

# Make Church a Part of Your Life

## WEEKLY SERMONETTE

### "EXCUSES, EXCUSES"

By Pastor Terry Laughlin, CrossRoads Church, Norton

In Luke 14: 16 - 24, Jesus teaches using the "Parable of the Great Banquet." In it, Jesus shares about a man who was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. It was the custom then, as it is today, to send out invitations to such a special event quite a long time in advance. Then, as the actual day approached, a more personal invitation was extended.

God, too, has issued a personal invitation of salvation to all people. The question is this, "What are you going to do with your personal invitation?" You can neither buy nor work your way into heaven. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith --and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God --not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2: 8, 9) You will only get to heaven by receiving the Lord's gift.

Jesus says, "Come, for everything is now ready." But, according to Scripture, instead of receiving the invitation joyfully, they all began to make excuses. The first said, "I have just bought a field and I must go and see it. Please excuse me." It has been said that an alibi is a lie stuffed in the skin of an excuse. Many have used possessions for an excuse to reject the Holy Spirit's invitation of salvation. Another said, "I have bought

five yoke of oxen, and I'm on the way to try them out. Please excuse me." People get so busy with their work that they have no time for the Lord. One day you are going to die, and you will discover that business will go on as usual without you; but you will die without salvation. "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'"

This man has the weakest excuse of the three. He could have extended the invitation to his new wife. Christ died for all and all should be given the opportunity to accept or reject God's invitation. This man's natural affection for his wife kept him from Christ. Many is the time a pastor hears, "I don't come to church on Sunday

because it's my only day off. It is the only time I can spend with my family... (going shopping/fishing/working around the house, etc., etc.)"

These things -- possessions, business, natural affections --keep more people from Christ than anything else. What excuses do you have that are keeping you from the Lord? What excuses are keeping you out of fellowship with Him and other Christian believers? God has an engraved invitation for you. It is written in the blood of Jesus Christ.

God sends the Holy Spirit out into the streets and alleys of Norton. Through the Lord's servants you have been invited to receive Christ, but many of you have one excuse after another. Not one person in Jesus' parable said, "I will not come." No one overtly refused His invitation. They simply made excuses to cover up the fact that they did not want to come.

Jesus has a severe statement for those who reject God's invitation, "I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of My banquet." You are excluded from heaven because of your refusal to accept His invitation.

Will you offer excuses; or will you accept Jesus' invitation of salvation?

## In the Basket

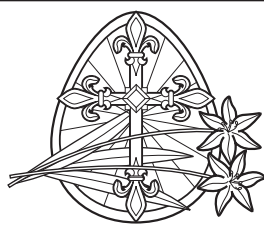


You can't have a picnic without the picnic basket -- all the goodies are tucked inside! Just carry it to a nice spot and enjoy the feast.

We spend a lot of time and effort deciding what is best for our lives, accomplishing our goals and dealing with troubles. Often we think we can figure everything out on our own, but life can be so much better if we bring God with us into every situation. God is constantly at work in our lives; when we work with Him, peace and joy increase accordingly. Life's a picnic! Visit your house of worship this week and learn more about God's power in your life. He has everything you need for a great life!

Sunday 2 Thessalonians 1,1-12	Monday 2 Thessalonians 2,1-17	Tuesday 2 Thessalonians 3,1-18	Wednesday Joshua 1,1-18	Thursday Joshua 23,1-16	Friday Joshua 24,1-33	Saturday Judges 4,1-24
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The Kansas Investments Developing Scholars (KIDS) Matching Grant program will match the first \$600 that participants contribute to a Learning Quest 529 Education Savings Plan account. KIDS was developed for Kansas residents with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

2008 is the last year of this three-year pilot project, and enrollment is limited to the first 1,200 applicants. Contributions must be received by Dec. 31, 2008 to be eligible for matching grant funds.

Call 1-866-504-5898 or visit www.KansasStateTreasurer.com/KIDS to apply.

KIDS is administered by Kansas State Treasurer Lynn Jenkins, CPA. Paid for with taxes or public funds.

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- 1 = \$20,800
- 2 = \$28,000
- 3 = \$35,200
- 4 = \$42,400
- 5 = \$49,600
- 6 = \$56,800

For each additional person in the family, add \$7,200