

Excuses, Excuses

Theme

Making excuses to God

Object

An invitation

Scripture

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. Matthew 22:1-3

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Look what I have. It's an invitation to a party. A friend of mine is having a birthday party and has invited me to come. Look what it says at the bottom of the invitation... it says, "R.S.V.P." Do you know what that means? (The term R.S.V.P. comes from the French expression "répondez s'il vous plaît", meaning "please respond".) It means that my friend wants me to reply to the invitation and say whether I will attend the party or not.

Sometimes people who receive an invitation to a party don't want to go, so they make up excuses. Here are some excuses they might use:

- I've had a bad cold and I just can't seem get over it.
- I think we are going to visit my grandmother.
- We are having a test at school and I need to stay home and study.
- I have to go to soccer practice.

- Mom said I have to babysit my little brother.

Making excuses isn't new. Even back in Bible times people made excuses. Jesus once told a story about a king who threw a party, but none of the people he invited showed up for his party. In Jesus' story, the king was going to have a party for his son who was getting married. Since he was a king, and this was his only son, you can imagine that it was going to be quite a celebration and it was a tremendous honor to be invited!

All of the plans had been made, the food was prepared, the invitations had been sent. The day of the celebration came, but no one showed up! The king sent his servants to see where the people were and why they had not come to his celebration. The people all began to make excuses about how busy they were.

The king was very upset, so he told his servants to go out into the streets and invite everyone they saw to come to his son's wedding celebration. They did exactly what the king told them to do and the Bible tells us that the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Can you guess who the King was in the story that Jesus told? It was God. I'm sure you know who his Son was in the story. Right, it was Jesus.

Jesus has sent you an invitation. You will find his invitations in here. (Hold up a Bible.) The Bible is full of invitations from Jesus. He says, "Whoever is thirsty, let him come and take the free gift of the water of life." (Rev. 22:17) He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) He says, "Let the little children come to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14) Jesus has invited us to come to him, and yet, some people are still making excuses.

Father, thank you for Jesus, your Son. We thank you for his invitation to come and receive the free gift of life which he offers. Without making excuses, we say, "Yes, Lord, Yes!" Amen.