* **Q & R**
* **Series Slide**
* I’m going to ask you to do an experiment with me this morning…
* …if you are willing and able.
* Take out your phones if you have them.
* Now, unlock them and open up your text messages…you know the page that shows all of your latest intimate communication.
* Ok, now, just for the next minute…hand it to a person near you…that you aren’t married to. Heck some of you it might be more frightening to hand it to your spouse…I hope not.
* Now remember the Golden Rule…do unto others what you would have them do unto you.
* I want you to just feel this for a minute. Feel exposed? Vulnerable?
* Sit in it. Anybody want to take a look at those texts? Anybody got a good one you want me to read aloud?

I can FEEL the blood rushing to your head right now. From all the way up here.

Ok. You can get your phone back.

Now, how did that feel?

For some of you, probably very vulnerable. You were sitting there thinking “I hope I can trust this person!”

Meanwhile, *they* are reading *your* texts thinking “I THOUGHT I COULD TRUST YOU! How could you say that about me?”

“I can’t believe you use that kind of language! You text your mother with those thumbs!?!?!??”

“Who is Keke? And why you asking if she loves you?”

Its vulnerable isn’t it. And even if you don’t have a dirty secret in there you’re covering up…you can easily be taken advantage of.

That person with your phone could have immediately texted someone you know, “You’re dead to me!” or “I’ve been watching you!” with heart eyes emoji.

This experiment was not original to me. Abraham Lincoln first used it back when he invented the internet after landing on Plymouth Rock.

No. Actually, this was what Joe Gebbia, the co-founder of AirBnB did to describe to an audience what it feels like to open up your home to strangers.

In case you're still paying for overpriced hotel rooms when you travel…you need to find AirBnB.

It's a website that allows people looking for a place to stay during their travels to find a home-owner whose looking to open up a bedroom or garage apartment or guest house for that stranger to stay.

In a TEDtalk, Joe explained how the whole thing started.

He was a starving artist having yard sale, and a guy pulls up on the street corner and buys a piece of his art.

So Joe takes the guy out for a drink. And at the end of the evening, he asks the guy, “So, where you staying tonight?”. He was just trying be nice and end the conversation so he could go home and go to bed.

But the guy says, “Actually, I don’t have a place.”

All of sudden Joe is in a pickle. What’s he supposed to say?, “Welp. I hope you find a bed to sleep in.”

So he invites this stranger to spend the night on his couch.

This is the way he explains going to bed that night.

* **“That night, I'm laying in bed, I'm staring at the ceiling and thinking, ‘Oh my gosh, what have I done? There's a complete stranger sleeping in my living room. What if he's psychotic?’ My anxiety grows so much, I leap out of bed, I sneak on my tiptoes to the door, and I lock the bedroom door.”**
* Its like the way you wanted to quickly delete a couple of texts before you handed your phone over.
* Joe goes on to say-
* **This was my first hosting experience, and it completely changed my perspective. Maybe the people that my childhood taught me to label as strangers were actually friends waiting to be discovered. The idea of hosting people on airbeds gradually became natural to me and when I moved to San Francisco, I brought the airbed with me.”- Joe Gebbia, co-founder AirBnB**
* Two years later, Joe is broke & unemployed and he hears about this designers’ conference in town…and all the hotels are booked up. So he calls up his best friend Brian and says, “I have an idea to make a few bucks.”
* **We built a basic website and Airbed and Breakfast was born. Three lucky guests got to stay on a 20-dollar airbed on the hardwood floor. But they loved it, and so did we. I swear, the ham and Swiss cheese omelets we made tasted totally different because we made them for our guests. We took them on adventures around the city, and when we said goodbye to the last guest, the door latch clicked, Brian and I just stared at each other. Did we just discover it was possible to make friends while also making rent?”- Joe Gebbia, co-founder AirBnB**
* So, here’s the question. In an individualized world of self-protection…where we keep to ourselves and *fear* our neighbors more than we *talk to* our neighbors…How in the world has a AirBnB turned letting strangers stay in your home into a successful business model?
* The answer? They’re banking on people’s trust.
* **We bet our whole company on the hope that, with the right design, people would be willing to overcome the stranger-danger bias. What we didn't realize is just how many people were ready and waiting to put the bias aside.**
* **Thankfully, out of the 123 million nights we've ever hosted, less than a fraction of a percent have been problematic. Turns out, people are justified in their trust. And when trust works out right, it can be absolutely magical.**
* We’ve been talking about hospitality for the last few weeks.
* And many of you may be think loving strangers sounds anything but magical. In fact, you are probably afraid for 2 very understandable reasons.
* **Title Slide- “Magical Trust: How to Enjoy the Vulnerability of Hospitality”- Luke 14:7-24**
* First, you think that inviting strangers into your life and your home is going to expose you. Those people are going to see your flaws and judge you. They are going to see that you don’t clean your bathroom well, or you can’t cook well...
* …or maybe worse. They are going to see that you aren’t a very good parent. Or that you don’t have much order in your life. Or they are going to ask you a question about God or the Bible that you won’t know the answer to.
* Whatever it is. You are afraid that you are going to be exposed. You’re going to feel like you did when you passed all of your private conversations to a person you barely know.
* The other thing you might be afraid of is that its not gonna pay off. Like, when the pastor hosts people in his house, or when he sits down and listens to someone, it always pays off.
* That person ends up following Jesus…and they become great friends. But YOU…you think…you’re gonna spend all this effort on loving someone…on hosting someone…on caring for someone…and they’re going to burn you. They’re gonna disappear.
* And then all that money, time, effort…will be wasted.
* So, you might as while just stick to a cloistered life that only allows people in that bring you comfort and make you feel safe. People you have vetted.
* Today, Jesus has something to say to you…
* …he’s going to give you the guide to being the best host…and the best guest…you can be.
* …and, he’s going to give you a way to build the trust you need, to be vulnerable and generous enough…to love the stranger.
* **Luke 14:1 & 7-24 (CSB)**
* **One Sabbath, when he went in to eat at the house of one of the leading Pharisees, they were watching him closely**
* **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 or sisters, 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.”**
* **15 When one of those who reclined at the table with him heard these things, he said to him, “Blessed is the one who will eat bread in the kingdom of God! ”**
* **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 servant 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 servant came back and reported these things to his master. Then in anger, the master of the house told his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the city, and bring in here the poor, maimed, blind, and lame.’**
* **22 “ ‘Master,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, and there’s still room.’**
* **23 “Then the master told the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges and make them come in, so that my house may be filled. 24 For I tell you, not one of those people who were invited will enjoy my banquet.’ ”**
* **Transition:** To get to the magic that hospitality can bring…you have you have to do 2 very vulnerable things. Humble yourself and Give your power away. And…
* **1) You won’t humble yourself until you trust God to raise you.** 
  + One of the primary differences between AirBnB and the Hotel industry, is that with AirBnB, you are rated as a guest.
  + You know, no hotel is going to call you out on Twitter for leaving your towels on the bathroom floor.
  + But, that’s what happens on AirBnB.
  + Its not just the guest who leaves a review of the host, the host gets to leave a review of the guest.
  + So, if you’re terrible guest, if you trash the living space of your host, or you aren’t very kind and courteous, you get a bad rating…and you won’t be invited in to stay at other AirBnB’s
  + You’ll be AirBnB SHAMED! So, with AirBnB, you are much more likely to hang your towel up and to treat your room and host with respect. Because they have the power to expose you.
  + Its not an entirely different system in first century Palestine.
  + They operate on an Honor/Shame economy.
  + The aim is, you want to try and accumulate honor in your community and avoid shame.
  + So, lets look at what’s happening here.
  + **14:1**
  + Jesus is in the house of an important man. He’s a ruler…so he’s got authority and he’s got money. He’s a Pharisee, so he’s also got a religious reputation to uphold.
  + This guy is top of the food chain in every respect. In other words, he has the power to distribute honor and shame.
  + These dinners were a part of what’s known as the “Patronage system”
  + Every community had a network of wealthy people. The people in this network, in this inner circle of wealth and influence, would always be looking for ways to move up the societal food chain.
  + So what they would do, is throw parties. Big expensive dinners. To improve your spot in the societal food chain, you would invite all the other rich and influential people so that you could network. The goal was to wine and dine those people at your party until you could make some of them your “patrons”.
  + Your patrons would then loan you money give you gifts, or invite you to their parties where you could further your network of patrons. The more patrons you had, the more doors of opportunity that would open up for you in society.
  + So, at these parties, everyone was clamoring for position. No one was really *enjoying* these dinners. They were work. You were trying to sustain your place in the wealthy social network…or trying to move up the ladder. It was a constant comparison game.

* + These parties were very expensive.
  + But, if you had the right people there and made the right moves, you would easily make all your money back from your network of patrons.
  + So, that’s where Jesus is. He’s been invited to one of these dinners so that the wealthy religious leaders could see how he handled himself.
  + They wanted to know:
  + Would Jesus jockey for position?
  + Who would he talk with? What would he say?
  + Would he establish a network of Patrons?
  + Maybe, they thought, Jesus would even bring shame on himself and be excluded from the community.
  + So, Jesus starts by addressing the guests at this party.
  + **Luke 14:7**
  + Jesus sees everybody going clamoring for the best seats…the one that will make people think they are more influential…wealthier…so they can raise their social position.
  + So he gives them what seems like some pretty solid party etiquette, but it actually runs much deeper than that.
  + **V 8-10**
  + Doesn’t this just sound like good social advice?
  + I mean, your Mom would probably tell you the same thing.
  + Its like the Pessimists motto: Assume the worst and you’ll either be right or pleasantly surprised.
  + If you start at the bottom the only place to go is up.
  + Is Jesus really just giving good social advice?
  + Is he just telling people how to be better guests at a party?
  + In fact, it even sounds a little self-serving doesn’t it? “Here’s how to act humble when really, you just want to be honored.”
  + But, Remember, Jesus is on a mission.
  + Every word he says is loaded with meaning.
  + He has come to let people know what the Kingdom of God is like.
  + He’s not telling people how to live their best life now…In everything he says and does, he’s saying, “This is what God’s Kingdom is like.”
  + **V 11**
  + And that totally comes out in v 11
  + Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.
  + See, Jesus is taking a common situation in their lives, and he’s telling them, “There is a bigger spiritual reality here”.
  + Jesus is giving them vision. The ability to see beyond what is in front of them.
  + He is showing them the broken way of their current party system, and the better way of his kingdom.
  + He’s telling them that how they act these banquets is a outward picture of what they think about God.
  + The cosmic spiritual reality he’s pointing to is that if you jockey for position with God…if you spend your time trying to show God how you deserve for him to love you, or care about you…or honor you…you are going to be rejected. You are going to be shamed. Because he’s God and you’re you. You have absolutely no social, economic, or moral capital with him.
  + YOU ABSOLUTELY CANNOT IMPRESS GOD.
  + And once you come to that realization, that you actually deserve the lowest seat with him. You’ll find that he wants to move you up.
  + It is your pride that keeps you from moving close to God…because there is only room for one God…and you’re not him.
  + Remember, he’s in the house of a religious leader. A guy who thinks that God is impressed with his good works and his position in society. His message is, until you bow down…you’ll never know true honor.
  + Until you die to your self, you’ll never live to God.
  + Religion says “Jockey for position with God…and if you can convince him…he’ll do favors for you.”
  + But Jesus comes back saying, “Admit you have no business at the party…and then you’ll find yourself sitting right next to the host.”
  + And here’s the beautiful thing.
  + Once you’ve realized that you don’t deserve to be close to God…but because of his grace and love, he’s brought you close…he’s exalted you…
  + …Your heart changes its economic system.
  + Its amazing. You begin to let go of things that used to be so important to you.
  + Like social status…or having tons of money…or being in control…or always being the center of attention…
  + …Those things aren’t at the center of your life anymore, because your heart is filled with a sense of God’s love for you. You aren’t nearly as concerned about what other people think of you…or whether or not you are building your network of patrons to take care of your future…because you know God’s got your future.
  + Listen, without God at the center of your life…money becomes more than money. It becomes your hope for a good life.
  + Social status, what people say about you, becomes more than just compliments. Those compliments become the air you breathe. Without them, you fall into a pit of despair.
  + Without God at the center of your life, money and social status become your security and your beauty.
  + **[SLOW]** They become your God. And you cannot have 2 Gods.
  + The dividing line between heaven and hell is not good and bad, its proud and humble.
  + Are you willing to lower yourself in God’s presence? Are you willing to admit that you aren’t worthy to be at his table?
  + That is the spiritual vision Jesus is giving the guests at this party.
  + And when you finally begin to live like God doesn't owe you a high seat at the table, but he still wants you to be close to home.
  + You start to be the sort of guest who doesn’t jockey for position with other people.
  + You’ll go to people’s houses without trying to prove yourself to them.
  + You’ll invite people over for dinner without worrying about them seeing your flaws or being exposed.
* **Back to 1)**
  + When you know that God wants to move your seat closer to him NOT because you’re awesome, but because he loves you. You get to stop worrying about shame and honor.
  + Instead, you’ll have one agenda. Jesus’ agenda.
  + To help the other people at the party get a good picture of the way God’s Kingdom works.
* **TRANSITION:** …so that’s how Jesus address’ your fear of exposure and shame. Now what about your fear that you are going to put in a ton of investment into hospitality, only to have your guests walk away unchanged and sort of feeling like you wasted yourtime and money. Well…
* **2) Generosity is impossible without eternal vision.**
  + We started out today by putting your unlocked phone in someone else’s hands.
  + In a lot of ways, that phone represents not only your private communication, its also your buying power, it's a tool for entertaining yourself, and even a way you project yourself to others through social media.
  + When you put that in someone else’s hands…its pretty vulnerable.
  + Generosity, which is required for hospitality, is the same way.
  + You give away your money, your time, your energy…and it feels like you are sort of putting it in the hands of whoever you are giving to to make it worthwhile.
  + Well, if you feel that way, Jesus would tell you, you aren’t looking far enough into the future.
  + **V 12**
  + After addressing the guests at this party,
  + Jesus looks at the host and says, “About this party. You’re doing it wrong.”
  + He says to the host, “If everyone you’ve invited here is someone who will eventually benefit you socially or financially…you’re missing out. You aren’t really partying at all. You’re just working to get people to like you so you get something from them. You know, if you’d invite people who had no chance of paying you back…you would actually find out just exactly what being blessed means.”
  + **V 13-14**
  + Again, Jesus sounds like he’s just giving nice “Dear Abby” kind of advice doesn’t he? He just sounds like Chicken Soup for the Soul.
  + “Do nice things for people…it's a blessing”. Is Jesus my grandma?
  + UNTIL… he gets to the last line…and then the whole thing goes COSMIC again…it goes supernatural.
  + I mean …Look at v 14.
  + He goes from “here’s how to host a party”…to “For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just”
  + This is like a mashup of Jesus and your Mom.
  + Now, you need to invite people that aren’t very popular to your birthday party….cuz you might see them again at the resurrection of the just.
  + I want you to feel the way Jesus takes the ordinary and shows you the supernatural through it. THAT IS THE VISION WE ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE.
  + To be able to see the supernatural…even in something as ordinary as a dinner party.
  + So what’s the deal with the Resurrection of the Just?
  + Well, When Jesus died and resurrected …he said that his Resurrection wasn’t just an anomaly.
  + Rather, it was the first of many resurrections to come.
  + It was the preview of what was coming to anybody who would humble themselves before God…
  + Its what anyone who has attached themselves to Jesus by faith, will experience. A resurrection.
  + And he doesn’t just mean some kind of spiritual resurrection. He doesn’t just mean a change in attitude or worldview.
  + He means, “I literally physically died…and then literally physically resurrected…and so will everyone who puts their trust in me.”
  + Do you see here how Jesus talks about being “repaid” in the resurrection of the just?
  + You know what he’s doing? He’s saying “If you belong to me…if you are a part of the Kingdom of God…if you are one of my disciples…
  + **BURN YOUR BUCKET LIST!!!!!**
  + You know what a bucket list is right? The list of all the stuff you want to do before you die…because if you don’t…you’re afraid you’re going to miss out.
  + When Jesus resurrected…he crucified your bucket list.
  + When he died…your FOMO died with him. You know FOMO?…Fear of Missing Out.
  + Xians have no business making bucket lists or having FOMO…because of the resurrection of the just…you won’t miss a thing.
  + Here’s the deal…a lot of you may think the afterlife is like the old Tom and Jerry cartoons. You know, Tom chases Jerry…then a car runs him over and he gets wings, a halo, and a harp…and his spirit floats up to the clouds where he lives for eternity as some disembodied cat spirit that STILL CAN’T CATCH THAT MOUSE!
  + Jesus’ resurrection blew this idea out of the water.
  + See, when Jesus resurrected. He wasn’t a ghost. In fact…he ate fish with his friends.
  + He had people touch him. He hugged people.
  + After the resurrection…Jesus had a real physical body.
  + But people aren’t the only ones broken. The Bible says all of creation is broken.
  + Take a look at what the Apostle Paul wrote about the resurrection of the just in **Romans 8:18-19**
  + **For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.**
  + He says all of creation waits for the REVEALING of the sons of God.
  + In other words…every mountain, every rock, every tree, every ocean, every lake, every bear, every dog, every bee, every grassy meadow, every dry desert….all we know of them is broken…they aren’t like they should be.
  + BUT WHEN JESUS COMES BACK AND RAISES ALL THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD…he’s going to make all of creation new.
  + And that means…in the New Heavens and New Earth that Jesus promises to bring at the Resurrection of the just…you can visit the Swiss Alps…and you think they are awe-inspiring now? Wait til Jesus makes them right!
  + I’m telling you. There is no trip you can take, no experience you can have now, nothing that money can buy you…that will not be infinitely better when Jesus raises his brothers and sisters….and transforms the world into what its Supposed to be…and you will have an infinite amount of days to enjoy it.
  + …and you thought heaven was going to be like a giant choir rehearsal in the sky. Far from it. In New Creation we won’t say “YOLO…we’ll say YOLF.” You only live FOREVER.

**Back to 2)**

* + …and don’t you see how this would make you generous?
  + How it would change the way you throw a party?
  + Especially to someone who thought he had to invite the right people who would financially pay him back and set him up to enjoy his future.
  + NOPE. Not anymore. Now I don’t have to be afraid of what I’m missing out on. I don’t have to wring my hands because I spent my money and time loving strangers…because if I never see the Italian country side in this life…who cares?.
  + Compared to the glory that's to come when Jesus makes Italy what its supposed to be…its more like a sewer now.
  + He’s telling this host, “DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME thinking the great payoff of your life happens now. It doesn’t. It happens at the resurrection of the just. The reward can’t come from anyone who shows up at your party.”
  + So go out and bring in everyone who is drowning in the physical brokenness of this life. The poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind…and bring them into the party…and then tell them “you think THIS is a good party…wait til the Resurrection. Everything broken will be made whole. You, you’ll see again. You, you’ll walk again. You, you’ll have the inheritance of a king. See, this party used to be about me getting mine…now its about announcing what Jesus is bringing to you.”
* **Transition:** Now, Jesus talks to one more guy. By far, this is my favorite interaction of the party. Because Jesus makes clear this paradox…
* **3) God’s Kingdom is only open to those with nothing.**
  + There is one thing you have to have…in order to use AirBnB.
  + You have to have a need.
  + You have to NEED a place to stay.
  + Nobody goes to AirBnB’s website to appreciate the websites design.
  + You go there for one reason.
  + You don’t have a bed in city that you are going to be staying in.
  + Can you imagine if you brought your own Airbed to an AirBnB.
  + Can you imagine renting an AirBnB, fully loaded, but bringing your own Bed and Regfrigerator and Stove.
  + Right? The Host would look at you and say, “Why did you bring all this stuff? I’m already providing it for you?”
  + Honestly, that’s where a lot of us are with God.
  + That’s what Jesus shows in this last interaction.
  + **V 15**
  + I love this. Whoever this guy is he is VERY UNCOMFORTABLE.
  + You know, Jesus has just confronted everybody at this party and tells them they’re doing the whole thing wrong.
  + So there is this awkward silence and one poor guy who JUST DOESN’T GET IT…is still trying to impress everyone at the party…so he fills up the silence a hearty “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!”
  + He’s like “AHHHH, Jesus, I see what you’re going for. Let me see if I can get in on the Spiritual Metaphor.”
  + Now, Luke doesn’t really tell us exactly what happened, but I just kind of get the idea that Jesus stares at this guy for a little bit before he lights into this last story.
  + **V 16-17**
  + Something else you need to know about banquets in these days.
  + Transportation wasn’t exactly what it is today…neither was food prep. It took days and days just to cook the food and then travel to the party.
  + So the host would send out an initial invitation, kind of like a “Save the Date”…just to get a head count.
  + Then a few weeks later, the host would send out the announcement that would say “Everything is Ready…make your way to my house!”
  + So when Jesus says this host “invited many” he’s talking about the people who had accepted the initial SAVE THE DATE invitation…and now, the party was ready to go…food prepared…table set…and his servants go back out to say “LETS GO! PARTY TIME!’
  + **V 18-20**
  + There are 2 shocking things in Jesus’ story.
  + First is that the people who said they were coming to the party, when it was time to actually go…they found something better to do.
  + And the reasons are completely lame…
  + Two guys bought a field and oxen BEFORE they saw them. That’s like buying a used car on Craig’s list because it says “RUNS GREAT!”
  + …and I see you just got married. I understand. The last thing your new wife would want to do is get dressed up and go to swanky high society party. Yeah…she’d rather stay home and watch the game with you.
  + These guys didn’t have important stuff to do.
  + The truth is, they didn’t think the host was rich enough to benefit them. They didn’t think he was important enough to demand their attention, time, and resources.
  + But, their excuses tell us that they still, at the same time don’t want to make him unhappy.
  + In other words, they are trying to keep their honor…and also, keep their money and position.
  + I think Jesus responds to the “Lets all eat bread in the kingdom of Heaven” guy because he knows the guy is all talk.
  + He’s like the guy who quotes a bunch of bible verses, but doesn’t live by them.
  + In other words…he talks a lot about the Kingdom of God, but when Jesus shows up and says “OK, I’m the one bringing the kingdom of God, Come follow me!” this guy is going to say”…uhhhh….well….actually…I’m pretty busy….You know…I have a family….and a job….and a pretty nice life….so ummmmmm…yeah….But hey, Jesus….I tell you what….I’ll talk to a lot of people about how awesome the Kingdom of God will be.”
  + That’s what Jesus is saying. He’s saying to this guy, “You sound like a pro-God guy…but you’re full of it. Go ahead and ride your Oxen with your wife in your new field. But don’t think you’ll ever taste the bread at the Party I’m throwing.”
  + See, even though he’s got the flowery language “BLESSED IS EVERYONE WHO WILL EAT BREAD IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!”… …he’s still jockeying for position at the table to get much lesser bread.
  + **The only thing you need to enter the Kingdom of God is nothing…and that’s exactly what most of us don't have.**
  + Jesus is simply a tack on to our busy lives. He’s not center. He’s just another person we can give lip service to then dismiss because there is something in our lives that carries more weight than his invitation to “Follow me”.
  + This is an absolute insult to say “yes” to the first invitation, then make excuses when the Host says “OK, I’m ready for you…come on in!”
  + Now, here’s the second shocking part of Jesus’ story:
  + **V 21-24**
  + This guy is going to fill up his house with poor, crippled, blind and lame.
  + When he says “go into the streets and lanes…into the highways and hedges”…the Master is sending his servant out into the places of exclusion. Into the area where people were outcast.
  + He’s passing by all the important people for the people who seem to have no benefit to society whatsoever.
  + The master is sending his servant out to get the prostitutes, the people with rough pasts, the sinners, the ex-cons. Everyone society has rejected and left behind….the Master says “THIS BANQUET IS FOR YOU”
  + But here’s the problem. Even though all of those people in the highways and hedges will appreciate the invitation…though they will certainly give it an incredible amount of weight….
  + …they are never going to believe that the Master is serious.
  + “They’ll say ‘people like us just don’t go to parties like that’!
  + What’s the catch? I’m not going into that party. This has to be some joke!”
  + You see where the Master tells the servant to “Compel” people to come in?
  + That word “compel” means to “Drive them in”. it means to persuade, argue…do whatever it takes to convince them that the invitation is real.
  + That they can come and eat and drink…the food is ready, the wine is paid for…come, eat at the Master’s table. He doesn’t expect you to pay him back.
  + Once again, Jesus is using a physical picture to show a spiritual reality.
  + The Master is God the Father.
  + The Banquet is the Resurrection of the Just. At the end of all things, Jesus tells us about something called the marriage supper of the lamb. It's a banquet. It's a party that never ends.
* **Back to 3)**
  + But, you know, we have a problem. See, we talked about the Resurrection part of that banquet. But not the “just” part.
  + You know, compared to other people…we can feel just. We can compare ourselves to others and always find people that make us feel like we are “good people”.
  + Most of the world thinks they are “good enough to go to heaven”.
  + But we’re not. Because we aren’t being compared with other people. We are being compared with the Master.
  + That’s why for some of you, right now, sitting where you are, you have such a hard time believing that God is inviting you to the table.
  + Because you feel unworthy. You feel outcast. You feel too low.
  + But Christ, the servant of the Master, has come out to you and is compelling you to come in? Is the Master’s invitation unbelievable? YES! You don’t deserve it.
  + But Jesus left the riches of heaven to come out to the Highways and hedges…the broken sinful world, to invite us in.
  + Jesus was just. He lived a life worthy of an invitation to the banquet.
  + But then he was crucified…rejected in your place.
  + So now, you become one of the just. Not because of what you have done, but because of what Jesus has done in your place.
  + When Jesus said from the cross “It is finished” he was talking about the meal. It's the second invitation. The master is ready to receive you now…come in.
  + ….and this isn’t a potluck. You can’t bring anything.
  + Its an insult to bring a microwave dinner to a 5 star restaurant.
  + God doesn’t want you to bring an appetizer to the table, he wants you to bring your appetite.
  + Come hungry and he’ll fill you.
  + Come desperate and he’ll rescue you.
  + Come low, and he’ll exalt you.
  + …but don’t come with excuses…and don’t come with spiritual language that covers up a heart that is rejecting him.
  + Come with nothing…or you can’t come at all.

**Invitation & Silence**