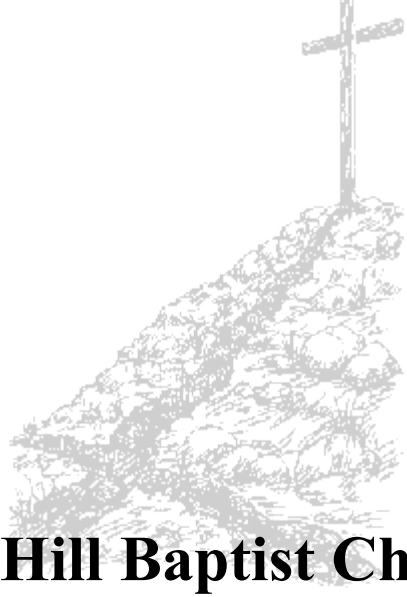


Compel Them To Come In

Missionary Commissioning Service

Luke 14:15-24



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FOCAL Read Responsively Luke 14:15-24^{KJV} And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. (16) Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: (17) And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. (18) **And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. (19) And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. (20) And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. (21) So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. (22) And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. (23) And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. (24) For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.**

Our Lord Jesus was sitting down and eating with several of His disciples one day - there were many who followed Him at this juncture of His ministry - when one of the unnamed disciples said to Jesus:

FOCAL Luke 14:15 .. **Blessed is he that shall**

eat bread in the kingdom of God.

That's a good statement. This disciple was eating with Jesus Christ, very God of very God, God manifest in the flesh. It was so good to be eating with the Master that he began to think, and as he thought he put his thoughts into words. If it is this blessed to eat with Jesus on earth, *how much better* to break bread with God in His Kingdom? Our Lord immediately seized on this statement and on His surroundings and began to tell a story with a very important point.

Before we look at that story - called a *parable* - I want to say that Jesus wasn't rebuking this man. What Jesus was telling this unnamed man was to *keep your eyes on what is most important!*

What's most important for the Christian? I get my news from the Internet, as I despise the television. Satan has seized television to promote his own evil ways, so I reject it totally. But I do read the news, and I get mine off of the Internet. I was recently disturbed to find out that Christians keep focusing their attention on things that *do not matter*. Some believers - many of them with well recognized names in the Christian community - have formed an **Evangelical Climate Initiative**¹. It seems that

¹ List of signatories found at <http://www.christiansandclimate.org/signatories>. Some of the names on this list are Rev. Dr. **Leith Anderson**, (Former President, National Association of Evangelicals (NAE); Senior Pastor, Wooddale Church, Eden Prairie, MN) Commissioner **W. Todd Bassett**, (National Commander, The Salvation Army; Alexandria, VA) Rev. **George K. Brushaber**, Ph.D., (President, Bethel University; Senior Advisor, Christianity Today; St. Paul, MN) Rev. **Timothy George**, Ph.D., (Founding Dean, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Executive Editor, Christianity Today; Birmingham, AL) Rev. **David Gushee**, (Professor of Moral Philosophy, Union University; columnist, Religion News Service;

these believers have joined forces with the scientists to combat what they call *global warming*. Another group, the **Interfaith Stewardship Alliance**² is also combating the dreaded *global warming*. Now let me add this. First of all, I deeply respect many of these men, and have studied publications or books that they have written. Secondly, I do believe that this present creation is *spinning down*, that things are degrading, that sin is taking it's toil on this earth. That's the nature of sin. The Apostle Paul, in looking at the decay of sin in creation (and, of course, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit) wrote:

Romans 8:18-22^{NIV} I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (19) The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. (20) For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope (21) that[9] the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. (22) We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the

Jackson, TN) **David Neff**, (Editor, Christianity Today; Carol Stream, IL) **C. Pat Taylor**, Ph.D., (President, Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, MO) Rev. Dr. **Rick Warren**, (Senior Pastor, Saddleback Church; author of The Purpose Driven Life; Lake Forest, CA) ; Rev. Dr. **Jack Hayford**, (President, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, Los Angeles, CA

² List of signatories found at <http://www.interfaithstewardship.org/pages/advisors.php>. Some of the names on this list are Dr. **Wayne Grudem**, (Research Professor of Bible and Theology, Phoenix Seminary, Arizona); Rev. Dr. **D. James Kennedy**, (Senior Minister, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida); Dr. **Marvin Olasky**, Editor In Chief, World magazine; Professor of Journalism, University of Texas, Austin .

NIV New International Version of the Scripture

present time.

The picture that God gives us of the creation is that when Adam fell, his fall brought *thorns and thistles* into creation itself. In time the Bible tells us that *everything* will be renewed. Peter, looking through the eyes of the Spirit, saw a day when:

2 Peter 3:10-12 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (11) Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

There is coming a day when God will burn up all of this earth, and everything on it. Even the atmosphere of this earth will be burned. Those who belong to Jesus need to

2 Peter 3:13 ... look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

It is so easy to get off track of the command. Jesus Christ never commanded us to band together *with science*, that religion that is as awful as the old Baal worship that used to inflict Israel. Certainly Christians should *feed the poor*, and *care for the widowed and the weak*. This we have command for. But we have no command to *preserve this world* though, I believe, as citizens of America we should be good stewards of what God has given us. But we must always remember to never sign Christ's Name to anything that He never endorsed!

What is our calling for God? We are to **recognize two charges**.

1. First of all, as *believers in Christ* we are to recognize that **every unbeliever is under a charge of guilt**. The God of Heaven has looked at every person who will ever live and **charged them as guilty of sin, unredeemable by their own hand**. This charge by Eternal God can only be erased when that unbeliever turns from unbelief and toward faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Second of all, as *believers in Christ* we are **under a charge ourselves, a command to go out and tell others about Jesus Christ and what He has done for all**. We have a Great Commission, and it says "**Go ye, and Teach what Jesus Christ taught, and baptize in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20)**". We dare not do anything else but what He has commanded.

1. There is A Charge Of Guilt Against Every Unbeliever Brought By Almighty God

FOCAL Luke 14:16-17 ... A certain man made a great supper, and **bade many**: (17) And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, **Come; for all things are now ready.**

When someone is guilty of doing wrong, a **charge** is made against them. There is a **charge** leveled against the unbeliever by our Lord Jesus in this parable. The central character of this parable symbolizes God Himself. God prepared a great feast, then told His servants to **go out and invite the people** to this feast. What did the people have to do? The Lord said they were to..

FOCAL Luke 14:17 .. **Come; for all things are now ready.**

Look at the wording in this text. The unbeliever is told to **Come**, to accept the invitation. What must the unbeliever do? Merely come! **All things are ready**, there is nothing to do. The house is ready, the table ready, the food is ready. Just come and receive. Yet, one by one, the people refused to come. They made excuses, and put other things before the Lord's invitation. One said:

FOCAL Luke 14:18 "... **I have bought a piece of ground**, and I must needs **go and see**³

3 G1492, εἶδω, eidō, i'-do, A primary verb; used only in certain past tenses, the others being borrowed from the equivalent, G3700 and G3708; properly to *see* (literally or figuratively); by implication (in the perfect only) to *know*: - be aware, behold, X can (+ not tell), consider, (have) known (-ledge), look (on), perceive, see, be sure, tell, understand, wist, wot. Compare G3700.

(consider what I should do with) it

"I am more focused on this earth, and the things of it. I have no time to go and fellowship with the Lord. I must go and see not the Lord, but my land." They were guilty of the sin of Lot who looked for Land but not the Lord. Unlike Abraham who followed the Lord in faith, they focused on the temporal above the eternal.

Following this we see another rejector of God's gracious invitation. This person says:

FOCAL Luke 14:19 "...I have bought **five yoke of oxen**, and I **go to prove**⁴ (to test drive) them ..."

"I am more focused on this earth and the things of it. I have no time to go and fellowship with the Lord. I must go and try these oxen out, but I will not try the Lord and see that He is faithful." This is a person whose relationship is with money, not with God. Oxen were used in the ancient world not for transportation, but for *plowing*. In modern terms we could say this man brought a fine tractor, and couldn't wait to try it out on his fields. Money and profit called, and he worshiped these rather than the gracious invitation of God.

And yet another person said:

FOCAL Luke 14:20 " ... I have **married a wife**,

4 Aorist Active Infinitive of G1381, δοκιμάζω, dokimazō, dok-im-ad'-zo, From G1384; to *test* (literally or figuratively); by implication to *approve*: - allow, discern, examine, X like, (ap-) prove, try.

and therefore I cannot come. ..."

"I am more focused on my relationship with my wife, husband, or children than on my relationship with the Lord. I must go to my spouse, but I cannot go to the Lord. " Jesus warns those who are following after Him that:

Luke 14:26-27 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. {27} And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

and in another place Jesus said to a man who put other things before following Jesus:

Luke 9:62 ... No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

The Way of God has always been to **Come to Me**, to follow Him wholeheartedly, believing that what He has said is true. **Saving faith demands a coming and a resting. Saving faith demands that you accept God's invitation when it is given.** The Bible talks about those who reject God's invitation to salvation. "**{Jesus} came unto his own, and his own received him not**" (**John 1:11**). Invited to the feast of God, most of Israel rejected the Master. Like much of America today Israel was busy

being religious, being prosperous, being industrious, and being married. Our Lord Jesus Christ cried over Jerusalem when He said:

Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

You can almost take our Lord's words and substitute **America** in the place of Jerusalem. How God must cry over America, just as He cried over Jerusalem!

And yet, God wants His house to be filled. God wills that His house be filled, so we read:

FOCAL Luke 14:21 ... the **master of the house being angry⁵ said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.**

There is a warning in this text that **must not be ignored.** If any reject the call to salvation, to the Great Feast of God, then God *may stop calling you, and He may call another.* If God touches your heart today do not delay,

⁵ Aorist Passive Participle G3710, ὀργιζῶ, orgizō, or-gid'-zo, From G3709; to *provoke* or *enrage*, that is, (passively) *become exasperated*: - be angry (wroth).

but answer that call. When the invitation was rejected we read that **the Master of the House was enraged**. What an awful thing for God to be enraged! God is angry at those who reject His call to salvation. The Apostle wrote:

2 Corinthians 5:11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men ...

and also,

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Illustration There should be terror in your hearts if you reject God's invitation! Remember the **children of Israel who were invited into the Promised Land**. They refused to God where God called, and as a result the invitation was withdrawn. Israel refused the feast, so God refused them. The children of Israel decided then (**Numbers 14:40**) that they would go into the land, but the invitation was withdrawn. When they tried to force their way into the land they were terribly defeated. There are no gate crashers in God's Kingdom. You come when He says, or you come not at all!

And who can forget **Noah and the ark of God**? All were invited to the salvation of the ark, but only Noah and his family accepted the invitation. As a result the doors of the ark were closed, and all life on earth died (**Genesis 7:21**). God's invitation to salvation must be accepted when it is given, or else that invitation may be

withdrawn. The only way that anyone gets into the Kingdom of God is by accepting the King's gracious invitation. I tell you this, you shall not be a *gate crusher* in Heaven. None shall sit at God's great feast unless they accept His invitation.

God invites right now, even today - but the invitation is **now**.

2 Corinthians 6:2^{HCSB} ... now is the acceptable time; look, now is the day of salvation.

The Lord has provided the **feast in it's entirety**. Those invited to the feast need only come. Jesus Christ has died for all. The Bible clearly states that salvation is by *faith in the finished work of Christ*. We who are saved are saved *because we have accepted His invitation*. We of the household of faith uphold the Scripture:

John 3:15-18 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him **might be saved.** (18) **He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed** in the name of the only

begotten Son of God.

God has reckoned that all are sold under sin, that all are *unworthy* to enter His Kingdom. There is no work that man need bring to God to secure his salvation.

Acknowledge your inability, your unworthiness, and accept what God has done for you. Turn from the idols you may have followed and worshiped and *turn to Christ*. God says:

Ezekiel 33:11 ... As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

It is God's Will that you all be saved. He cries out:

Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

The great preacher **C.H. Spurgeon** said⁶:

"Permit me to tell you what the King has done for you. He knew your guilt, he foresaw that you would ruin yourself. He knew that his justice would

demand your blood, and in order that this difficulty might be escaped, that his justice might have its full due, and that you might yet be saved, Jesus Christ hath died. Will you just for a moment glance at this picture. You see that man there on his knees in the garden of Gethsemane, sweating drops of blood. You see this next: you see that miserable sufferer tied to a pillar and lashed with terrible scourges, till the shoulder bones are seen like white islands in the midst of a sea of blood. Again you see this third picture; it is the same man hanging on the cross with hands extended, and with feet nailed fast, dying, groaning, bleeding; methought the picture spoke and said, "It is finished." Now all this hath Jesus Christ of Nazareth done, in order that God might consistently with his justice pardon sin; and the message to you this morning is this — "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." That is trust him, renounce thy works, and thy ways, and set thine heart alone on this man, who gave himself for sinners."

You have been invited, the King has made payment. There is nothing to do but to accept that invitation, and come in. If you do not, you will stand charged before the Courts of God, for it is YOU who rejected His invitation.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as Savior, do not fail to accept Him now, even this moment. I compel you, come in!

2. There Is A Charge Given To Every Believer

⁶ **Compel Them To Come In**, number 227, December 5, 1858, at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens

If you have believed in Jesus Christ, then you are also under a "**charge**", a **specific assignment**. God wants His house to be filled, so He tells each and every one of us to:

FOCAL Luke 14:21 ... **Go out quickly** into the streets and lanes of the city, and **bring in hither the poor**, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

Here is where Christians today generally get confused. The Church is not designed to be a *money lending institution*, nor is it designed to be a *hospital* nor a *welfare station*. Certainly we should help those who are destitute, sick, and homeless. However, this is not the Church's primary calling. Our primary calling is to remember that Jesus Christ:

Luke 19:10 ... {came} **to seek and to save that which was lost.**

We are told to go out and tell others about Jesus. We are not told to go out and seek the *very best of this world*. The very best, the rich, for the most part reject Jesus Christ as Savior. In fact, most of those who are privileged in our society - if they accept Christ - they do not accept the Christ of the Bible. They accept a rich man's Christ, a reformer's Christ. Jesus Christ Himself was poor while He walked on this earth. He left the splendor of Heaven to be born in a feed trough. Jesus said of Himself "**foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay**

his head" (Luke 9:58). So many Christians today believe that the Church exists to stamp out poverty, but Jesus did not come to humanity for this reason! Our Lord reminds us, "**for ye have the poor always with you**" (Matthew 26:11). We are not called to make people **unpoor**, we are called to invite **the poor to the foot of the Cross**.

FOCAL Luke 14:21 ... **Go out quickly** into the streets and lanes of the city, and **bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.**

Under the Old Testament Law of God no priest could serve God if he had a physical infirmity. God told Israel:

Leviticus 21:17-21 ... **Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.** {18} For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous, {19} Or a man that is broken-footed, or broken-handed, {20} Or crookbacked, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken; {21} **No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.**

Yet Christ has bore the burden of our sins on the Cross. For this reason today our God seeks out the **maimed, the halt, and the blind**. The Law was given to convict man of his weakness, of his inability to reach God in his own power. Under Grace God has reached out to all. The Bible says that we who sit in fellowship with God by faith in Christ are not the best of this world, but we are *the least*, praise be unto His Holy Name! The Bible says:

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: {27} But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; {28} And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: {29} That no flesh should glory in his presence.

We are ambassadors of God. Though we commission one person, Jerome Azbell, to go on mission for the Lord, we are all commanded to

FOCAL Luke 14:23 .. **Go out** into the highways and hedges, and **compel** them to come in, **that my house may be filled.**

The business of the Church is the preaching of the Gospel, telling others that Jesus died for them just as He died for us. The business of the Church is to **go quickly**. Do not dawdle, for people are dying and going to hell every second of every day. The business of the Church is to **go out into the highways and the hedges**. We are not to go to the mansions nor palaces, but to those who are broken and ready to hear the message of salvation. The business of the Church is to **compel them to come in**, to come in to a saving relationship with God by faith in Jesus Christ. We are sending Jerome to Boston, Massachusetts to do this for us. But our sending of Jerome does not negate our need to tell others about Jesus. Jerome is one servant going to one place. If you belong to Jesus, remember that Jesus orders you to **go quickly, go out, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled**.

May God the Holy Spirit empower this Word in your hearts this very day. Amen!