

Is There A Good Excuse?

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

Luke 14:17-20. "And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And 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."

There have been times that many of us have felt like the servant in this story. We invite people to come to church and most times we get a variety of excuses. Have you ever heard a good one? I haven't either, and the reason is that there is not one. People make excuses when there is not a reason, or, they don't wish to tell the reason.

These excuses that were given in the parable were ridiculous. They were also an insult to the host who had given the invitation. Earlier they had indicated that they would come, causing the host

to prepare enough food for them. Then, when all was ready, they refuse to come and mock him by giving these excuses. As ridiculous as they may sound they are no worse than some that people use today.

One that I have heard is, "I don't have clothes fit to wear to church." Like in the parable, instead of being honest and saying, "I don't want to come," they make an excuse. Those who give this excuse always dressed decent enough to go to anything that the world had to offer.

I have heard of churches that had dress codes. One man told me once that in another state he was told to leave and come back when he had a necktie on. If this is true, then I say shame on such a church. Such man-made rules hurt the cause of Christ. Clothes should be modest and clean - beyond that is man's doctrines and wants.

Some say that they don't like to be in crowds. I don't understand this at all when I've run into these people at a store where there were more people than I've seen at church. Ball games and other places have crowds but they don't seem to produce the fear or whatever that keeps them away from church. The truth is that they don't want to come to church.

Some have said, "I don't go to church because of a certain

person that goes there." It may be the preacher, or someone who they don't care for, but to them it is an excuse that they cling to.

Would they stay out of heaven if that person is there? If we want to be accepted of God we had better follow His commands. Remember, the Word of God tells us that if we don't forgive others, we will not be forgiven. If a person has a problem with someone they need to talk and get it right according to God's Word.

Some say that they don't have the time - there's just too much work to do. While we need to work, there is danger, if it keeps us from the Lord. As someone said, there will be work to do after we are gone. We need to serve the Lord more than we need the things of this world.

People today make excuses just like those we read of in the Bible. They are not that much different and no better at justifying us than any excuse ever given. Isn't it silly to think that now some make excuses to stay out of church and then, if they could, they would try to make excuses on why they should be allowed into heaven? Getting into heaven will be no accident. Those who enter there will be those who have loved and followed the Lord throughout life.

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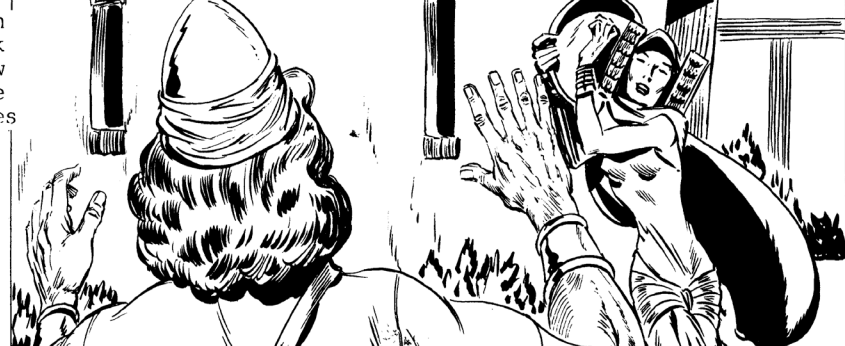
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JEPHTHAH
JEPHTHAH, ANXIOUS FOR VICTORY OVER THE AMMONITES, VOWED TO THE LORD: WHATSOEVER FIRST COMETH FORTH FROM HIS HOUSE TO GREET HIM WOULD BE SACRIFICED TO THE LORD...NOW HIS ONLY DAUGHTER IS THE FIRST ONE...



OH, MY DAUGHTER, MY DAUGHTER!

THIS DAY AM I DEALT A HARD BLOW, MY DAUGHTER - VICTORY IS TURNED TO SADNESS!

FOR KNOW, NOW...

I HAVE MADE A VOW UNTO THE LORD - AND I CAN NOT GO BACK ON IT!



WHATSOEVER THOU HAST VOWED UNTO THE LORD, FATHER, DO UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD! ONLY GRANT ME ONE WISH...

AND JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER ASKS ONLY TO BE ALLOWED TWO MONTHS TIME IN WHICH TO GO UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS WITH HER FRIENDS AND BEWAIL THE FACT THAT SHE WILL NEVER BE A MOTHER IN ISRAEL.



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