


## SERMON - MESSAGE – AUGUST 07, 2022

# Title: "Come To The Banquet Meal?"

**Scripture: Luke 12:35-40**

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*35 "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, 36 like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him. 37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. 38 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. 39 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. 40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."*

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As you read the title to my sermon, your mind could be wondering how I might tie today's gospel scripture lesson into the theme of a banquet. First, let's understand the definition of the word banquet. A banquet *is a lavish meal; feast. A ceremonious dinner especially honoring a person or persons or organization.* From that definition one can spin off many thoughts and applications for the word banquet and apply it to various parts of living. And that is what I'm going to do in my message today using the selected scriptures.

I think we have all been a participant in the festivities of a ceremonious banquet/dinner honoring a person or an organization. Some of us have probably gone to a lavish meal or even a feast of some type. One example of a feast is located in Orlando (near Disney world) known as “Medieval Times”. This is where you sit in a large arena (on various levels) and partake of an array of lavish food as you watch people dressed in period costumes of the medieval ages enact various knightly activities which even include horses, charoites and more. It is quite entertaining and wonderful fun, all the while you feast on lots of food...it’s a banquet feast. Also, if you go on any cruise, you will quickly come to an understanding of what feasting on lavish food is all about. You eat almost all the time...it’s non-stop food...a feast...a banquet.

Those were examples of food banquets but this morning, I also want you to consider two other banquets:

- First: the Banquet of the  Lord’s table
- Second: the Lord’s Banquet of Knowledge.

Here at the Chapel of Cypress Cove, we gather at the Lord’s Communion banquet table (also known as the Eucharist table) on the first Sunday of each month. FYI; Eucharist means thanksgiving for

Jesus sacrifice for our sins. It is here that we celebrate the sacrifice of Jesus Christ's life, his death and his resurrection. It is also a time when we seek repentance of our sins. At the holy Communion/Eucharist table, we physically enter into this ceremonial banquet with our Lord Jesus Christ. For the Christian, this should be a very special time, when the sanctified elements, which we personally partake in become the sacrificial body and blood of Christ. We do not morn Christ's sacrifice but celebrate with him in the victory over death.

The other banquet I'd like you to consider is one that you may not have thought too much about before: dining at Christ's Banquet of Knowledge. I must tell you that as I studied the scriptures while in seminary, they revealed so much spiritual understanding and the scriptures became like that of a feast of learning...a Banquet of Knowledge. I was feasting/consuming the Word of God. So much knowledgeable spiritual food was set before me and I could partake of as much of it as I wanted. I feasted on God's Banquet of Knowledge then and I continue to do so today. And sometimes to the point of gorging myself on this awesome feast of spiritual knowledge provided by Almighty God through the scriptures. I have, therefore, come to consider the Holy scriptures the Banquet Feast of Knowledge

set before me and I consume as much as I want and as often as I want. That said, I would like to recommend Holy scriptures/Bible to be your own Banquet of Knowledge and feed on it.

When you get hungry and your stomach signals you to give it something to eat...what do you do? You find some food and eat it and it fulfills the need and provides you energy to live. And so, it should also be with our spiritual craving. When you get hungry for spiritual food you should go to our scriptures (as well as prayer) and feed from the Word of God. It will provide you sustenance and energy to live. Figuratively, you turn to the scriptures and read and study the words and imagine those words of God coming into your mind, body and spirit to nourish you. And let me tell you, that this spiritual nourishment will provide you with much of the energy necessary to live especially in our chaotic world. These exercises of going to both the Communion banquet table of the Lord...and the banquet table of Spiritual Knowledge (God's Word) and feasting from these banquets will (I repeat)...will make a difference in your life today and every day.

So, let's feast on our gospel lesson of knowledge for today. It is describing a physical banquet of what God is providing us to feast

upon. The gospel starts by saying; *"be dressed, ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet."* (v35-36) Most of the time we get dressed in nice clothes when we attend a special banquet? And don't we always wait for the host/hostess to be there before we begin to eat from the table? It was the custom in those early days to keep the lamps burning at a banquet, to signify the constant readiness of the guests arrival and that the host is prepared. What this scripture is telling us is that we must be in constant readiness for our host...Jesus Christ...to return again. We must be ready to receive him at any given moment. And as we wait, we prepare ourselves by feasting at his spiritual banquet (Communion/Eucharist) on his love, kindness, understanding, and forgiveness. I want to tell you that the list is endless of what we can feast upon at the Lord's spiritual banquet table…like his forgiveness, mercy, grace, etc. When we come to the spiritual banquet (Communion/Eucharist) we must also be cautious not to fill our mind with the evil pollution of what the world is feeding us. We see it around us...the media and internet floods our mind with the information of hate, crime and immorality. Never forget that Satan also provides his own banquet table and is having many people come to his banquet table to feed upon the unholy sins which he provides to those who sit there. Let us also quickly realize

that there are primarily two spiritual banquet tables...the banquet table of the Lord and the banquet table of evil (provided by Satan). Both tables are offered free to those who wish to make the choice and take a seat.

Luke tells us in today's scripture; *"it will be good for those servants (he is meaning you and me) whose master (Jesus Christ) finds them ready.* (v38) Now listen closely to what I'm about to share with you. God's banquet table which includes communal Holy Communion/Eucharist and personal Bible and prayer time is always prepared and ready for each of us. It is an endless table and it is open to everyone every minute of our life. And for some people it may take longer to finally sit down at the Lord's banquet table. As you well realize, there can be many obstacles put in the way but I say this in all sincerity...anyone can and will get to sit at the Lord's banquet tables if he/she wants to. Here again is the factor of choice. God gives us all the liberty to make choices for everything in our life including coming to his spiritual banquet tables. God does not force anyone to come to his banquet feasts...it is our choice always.

Now let's recap what we have learned today about God's spiritual banquets.

- One: the spiritual food on the Holy Communion/Eucharist banquet table of the Lord is ceremoniously prepared for each and everyone. This is the physical table set for us to receive the forgiveness of our sins and to recall the sacrifice which Jesus Christ made for us all. Christ has prepared the table of Holy Communion/Eucharist carefully for each of us through his death and resurrection. This table of Holy Communion/Eucharist is rich in spiritual nourishment. Nourishment, provided by Christ that will sustain every part of our life.

- Second: all we need to do is come, sit and partake of this Holy Communion/Eucharist banquet prepared for us.

- Third: we can also go to the table of Spiritual Knowledge, provided by Almighty God when we open our Bible. The spiritual knowledge we receive will nourishment us. When you do this, you are immediately sitting at God's banquet table of knowledge and all the rich spiritual nourishment that you need to live, is right there for you. It is free and all you have to do is feast upon this spiritual food of knowledge.

If only each of us would stop and pause long enough to listen to God speaking to us...our large problems would become smaller and our life will be changed. We will have a better understanding of God's purpose for our life. Unfortunately, many individuals tend to only listen to God speaking to them when they need him. We often listen to the world around us and not concentrate on God speaking to us and with us. We don't come and feast at the Lord's banquet tables (Holy Communion and Holy Scripture Spiritual Knowledge) as we should.

I say to you with all honesty that I hear and feel God speaking to me more clearly when I go to his Communion/Eucharist banquet and his Holy Scriptures of Spiritual Knowledge banquet. It is at these banquet feasts that I begin to find the nourishment which will bring me substance and provide me with the strength to carry me through the struggles of this world. It is only when I come and receive the spiritual food from God's banquet tables that I truly find the real spiritual nourishment that will carry me forward with the energy that comes only from Almighty God.

So, my dearest friends, today and every day, we are all invited to the Lord's banquet tables which are free. You can eat from them without cost. Today, you are being fed from the Lord's banquet table of

Spiritual Knowledge as the scriptures were revealed to you by me. And in a few minutes, we will all feast at the Lord's banquet table of the sanctified sacrificial Communion/Eucharist meal. And as we do this will you earnestly feel Almighty God, through Christ and in the presence of the Holy Spirit, feed you with renewed spiritual life. Jesus invites each of us…let's dine with him.

