

GRACEPOINT CHURCH

Weekly Devotional

Once Upon a Kingdom: The Stories Jesus Told Lent 5

How will you RSVP? – Ian France – 22.3.2026

Scripture

Luke 14:15-24

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

Observation

Jesus was attending a dinner given by one of the rulers of the Pharisees when He warned them of the danger of tradition, pride and elitism. One of the men there said how blessed those would be who shared the feast in the kingdom of God, and Jesus told this story of another banquet when a man prepared a feast and invited many people to attend. He had sent out advanced notice and many had accepted the invitation. But, as was the custom, when he sent messengers to tell the guests the banquet was about to start, they all gave one excuse after another. Some dealt with material things – the purchase of land and animals; another was given by a man who put his family first. These excuses just veiled the fact that the guests did not want to go to the banquet. The servant returned to the host and told his master what had happened. The master was offended and angry at this response to such a wonderful invitation. Such behaviour was considered to be a great insult at that time. He gave further instructions to the servant telling him to go and ask the poor, the lame and the blind people he found and invite them to the banquet. The feast would go ahead whoever came. He requested the servant to make every effort to persuade these people to come and enjoy the feast. He knew they would need to be convinced that they were welcomed and loved, in spite of their circumstances. Jesus used the parable to ask those who dined with Him if they were ready to receive the invitation to the Messianic Banquet, and sit with all those who came, no matter who they were for they would soon include the Gentiles, although the diners would not be aware of that then.

Icebreaker:

What was the most impressive meal you have ever attended? Was it one you gave or one to which you were invited? What do you remember most about it?

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Application

- *If you want to know who God is; what it is to be human; and what love is: Look at Jesus.* How has learning about Jesus in the Gospels helped you to understand these aspects of your life as a human being?
- In the sermon, we were told of three ways to approach any Scripture. They were:
 - *What does this story teach us about God?*
 - *What does this story teach us about human beings?*
 - *What does this story teach us about the relationship between God and human beings?*
- *God relentlessly seeks out and saves the lost:* Are you aware that God seeks to use you to reach the lost? How does this happen in your life? Can you think of someone whom God has put in your life who needs to hear about Jesus? (You do not need to name them). What story can you tell them that will help them to see what Jesus means to you – and what He can mean to them?
- *Human beings are shaped by what they put in the centre of their lives:* What is the centre of your life? Where position does God hold? Is He central; pushed to one side; brought out when it is convenient or necessary; does not feature very much at all? How does what you feel is central shape who you are? How can you put God at the centre? What changes will you need to make?
- *The story reveals the relationship between God and human beings:*
 - *Are you an invited guest:* Are you eager to attend the banquet? Or what excuses do you make to avoid following Jesus and responding to His invitation to the banquet with a resounding yes? What do you feel when you think about missing out on Jesus' banquet? How can you respond yes to God's invitation?
 - *Or are you an outsider: in the streets and lanes of the city* whom the servant finds and includes you in the invitation? How do you feel to be included? Are you happy to accept or is there a reluctance? Why do you respond in this way?
- What does it mean to you to say yes today?
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

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Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

Service

This week, pray for God to lead you to someone who needs to hear that you have said yes to Jesus and what that means; ask God to help you to put him at the centre of your life; and to help you to say a whole-hearted yes to Him as He invites you to His banquet.

Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/luke-14/>



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