

Sunday Night Meditations 13 Message and Song - 1950's

by Welcome Detweiler

The sermon emphasizes the importance of accepting the gospel invitation and not making excuses, highlighting the Lord Jesus Christ as the way of life and the consequences of rejecting Him.

Duration: 30:46

Scripture: John 14:6

Topics: "Gospel Invitation", "Salvation Through Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of accepting the invitation to the feast presented in the gospel. He compares the gospel to a royal feast, with invitations going out to all corners of the earth. The preacher highlights that the way that seems right to man often leads to death, but Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one can come to the Father except through Him. The sermon also mentions the excuses people make for not accepting the invitation, using the parable of the great supper in Luke 14 as an example.

Transcript

Greetings to our radio friends. This is a gospel program in which we seek to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. Mrs. Greenhill is opening the program by singing, The Wonder of It All.

This is welcome Deathweiler speaking. The heathen who hear the gospel from the lips of a foreign missionary have many questions to ask. They soon learn that in the country from which the missionary comes, the Bible is very common, and that everyone has heard of Jesus and his love for sinners.

Then, when the missionary tells him that although the Bible is common, yet only a very few are born again, and that many go on in uncertainty day after day, as lost as if they were heathen. But the heathen replies, why do they not all trust Christ as their Savior? The missionary blushes and answers, well, they all seem to have excuses. In Luke chapter 14, where the Lord Jesus tells the parable of the great supper, we read, and they all with one consent began to make excuses.

The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must need to go and see it. I pray thee, have me excused. Another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them.

I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. No sooner does one begin to preach the gospel, than men and women begin to make excuses.

If I were to come to you, each one of you, and ask you, those of you especially who have not trusted the Savior, why will you not accept God's invitation to the gospel feast? You would probably have an excuse ready to offer. Do you know the origin of excuses? You will find it back in the Garden of Eden, when Adam had sinned. He tried to excuse himself by saying, The woman whom thou gavest me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

He tried to lay all the blame on God. Eve tried to lay it on the serpent. And down to the present time, men and women with one consent begin to make excuses.

Remember that these men in the parable in Luke were not invited to a funeral, or to hear some dry stupid lecture, or a sermon. They were not invited to visit a hospital, or a prison, or a madhouse, to witness some terrible scene of execution. No, it was to go to a feast.

The gospel is presented in the Bible as a feast. At the close of this dispensation, there is going to be the marriage supper of the Lamb, and all true believers will be present at that feast. In our parable, not only was it a feast, but it was a royal feast.

Here is an invitation from the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, God's only Son. The invitations are going out to every corner of the earth. All are invited.

For nearly two thousand years, God's messengers have been crossing over valleys and mountains, over desert and sea, inviting men and women to the gospel feast. When a man prepares a feast, there is a rush to see who will get the best place. But when God prepares his feast, all the chairs would be empty if his servants did not go out and compel them to come in.

Then too, when man prepares a feast, he invites his friends, those who love him. But God invites his bitterest enemies, those who are in rebellion against him. No sooner is the invitation given by God, but the excuses come in, and everyone seems to be different.

Did you ever stop to think what would take place if God would take at his word everyone who makes excuses? If God would listen to those excuses and say, yes, if you don't want to come, you are excused, and immediately banish them from his presence. It pays to be honest with God. God is honest.

He means what he says. If you do not want to be at his supper, why not say so? Why make excuses? If you can give a reasonable excuse, tell God what it is. Tell him why you do not want to accept his invitation.

Tell him that you want to be excused. But think for a moment what you are asking to be excused from. From heaven, from the society of the angels, from those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

You are asking to be excused from the mansions which Christ has prepared, from God the Father, from Christ the Son, and from the Holy Spirit. Let us think for a moment of the three men who made excuses. The first one said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it.

If he had been a good businessman, he would have seen the ground before he bought it. He couldn't make the bargain any better by going to look at it. On the face of it, it was a downright lie.

He did not want to go to the feast, and so he manufactured this excuse to ease his conscience. And that is the reason, probably, for all excuses. The second man said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them.

I pray thee have me excused. Why did he not prove them before he bought them? And now that the bargain was closed, he could prove them any time. Could he not left them in the stall till he had accepted the invitation? Don't you see that it was just another lie? He did not want to go to the feast.

The third man's excuse was the most ridiculous of them all. I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. Why did he not take his wife along? Who likes to go to a feast better than a young bride? The real fact was he did not want to go.

But many years have rolled by, and they tell us that this world grows wiser. They say that it has improved during these years. But tell me, do men have any better excuses? Have you any excuse that will stand the test of eternity? Have you an excuse that will even satisfy yourself? Let me mention some of the most popular modern excuses of the present day.

Here is one. I don't like the minister or that preacher. You are trying to excuse yourself because you do not like the messenger.

But forget the messenger. What about the message? What about the invitation? If you are going to wait until you find some perfect man or woman to bring you the invitation, you will never come. You may find many flaws in those who bring the message to you, but you can never find a flaw in the Savior who bids you to the feast.

Another excuse. Some say, I would have to give up all my good times and be gloomy the rest of my life. This is the devil's lie, for there is a sense in which only Christians are happy.

Religion may give you a long, sanctimonious face, but when you are really saved, the joy of the Lord becomes your portion. Another excuse sometimes heard. I guess I'm too bad to be saved.

Of course it's not true, for the Lord Jesus said, Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. And so I could go on with many other popular excuses, but let's face facts. Your excuse, whatever it may be, is just a polite way of telling God you don't want to be saved.

Sometimes we hear the expression, you can have anything you want if you want it bad enough. I don't know whether or not that is true, but I do know this. You can have God's salvation this very day if you want it bad enough.

The Lord Jesus loved you. He died for you on Calvary's cross. He wants to save you and to give you eternal life, and He wants to do it right now.

He is inviting you to come to Him. Just as you are with all your sins, He is asking you to accept the invitation to come and be blessed at the gospel feast. What are you going to do about this invitation? Are you going to turn it down, or are you going to receive it? It would be better for you if tonight you would face this invitation and say, Lord Jesus, as best I know how, I will accept thee as my Lord and Savior.

I want to thank thee for dying for my sins, and I will completely put my confidence, my trust, in the work that you did on Calvary's cross. And thus I will claim the promises of thy word, him that cometh unto me I

will in no wise cast out. May God bless you and help you to brush aside all excuses that you've used these many days, and that you may come clear with God, trust His Son as Savior, and receive eternal life.

Our gracious Father, we ask now thy blessing to rest upon thy precious word, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Fearful Greetings to our radio friends.

This is a gospel program in which we bring you the truth of God's word to strengthen you in these difficult days. The program opens today by the Gospel Center Choir singing, When I See the Blood I Will Pass Over You. And then you shall hear a message from God's precious word by C. Stacey Woods, who is the International Secretary of the InterVarsity Fellowship.

This evening I should like to read three verses from three different portions of God's word. The first from the book of Proverbs. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

The second from the prophecy of Isaiah. We have turned every one to his own way. And the third, the words of our Lord from John chapter 14 verse 6. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. Life sometimes has been compared to a journey which commences at birth, which ends at death. Life also has been compared to a preparation for that fuller and more meaningful enduring life which is to come.

If you and I were to take a journey, we would make preparation. I wonder what preparation we have for this journey of life. I expect you may have heard the story of the king and his fool, the jester.

That was the day before radio or television entertainment, and he employed this man to while away the weary hours of the day. After a number of years of service, this jester determined to leave his master and seek other employment. As a farewell gift, the king gave this jester a richly ornamented scarf, saying to him, Here, keep this until you find a bigger fool than yourself.

And so the jester left the king. Some years afterward, the king fell ill, and the jester returned to visit his old master. The king knew that this was a sickness unto death that he would not recover.

And speaking of this, he said to the fool, I'm going on a long journey. When will you return, said the jester? In a week? No. In a month? No.

In a year? No. Well, when then? Never. The next question, what preparation have you made for this journey? The king paused for a moment and said, I haven't made any preparation at all.

The jester replied, if that's the case, take back the scarf you gave me. You told me to keep this till I met a greater fool than myself, and I've met one today. I may be only a poor king's jester, but I would never take a journey from which man never returns without any preparation whatsoever.

You and I are in the midst of that journey, from birth to the grave and into the beyond. Are you prepared? Are you prepared for the journey of life with its temptations and trials and problems and testings? Are you prepared for that life beyond death from which man never returns? Think of our verse, there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. This describes so many people today.

They choose their own way. They're described in those pathetic words of the prophet Isaiah, we have turned everyone to his own way, in contrast to the way of God, which is the way of life, the way of forgiveness, the way of peace, the way of salvation. I used to live in Australia, and there we have a class of individual known as the sundowner.

They are sort of hobos, but not like the ordinary hobo you may meet around this country. Very often a sundowner is a well-educated man. I've met such a one who's been graduated from a university such as Oxford or Cambridge University in England.

They're often men with high professional training and good skills, doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers. They used to live in England, often were married and had a happy home and family for a time, but something goes wrong. The way of life they have chosen ends in failure, and they're afraid to face life at home.

So they take ship to Australia, about as far away to the end of the earth as they could go anywhere, and when they arrive they buy themselves some tobacco and flour and sugar and tea and a couple of blankets, and they pile this as a great bundle on their back, and they spend the rest of their life wandering, wandering aimlessly from one farm to another farm, from one cattle or sheep station, we say, or as you would say, ranch to another cattle ranch. Usually they find a bed for the night, they may do a bit of weeding in the kitchen garden the next morning, and then with their bundle on their back they start to wander afresh. It isn't that they cannot work, it isn't that they're not trained for a good position, but they've lost ambition, they've lost a sense of direction, they've chosen their own way, and that way ends in death.

Often times in a country newspaper you'll read of a policeman finding a sundowner dead in a bark humpy or shanty. You see, the bark of our trees in Australia peels off, the trees shed their bark rather than their leaves, and so such a sundowner, when he's feeling tired and weak and ill, he'll drag himself off to the side of the road and pull off some of that loosely hanging bark and lean it against a bush or a tree and crawl in there at the end of his life, and he'll sleep himself away into death. What a sad, sad picture.

A picture of a man who was well prepared for this life, but he'd chosen the wrong way, and that way ended in death. Let me ask you a question. Is your way of life God's way, or have you turned to your own way? A second question.

Does your way end in life, or does it end in death? There is a beautiful parable to the story of the wise men who came to see the babe, the Lord Jesus Christ. You know, they came from the far east bearing gifts, and they were warned in a dream that having seen the Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, they should return home another way, and so Herod did not find decisive news concerning the babe, the Lord Jesus Christ. But the parable of the story was this.

They'd come to Bethlehem. They'd met the babe, Christ Jesus, and they returned home another way. Having met the Lord, life for them had to be different.

Having met the Lord, life for them was a new way, another way, and that is a sort of thing described in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am the way. I am the truth.

I am the life. Elsewhere we read of a new and living way, which he hath opened up to us, to the very presence of God, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The Lord Jesus is not just a way-shower.

He is the way. By his death for us at Calvary, whereby he shed his precious blood, that our sins might be cleansed, that we might be forgiven, he, the Lord Jesus himself, becomes the way to God, the way of acceptance, the way of forgiveness, the way of salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ himself is the way of life.

Is he your way of life? Have you met him? Are you journeying with him? Not only is the Lord Jesus Christ the way of life to God, but he is the way of life so far as life on earth is concerned. He is the one who knows all about us, our weakness, our difficulty, our possibilities. He knows all about our makeup, our physique, our mentality.

He knows us better than we know ourselves, and he wants to come into these hearts and lives of ours and make all things new. He wants to come into these hearts and lives of ours and take up residence there, make his home there, and become life itself for you and me. Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ in that way? And then when you and I come to die, he's with us when we come to die.

He's not only the way of life, but he's the way through death into life everlasting. He said to John of old, Fear not, I am the first and the last. I am the living one.

I am he that liveth and was dead, and I am alive forevermore. The Lord Jesus is with his people in life. He is the way of life for them.

He's with his people in death. He never leaves them when they come to die, and he is with them in that great beyond, to be with them in the Father's home, in the Father's house in heaven. Think of the contrast then between the way which seems right unto a man, a way which ends in death.

Think of the tragedy of men and women who have heard the way of the gospel, who know the way of the Lord Jesus, but have turned everyone to their own way. And men and women, as you listen to me, your way is not the way of life. Your way, unless it is Christ, the living way, becomes the way of destruction, the way of eternal doom.

The Lord Jesus said, I am the way. I am the life. I am truth.

No man comes to the Father, but by me. Think of those verses again. The way which seems right unto a man, but ends in death.

The tragedy of the one who hears of the way, who hears of the Lord Jesus and turns to his own way, but oh, the joy and peace in believing, in meeting the Lord Jesus, and having him indeed become that way of life, by way of the cross. Give yourself to him tonight. Put your trust in him, and you'll be able to say, yes, the Lord Jesus is my salvation.

He's my forgiveness. He's the way of life for me.

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