

Come, All Is Now Ready

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[0 : 0 0] Can maybe open your bios at the passage that we read in Luke 14 and this evening what I would like to do is just focus on the second part of the passage that we read when Jesus spoke about the passage that's commonly known as the Great Banquet. This time last year I was actually looking at my notes I was here a year ago today preaching with you in the morning and probably at that time I told you that we were in the throes of planning a wedding my oldest daughter or our oldest daughter Rebecca was getting married and they saved the date cards had gone out and about 10 months prior to that and when I was here in February the invitations for the wedding were going out we'd sent out save the date cards 10 months in advance so that people had time to prepare, book their hair appointments make sure they're a dress or a suit that would fit them or me a kilt that would fit me and I have to report that I didn't manage to get into my own kilt and had to resort to hiring one but we sent out the save the date card so that people were able to set the date in the diary and plan their travel arrangements to go out to Inverness or come to Inverness for the for the wedding and then the invitations went out we read here of a great banquet that was being prepared and notification had gone out for the banquet and we come into the story where the banquet is now ready and the servant has been sent out by the master of the house to come, come to the banquet, banquet was now prepared the guests should have been ready but the servant went out and when he told them come for everything is now ready we read that people weren't ready people made excuses they made various different excuses as to why they weren't going to be there we prayed earlier on we reminded we were reminded that Jesus has gone before us and he's gone to prepare we thinking of that each and every one of us and are we thinking of that this night your communions are here next week there'll be a table laid and you'll be asked to come come and make profession come and taste of the blood and the body that was broken in the wine and the bread you've maybe sat behind the table for years gone past but the call goes out to you again and you'll hear it repeatedly in the preparatory services from Friday through to Sunday to come come and make profession come and stand for Christ that invitation has been there since the beginning of time from one Adam and Eve fell in the garden we read in Genesis that God said I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring

and he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel God was going to send one that was going to be able to bruise the head of the serpent he promised even then and we read in Isaiah Isaiah 40 a voice cries in the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord make straight in the desert a highway for our God every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill made low the uneven ground shall become level and the rough places a plane and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all the flesh shall see it together for the mouth of the Lord has spoken and then again in verse 21 do you not know do you not hear has it not been told you from the beginning have you not understood from the foundations of the earth now while I know some of you here tonight I don't know the background of each and every one of you is here this evening you may have in the past attended Sunday school you may have been worshiping here Sunday after Sunday for many years you may just have come to the congregation but I am sure that whether it be Thomas or Phil or anyone else that stood here before me that you have heard the message of the gospel sent out to each and every one of you the message that a Savior came to die for your sins you may choose to ignore that message you may have your ears closed to it tonight your mind shut off thinking about other things but you cannot say you have not heard that you have not been told again we can read in verse 28 of

Isaiah 40 that message said again have you not known have you not heard the Lord is the everlasting God the Creator of the ends of the earth he does not faint or grow weary his understanding is unsearchable he gives power to the faint to him who has no might to increase his

strength even youth shall faint and be weary and young men shall fall exhausted are you tired and weary tonight are you exhausted as you run the race of life message for each and every one of us is come come to who come to Jesus even for the children he says in Matthew 11 let the children come to me for such is the kingdom of heaven and to each and every one of us he says come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light what burdens are each and every one of you carrying tonight what is it that's wearing you down are you taking it to God in prayer he says within his word to cast all our cares all our anxieties upon him why because he cares for us and some of you might be sitting here tonight thinking I'm here because I need to be here here I'm here because it's my routine to come but God has taken each and every one of you here tonight for a purpose not to hear me but to hear God's word are you listening are you hearing what God is saying to you to come the price has been paid for each and every one of you the banquet is ready are you going to come or are you going to make excuses we read in the passage of the very different excuses that were given and you might be sitting there tonight thinking I've heard this before it's not for me I've got this I've got that I don't need this the passage tells us but they all alike began to make excuses the first said to him I've bought a field and I must go out and see it please have me excused and another said I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to examine them please have me excused and another said I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come first was more concerned about their possessions the field he had bought without even seeing it how many of us pardon me how many of us want something to fill the gap in our lives and so often we don't even need it this was somebody who had bought a field just for the sake of buying a field I hadn't even seen it didn't know whether it was worth the price he had paid for it our lives can be caught up with amassing treasures here on earth not thinking about what God's word teaches us about making sure that our treasures are stored up in heaven second similarly had gone and bought a yoke of oxen and he had to now go and try them who when looking for a tool to carry out a particular job if they didn't have it in their toolbox wouldn't go to the shop and wait in their hand to find out whether it was going to do the job that they needed or as many of us do now go online and research it find out what score it gets on the different reports that have been given back in it third man not really sure what to say about the third man other than this he refused the opportunity not just for himself refused the opportunity for his wife wouldn't like to be the man that went home and said we were offered a free meal but I'm not taking you was he embarrassed about his wife did he not want his friends to meet her he used his wife as an excuse for not going there's a warning to us there though not only did he not go to the banquet and get the opportunity to experience the food the fine wine that would have been there his wife never got either how many of us in our lives because we make a decision not to come to Christ are denying that opportunity to somebody else in their household how many of us because we choose not to come and hear God's word when God's word is preached here or we leave somebody at home or somebody who wants to come doesn't get the opportunity to come because you're not here what message are we sending to members of our own household if we don't make our decision to come to Christ again going back to Genesis when Abraham was called by God in Genesis 12 we read that it said what God said to Abraham there and I will make you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing not only was Abraham going to get a blessing but he was going to get a blessing that was going to bless the nations to come come for everything is now ready come and sit at the table because the price has been paid for you are you going to come and receive the blessing that is open to you there has been offered to you time and time in Acts 16 you're going to stay back and deny it in Acts 16 we read of Paul's journey and how when he met Lydia and it says one who heard as was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira a seller of purple goods who was a worshiper of God and where did he meet Lydia he met Lydia at the place of prayer there wasn't a synagogue in Thyatira because there wasn't enough men to form a congregation but the women got together to pray and Lydia was there Paul and Silas knew that there would be a gathering and while they were there the Lord opened Lydia's heart and she was able to understand and able to accept the message and caught accept to Jesus as a Lord and Savior what we read in verse 15 said and after she was baptized and her household as well Lydia came and professed faith and the blessing was that her family came with her and again further on in the same chapter the

[14 : 35] Philippian jailer as we know him after his old world had been turned upside down the very foundations of the prison were shaken the Philippian jailer was going to fall on his own sword but he then came and cried out what must I do to be saved and that might be the call of each and every one of you here tonight if you don't already know Christ as your Savior what must I do well the simple answer that Paul gave is the same answer today believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and in believing the Philippian jailer brought them as Paul and Silas into his own house and he set food before them and he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God the third man made an excuse not to take his wife please don't stop coming to Christ and stop the blessing coming to your family again as you hear the invitation are you still blocking your ears are you saying this is not for me you are taking each one of you here as I said earlier on for the purpose to hear that everything is now ready please don't make an excuse please come because those that didn't come as we read later on in the chapter they were never invited again so in verse 21 it says so the servant came and reported these things to the master that is those that had made excuses and the master of the house became angry and said to a servant go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and the crippled and the blind and the lame the banquet was ready the places had been set the master of the house wasn't going to start the banquet until every seat was taken and he sent the servant out that second time and it wasn't just to go to the group that he had invited himself the first time it was to go further afield and to go out into the streets in the lanes of the city and ask the people to come in those that wouldn't normally have been invited the poor the crippled the blind and the lame it was a place for every one of them at the table and the servant went out that second time and then verse 22 the servant came back and the servant said sir what you have commanded has been done but he didn't stop there the servant knew the heart of the master and the servant said and still there is room have you got a servant's heart in knowing the heart of the master that there is room for many more are you about the master's business and going out with the word recognizing that there is still room and there are still more to hear that can come in and fill the banquet wouldn't be great to come here and see this place full there are still empty seats downstairs there are still empty seats upstairs there is still room are we going out recognizing what the master's will is that the place would be filled sir what you have commanded has been done and still there is room you're a Christian here tonight you've all been given a commission to go into all the world and to make disciples are we able to say with hand on heart and I say this to myself as well sir what you have commanded has been done have we gone out there's a third time the master sent the servant out when he told him there was still room he sent him out to the highways to the hedges outside their comfort zone places that they wouldn't normally have gone to reach others to ask them to come in are we prepared to step outside the comfort zone that we have to reach others for Christ do we recognize that in God being sovereign in everything that where we have our house where we work God has placed us there for a purpose and if you're a Christian here tonight that purpose may be to speak to the very person that stays next door to you if you're at your place of work how often do the opportunities come for you to witness to those round about you as a denomination we have a desire to see a healthy gospel church in every community in Scotland wonder that one of the things that underpins that is that we raise the evangelistic temperature within our congregations I was to ask you tonight what is your evangelistic temperature what is your desire to see your neighbor saved for Christ would you be able to say what you've commanded has been done or are you recognizing that there is still room there is still work to be done that God can still use me in the place that he has placed me are you prepared to step out and go outside your comfort zone for Christ it's not easy it's not always rewarding it can be really challenging it can be personally hurtful when somebody rejects the message that you bring to them but what you have to remember is that it's not you that's being rejected it's a message of salvation and when the servant came and he said to the master there is still room and the servants sent them out sorry the master sent them out to go to the hedges and to the highways what did he say compel them compel them to come in that wasn't just a case of going out and saying there's a banquet would you like to come along it's a case of saying there's a seat at the table for you please come and persuade them to come it wasn't a case of grabbing them and dragging them kicking and screaming it was compel them to come in and there is a message that each and every one of us have as Christians it's a message of hope to those that are hopeless there's a message of comfort to those who need comfort it's a message that's been given to us to share to bring others to Christ again I ask you you prepare to step outside your comfort zone and compel them to come in

we sent out save the date cards we sent out wedding invitations as I said earlier on we gave people plenty of notice for the wedding or when the invitations went out there was one or two that said they weren't coming and gave various different excuses like the master of the banquet here he wanted every seat filled being a Scotsman I was paying a fixed price for the wedding venue and I wanted to make sure that every seat was filled around the table so there was other people invited to fill the seats at the wedding those wives came without their husbands those children came without their parents they never got the opportunity to sit at the table to test the food they didn't hear the speeches that were said they didn't share in any part of the celebration so one-off event they may get to look at the photographs they may get to hear from others that were there about how much they enjoyed the day what the bride looked like but they never got to taste of it Jesus is coming back this is what this banquet is all about the Jesus is going to return and there'll be a place at the table for all those that have answered the call to come on to me oh ye that are weak and heavy laden but nobody will come back and tell you how good the banquet was the doors will be closed and only those who have called and acknowledged Christ as their Savior will go in as we said earlier on Jesus has promised that he has gone before us to prepare a place for us are you going to take the place that has been prepared for you or are you going to walk away this night and reject the call to come for everything is ready there's nothing that you need to do we read before of the banquet that was called and who you invited because you thought you were going to be repaid most of you I'm sure where you're invited to somebody's house will make sure before you go there you've got something to bring to the host because you feel obliged to do something the price has been paid everything is ready the only thing you need to do is believe and my prayer for you in the prayer of I'm sure each and every one of the members in this congregation is that if you do not know

Christ as your Savior if you haven't already come to him that tonight before you even go out the doors of the church that you would come and recognize that everything is now ready the place is set for you don't walk away from it come come to the one who will never leave you no forsake you let us pray