

# Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024 10 am

"Come, for everything is now ready"

---

Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture and prayer

Hymn MP 33 And can it be

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Scripture Psalm 27 (page 557)

Children's talk the bitter water and the piece of wood.

Chorus MP 591 Seek the Lord all ye people  
MP

Notices Wednesday Cameo, Thursdays pm prayer, Daily Bread.  
Sleepout, Members meeting 25<sup>th</sup> Feb. Barnabas Aid coming.

Prayer and share time.

Reading Isaiah 55 :1-7 (page 742)  
Luke 14:15-27 (page 1048)

Hymn MP 541 One shall tell another.

Sermon: "Come, for everything is now ready"

Hymn MP 990 I will offer up my life

Closing Prayer

[Sermon Index Database](#)

---

## Prayer and Exordium

▪ Hold up an invitation to a heavenly banquet, read it out – then tear it up.  
How terrible to do a thing like that – and reject the Lord's kindness.

The message this morning is entitled: "Come, for everything is now ready" x2

## Background

Jesus has been invited to eat at the home of a Pharisee. As they recline at the table Jesus teaches them about the kingdom of God. v15 **When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."** This man's words indicate that a future feast was a well know way of describing the Glory to come in the kingdom of God.

**Yes there is a heavenly feast to come.**

A feast conjures up two things, abundance, and happiness. An abundance of food, and people gathered together in unity with joy and gladness.

God is good and he wants to share that goodness with you, his creation. When the Lord finished his work of creation on the 6<sup>th</sup> day he said it was very good.

The Garden of Eden was very good, and the garden was full of food, good food from every tree in the garden. Adam and Eve enjoyed everything in perfection.

Why should anyone leave that behind? But that is what sin does, it blinds me and makes me a fool so that I cannot see what is good and right. When Adam and Eve chose to disobey this good God and sin - they were out.

The Lord says to the man "where are you?" as he walks in the garden in the cool of the evening. It was time to eat, but the man was not there. The Lord wants the best for us, that we may enjoy Him, to be fully satisfied in Him. And that is what you and I were made for. How foolish to choose to be independent.

The Lord in his kindness reminds us of the sweetness of friendship around the table as we eat together as families. Or with our church family, or with others.

To eat with someone is a sign of being at peace with them, we may have been at odds - but not now, being at the table together is a sign of peace.

Jacob and Laban, having had a row sit down to eat, as a sign of peace.

When Jacob returns in fear and meets Esau they eat together as a sign of peace.

When God gave the law on Mount Horeb no-one except Moses could come close on fear of death, the Lord Holy and Mighty evoked fear and awe.

Yet the OT looks forward to another, very different mountain: Isa 25:6 **On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines.** This picture of

the richest of fare would have come to mind as the guests gathered at the wedding banquet at Cana and enjoyed the best of wine. It is here that Jesus chooses to introduce to us the Kingdom of God. How good God is.

So weddings, feasts, food banquets are an apt picture for the Kingdom of God, The Lord speaks of this great feast in heaven: **I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.** Mt 8:11

Jesus said to his disciples you can rub your tummies **“I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom..** Lu 22:29-30 mmm

⇒ **Now, through Christ, the table is set, and you and I are invited to come to the feast. Christ’s house is a good house, and it is an open house. Enter. x2**

Why did this man say these things?

The previous verse gives us a strong clue. 13 **But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,** 14 **and you will be blessed.**

So he starts with the same word: **"Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."** In other words; happy is that man, or woman, - happy because of being there, - and happy because I don’t deserve to be there!

⇒ **Those seemingly the furthest from the Kingdom of God will be there at the great feast, while those who appear to be the closest will be excluded. x2**

Or I should say, they will exclude themselves.

16 **Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests.** Many are invited. The invitation is general, it is to all, it extends to all peoples. This hand of invitation stretches its arm through time, and it reaches to you and I here in Kings Norton, in this room, this morning.

For surely with the Lord there is space enough, surely God’s heart is big enough. Surely He is generous enough, He had made provision enough.

17 **At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’** x2

Surely everything has been done. Christ the Holy Son, God incarnate, has followed fully the father’s will in every word and deed. He has been rejected by men, He has suffered unto death, He was buried, and He rose again. All has been done, Christ has paid the penalty for sin, he has carried it, He has done it, and it has been accepted on high, it is now complete, all has been accomplished, everything is ready. now come... now come.

2a

You don’t deserve it, but you can come. This is the season of Grace, the gift is ready, come and take it. You only need one thing, to thirst for it, to want it.

Remember the words in Isa 55:1 **"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."**

Do you thirst? Are you hungry? Then come. Why would anyone not come?

▪ **Just at the mention food ears prick up - and were there!!**

Why wouldn’t they respond? Did they not hear? Did they not understand?

▪ **Offer of £5 note in CE they didn’t read it properly, so they binned it. a small number did read it – and immediately came back for the money.**

Did they hear? Yes, did they understand? Yes, could they come? Yes, So why the rejection? why the neglect? It is not neglect it is contempt. It is contempt for kindness of God. 18 **"But they all alike began to make excuses.**

**The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’** Possessions, Possessions, Possessions

Remember Lot’s wife we are told, she looked back for she loved her possessions and her home. Remember the rich man who went away sad because he loved his possessions more than God.

How possessions and riches can form a stockade against the kingdom of God. Is that your problem? Jesus said: **you cannot love both God and money.**

See the field tomorrow, it won’t go away! No **I must go and see it.** x2

Where this man’s treasure was – there was his heart. Love for God his maker was a poor second. Jesus tells us to **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.** He will take care of what you need. It is a command & promise.

⇒ **No-one who puts themselves first will ever enter the Kingdom of God.**

The first was a man who had just purchased something, so too the next. 19 **"Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’**

Is this work or the latest gadget? Oh how the things of this world mesmerise, how these things steal our hearts and demand our attention, care and concern.

**I’m on my way** – well turn back! this is more important! The master has called you. **try them out** another time,

**How the love of things affects the hearing, how they stifle the voice of God.**

Did you notice these were purchases, shopping, all the promises of worldly happiness wrapped up in them.

2b

The Lord knows we need food and clothing – but ask the question when you make that purchase. How will this affect me? How will this affect my life? What effect will this have upon my soul? Remember the words of Jesus **A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. What good is it to gain the whole world and yet forfeit your soul? What can you give in exchange for it.** There's a price-tag on almost everything, but you cannot buy life!

- How foolish they were on the Titanic to go back for their Jewellery.

Well there is a price on life – but you could never pay it. Come to the till anyway and I'll pay it **'Come and buy ... without money and without cost.'** – without cost to you – but at great cost to him. Jesus has paid for it, and he did so with his own blood. How he suffered, how he who had no reason to do so, breached that gape between the undeserving sinner. The Holy One of God gave up his perfect life – for your sinful life. – that you may freely receive.

20 **"Still another said, 'I have just got married, so I can't come.'**

This is not another purchase, but it is still something new. Relationships, how often relationships get in the way. Could she not come as well? Could they not both come to the banquet?

This man didn't see this invitation as important. She was more important. Wasn't this Adam's snare, he listened to his wife. God rebuked him for it.

How often I visit a home and the man or woman seems genuinely interested. Then the spouse comes along, and the conversation is over, the pressure of their influence, subtle or otherwise prevails, and the chance to hear the gospel had been stolen away from a heart that might otherwise be ready. Jesus said <sup>26</sup> **"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.**

On Judgment Day, your husband or wife will not be there with you, nor that influential boy or girlfriend. Nor your parents, nor your children, nor your science teacher who taught you evolution, nor your boss at work who made you give up all your time. Only You, You must decide, You alone.

Your greatest need is to have peace with your Maker. Can you see it? This is far more important than anything in this world, yes anything and everything.

Jesus has told us the truth of the matter. Let us all order our priorities.

- BCM Missionary in Handsworth had been visiting a lady who sounded really interested in the things of the Lord. She invited the missionary in on numerous occasions. Then one day it suddenly dawned on her what

the gospel meant - that she would have to put the Lord first, this evoked a strong reaction "no nothing will get between me and my husband!!"

Who here is choosing to put your husband or wife first before God? That is idolatry. If you do that you have made an idol of them. Beware lest your friends, your spouse, your parents, your siblings, your children, - who God says you should love - get in your way to God. A Christian has **turned to God from idols** (that includes our family) **to serve the living and true God.**

33 **In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.** Miss that and you miss salvation.

**they all alike began to make excuses.** In other words they did not 'um' and 'ah' about it, their minds were quickly made up. Some have clever answers which they erect as a barrier to hide behind. Not here. There is nothing reasonable, it's an excuse, a cover up for a resistant heart.

Will you come and give the Lord his rightful place in your life? If not why not?

- 35 years in Christian work means I have heard the excuses, all of them, many times. You will not tell me anything new. I am amazed that people make excuses and think I can't see it. I may well nod and say "I hope it all goes well" but I know it's just an excuse.

⇒ Jesus Christ can see it, He knows exactly what is going on with you, and your motive behind it.

Will you open up your heart to Him?... for some here mentioning Jesus is fine, speaking about Him is fine, learning about Him is fine, going to church is fine, being involved in Christian activity is fine. Mixing with Christians is fine, as long as Jesus does not have me. - as long as Jesus does not have my life.

- In Scotland, in the roughest parts of Glasgow I used to hear of fighters who drew invisible lines around themselves, no-one could step inside without being met with a violent reaction.

It that so with you? The most pleasant conversation takes a sudden turn – speak of repenting of that sin – which is so odious to God – and that Christ may have his rightful place and suddenly there is the most violent reaction.

⇒ Do not keep Jesus at bay. Do not let pride be that wall to keep out the Glorious Son of God who deserves to rule your life. Give over those idols that you hold dear. They must be given over – they must be given up.

Think to yourself - what is it with me? Is it "I don't know enough yet?" Your do. Or is it "I am doing my best in my circumstances". No this is not a test of your effort, this is an invitation, something to respond to. **"Come, for everything is now ready"** x2

Today the door is open. Come in. Jesus is that door, and he is beckoning you. It is a narrow door, leave your life's baggage behind. It is a low door, you must bow your head to enter. Crawl in on your hands and knees, come in with tears, but come in. Will you? now? Today? If you do then tell to someone today.

### God's anger

Many tore up the invitation, they trod it underfoot. 21 **"The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry**

God is right to be angry. To refuse to come to Jesus Christ is to be in rebellion towards your maker.

The Lord God is right to be angry. **In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.** Ac 17:30

Do you feel God is angry with you? It doesn't have to remain that way. Hear Job's heartfelt anguish **"If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both, someone to remove God's rod from me, so that his terror would frighten me no more."** Job 9:33-34. Oh that there was someone to remove God's anger from me – there is, Jesus Christ who took the full force of God's anger towards me, onto himself says **'Come, for everything is now ready'**

**Are you thinking 'I do not have what others have'. Then respond to Christ's gracious invitation. Do not remain fixed, immovable, unresponsive.**

Come in, there is a place for you, but if you refuse, and refuse, and refuse it will be given to another. The Master **ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'** We are back at v13 Yes they will come.

**Bring them in, they came but there is still room.'** go out after others **and make them come in, so that my house will be full.** They came and it was - and will be.

### A word for the Christian

You may be thinking well I have responded, I have come, I know the Lord. Maybe you have, maybe there was that handing over to him of all that you had, the was that moment you declared Him Lord of all of your life.

But then gradually, over time, you clawed things back, your finances, your time, your plans, gradually you less and less lived by faith in Him – and more and more in yourself. That child-like trust in His provision has slipped into dependence on your own financial security, less trust in his wisdom, more your own view on things. Where once an emptying of self - self has crept back in.

So it was with Christians at Laodicea, they were living in a prosperous city as we do, their lives were prosperous – they had all they needed. Jesus says: **You**

4a

say, **'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.'** it gradually stole their heart and trust. Jesus exposes to them their true state. **But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.** Re 3:17

Picture Jesus standing with all the other stall holders in that market town and shouting **"I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so that you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so that you can see."** Re 3:18

Jesus lovingly seeks you to return, "invite me back in" he says **Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."** Rev 3:20. Will you open up? Will you give Him his rightful place?

Jesus is addressing His redeemed people, the church. Us. **Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.** Re 3:19 A true Christian lives a life of constant repentance, a constant pulling of oneself back in line.

v25 Luke points to the large crowds 'travelling' with Jesus. Someone looking on from a distance may well have thought; 'see how many disciples Jesus has'. But Jesus says that doesn't make you a disciple! however it may look, however it may appear. A disciple is someone who has forsaken all to follow Jesus. 33 **any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.**

Some might come into this church, or any other, and think 'Oh here are Jesus' disciples. Some are disciples - and some are just 'travelling' along. Which one are you? For the second time Jesus says that **if anyone is to come after him he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow him.** There's the sign.

- **Joyce was one of the Lord's disciples. At her funeral we were reminded of how her love for Him showed in her serving Him, and taking every opportunity to speak of Him. She had a living faith.**
- **And as death approached, there was no fear, in fact a desire to, a longing to be with the Lord she loved and when that moment neared - Joyce took off her mask and slipped into His arms. She did so because she knew where she was going.**

At the last supper Jesus ate with his disciples – isn't that meal a picture of the supper feast in heaven? Surely. **I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."** Mt 26:29 (Mr 14:25, Lu 22:18)

**"And I confer on you a kingdom, ... so that you may eat and drink - at my table - in my kingdom** Lu 22:29-30 To be there then you must respond to the invitation now! Don't tear it up!

END

4b