you whose son or ox falls into a well, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" 6 To this they could find no answer.

Teachings on Humility

7 He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noticed how they would choose the best places for themselves: 8 "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, don't recline at the best place, because a more distinguished person than you may have been invited by your host. 9 The one who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give your place to this man,' and then in humiliation, you will proceed to take the lowest place.

10 "But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' You will then be honored in the presence of all the other guests.

11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

12 He also said to the one who had invited Him, "When you give a lunch or a dinner, don't invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives, or your rich neighbors, because they might invite you back, and you would be repaid. 13 On the contrary, when you host a banquet, invite those who are poor, maimed, lame, or blind. 14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The Parable of the Large Banquet

15 When one of those who reclined at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "The one who will eat bread in the kingdom of God is blessed!"

16 Then He told him: "A man was giving a large banquet and invited many. 17 At the time of the banquet, he sent his slave to tell those who were invited, 'Come, because everything is now ready.' 18 "But without exception they all began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. I ask you to excuse me.'

19 "Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm going to try them out. I ask you to excuse me.' 20 "And another said, 'I just got married, and therefore I'm unable to come.'

21 "So the slave came back and reported these things to his master. Then in anger, the master of the house told his slave, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the city, and bring in here the poor, maimed, blind, and lame!'

22 "'Master,' the slave said, 'what you ordered has been done, and there's still room.' 23 "Then the master told the slave, 'Go out into the highways and lanes and make them come in, so that my house may be filled. 24 For I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will enjoy my banquet!'"

1. A Wake Up Call

- According to the World, assuming they believe heaven is (or might be) a real place, who qualifies to go to heaven? What type of lifestyle do you need to live in order to gain entrance into heaven?
- Vv.1-6 The Hypocrisy of Sabbath Laws. **Who** is above the law?
- Vv.7-11 A Lesson in Humility. How highly do you regard **yourself**?
- Vv.12-14 **Who** should we show love to? Where do you want your rewards? Earth or Heaven?
- Vv.15-24 **Who** will enter the kingdom of God?

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, drive out demons in Your name, and do many miracles in Your name? Then I will announce to them, ‘I never knew you! Depart from Me, you lawbreakers!’” Matt. 7:21-23

2. Distractions from Above

- What type of things were used as excuses for not coming to the feast?
- Is there anything inherently wrong with these things?
- Would you say these things could be called gifts from God?
- What is the danger of receiving gifts from God?
- Who ends up attending the feast? Invited or non-invited. Ones with gifts from God or ones that appear to be outcasts of society.

C.S. Lewis quotes:

-“There must be something good first before it can be spoiled.”

-“Understand that there is a reason why we say the devil is a fallen angel. It is a real recognition of the fact that evil is a parasite, not an original thing. The powers which enable evil to carry on are powers given it by goodness. All the things which enable a bad man to be effectively bad are in themselves good things – resolution, cleverness, good looks, existence itself.” *Mere Christianity*, p. 44, 45

3. Why God?

- Why would God give us the choice of using His gifts for good or for evil?

“all things have been created through Him and for Him.”
Col. 1:16b

“Remember that the Lord your God led you on the entire journey these 40 years in the wilderness, so that He might humble you and test you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep His commands.” Deut. 8:2

“Free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having.” C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 48

Jonathan Edwards said:

“God’s purpose for my life was that I have a passion for God’s glory and that I have a passion for my joy in that glory, and that these two are one passion.” From a sermon entitled *“The godly are designed for unknown and inconceivable happiness”*.

John Piper says:

“We waste our lives when we do not pray and think and dream and plan and work toward magnifying God in all spheres of life.”
Don’t Waste Your Life, p.32

Scripture passages from the Holman Christian Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

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