

Series: ALL DAY EVERY DAY

Text: Luke 14:15-24

Title: "BACK ROADS"

Introduction: WELCOME, BMZ! Glad you're with us TODAY as we WRAP UP our "**ALL DAY EVERY DAY**"! Today, we are GOING to GO FURTHER. WE'VE TALKED quite a BIT about HOW to ENGAGE our RELATIONSHIP with JESUS ALL DAY EVERY DAY. TODAY I want to get a LITTLE FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD ... THINK HOW OFTEN Jesus and the Disciples were ON the ROAD. They TRAVELED from town to town ... ON FOOT. And JESUS took ADVANTAGE of the ROAD TIME ... As they WALKED, Jesus TAUGHT.

WHEN JESUS TAUGHT, IT was NOT LIKE the TEACHING of the WORLD ... *Jesus TIPPED OVER Human LOGIC like the TABLES in the TEMPLE, and He SCATTERED HUMAN REASON like the MONEY of the MONEY CHANGERS. He COMES with POWER! When JESUS TAUGHT, people REALIZED what they ASSUMED to be RIGHT could VERY WELL be WRONG.*

PAUL wrote ... **ROMANS 12:2 = *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.***

WHY? Because THAT is WHAT JESUS DOES on the ROAD / Journey...

Jesus WARNS of the DANGERS of the WORLD that will DERAIL His FOLLOWERS from BEING His FOLLOWERS! GREED is WORLD STUFF ... SELF-CENTEREDNESS is WORLD STUFF. WORRY ... REMEMBER: Jesus is NOT TRYING to TRAIN the WORLD NOT to be WORLDLY, He's TEACHING HIS FOLLOWERS NOT to be WORLDLY! JESUS DID NOT / DOES NOT EXPECT the NON-BELIEVERS to ACT like His Followers / CHRIST-LIKE. He KNOWS HOW the WORLD ACTS. JESUS EXPECTATION of US? BE DIFFERENT!

LUKE 14 ... JESUS at a SABBATH DINNER at a PHARISEE'S HOME. Jesus HEALS a MAN (on Sabbath), and the Pharisees can NOT SAY a THING. Jesus CHALLENGES the GUESTS to PRACTICE HUMILITY. READ IT!

FINALLY, Jesus DEFINED what HOSPITALITY IS and TAUGHT that GOD will REWARD TRUE HOSPITALITY ... not looking for anything in return. MORE to lead into ...

LUKE 14:13-14 = *Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. 14Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you.*

The Banquet Story:

THEN, Jesus gets a CHANCE at the DINNER to TEACH about KINGDOM STUFF in RESPONSE to THIS MAN'S STATEMENT ... next verse ... **LUKE 14:15 = *Hearing this, a man sitting at the table with Jesus exclaimed, "What a blessing it will be to attend a banquet in the Kingdom of God!"***

The JEWS saw HEAVEN as a FEAST at the TABLE of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ... with the PROPHETS as Honored Guests. This MAN, sitting at the TABLE of a Pharisee with JESUS was CONFIDENT HE would ONE DAY be at a BANQUET in the KINGDOM of GOD.

Then, JESUS told a STORY / PARABLE to tell how **HE** (Jesus) SAW the KINGDOM BANQUETS (BTW – Jesus will be IN CHARGE of those) and HOW this man’s FALSE CONFIDENCE DECEIVED HIM. Like Jesus saying, **“I’m NOT sure you UNDERSTAND HOW this is going to GO and/or WHO will BE AT the BANQUET...”**

LUKE 14:16-17 = **“Jesus replied with this story: ‘A man prepared a great feast and sent out many invitations. 17When the banquet was ready, he sent his servant to tell the guests, ‘Come, the banquet is ready.’”** Jesus tells a STORY of a MAN INVITING SPECIFIC / SPECIAL PEOPLE to DINNER... There was a GUEST LIST. There were the INVITED ... **#1 = The INVITED**

Write that down. Now, LET’S get a PICTURE of what a BANQUET like this would LOOK LIKE in the FIRST CENTURY. Back then there was LITTLE or NO FOOD STORAGE / REFRIGERATION / MICROWAVES / KITCHEN APPLIANCES, etc. THEREFORE, if YOU were going to INVITE people to a DINNER, it HELPED to KNOW HOW MANY were GOING to ATTEND. So, when you would INVITE GUESTS to DINNER, you TOLD them the DAY, but NOT the EXACT TIME of the MEAL. WHY?

Well, the HOST had to KNOW how MANY GUESTS were going to ATTEND so he KNEW HOW MANY ANIMALS to BUTCHER and how much OTHER FOOD to PREPARE. The INVITATIONS had to be SENT and REPLIED to BEFORE the DAY of the DINNER.

THEN, when the FOOD was READY, the SERVANTS would go BACK out and let the CONFIRMED GUESTS KNOW it was TIME to COME. So, DO NOT MISS this ... EACH of the GUESTS in this PARABLE had already RSVP’d for the DINNER FEAST. The HOST EXPECTED them to BE THERE!

Here’s what happened ... The SERVANTS go back OUT to tell the INVITED / RSVP’d GUESTS that the FOOD / FEAST is READY, BUT ... LUKE 14:18-20 = **“But they all began making excuses. One said, ‘I have just bought a field and must inspect it. Please excuse me.’ 19Another said, ‘I have just bought five pairs of oxen, and I want to try them out. Please excuse me.’ 20Another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’”**

They ALL MADE EXCUSES. NOT GOOD ones either. IF we KEEP in mind in the First Century BANQUETS took place in the EVENING ... had the DAY to prepare all the FOOD and EAT at NIGHT, we will NOTICE these EXCUSES were WEAK!

I JUST BOUGHT a FIELD – In those days, LAND PURCHASE was a LONG and DETAILED PROCESS. If you BOUGHT LAND, you’d have PLENTY of TIME to INSPECT the land BEFORE you BOUGHT IT. So, THAT NIGHT ... at NIGHT this INVITEE was going to INSPECT his NEW LAND? WEAK!

Another BOUGHT TEN OXEN and wanted to **“TRY them OUT.”** This MAN already AGREED to COME to DINNER and NOW he wanted to TEST his NEW OXEN ... at NIGHT? Unless those NEW OXEN came with HEADLIGHTS ... WEAK!

The THIRD GUY got MARRIED. OK. That’s pretty GOOD ... EXCEPT ... Jewish Weddings were SO ELABORATE and INVOLVED, this GUY would have KNOWN about the MARRIAGE LONG BEFORE he ACCEPTED the DINNER INVITATION. WEAK!

EXCUSES! ... Here’s the ROUGH PART: **These THREE INVITEES EXPECTED to get ANOTHER INVITE in the FUTURE ... but it NEVER CAME.** Instead ... LUKE 14:21 = **“The servant returned and told his master what they had said. His master was furious and said, ‘Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’”** NOW the MASTER has ALL the FOOD PREPPED and READY to EAT and NO ONE COMING to EAT IT ... He CAN’T just throw it in the FRIDGE!

He does NOT want it to GO to WASTE ... GOOD FOOD and TIME SPENT to PREPARE IT!
So, FORGET the INVITED! HE SENT HIS SERVANTS OUT to GATHER the CROWD ...

#2 = The CROWD

Write that down. Remember, JESUS is TELLING the STORY. He SENDS the SERVANT to the STREETS and ALLEYS. What KIND of people would the SERVANT FIND in the STREETS and ALLEYS? The POOR / OUTCASTS / HOMELESS. The UNDESIRABLE PEOPLE ... you know, The KIND of PEOPLE JESUS CAME to SAVE.

At the BEGINNING of LUKE 15 (Read It!), Religious Leaders COMPLAIN because JESUS is HANGING OUT with **“TAX COLLECTORS and Other NOTORIOUS SINNERS”** ... the UNDESIRABLE PEOPLE / the OUTCASTS. **Even EATING WITH THEM!**

Back to the STORY: The MASTER KNEW those people from the STREETS and ALLEYS would COME. Do you know WHY? **They had NO EXCUSES!** The POOR could NOT AFFORD OXEN. The BLIND could NOT LOOK OVER their LAND. And the OUTCASTS would NOT be GIVEN in MARRIAGE. And ... they were PROBABLY HUNGRY! I'd think THEY'D be EXCITED to ACCEPT such an INVITATION.

Jesus CONTINUES the STORY ... LUKE 14:22-24 = *After the servant had done this, he reported, 'There is still room for more.' 23So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full. 24For none of those I first invited will get even the smallest taste of my banquet.' ”*

MAYBE we DON'T THINK of our LOVING GOD as EVER getting truly ANGRY at US. But for **THOSE who REJECT HIS GRACE-FILLED INVITATIONS**, Jesus TELLS us HERE ... CLEARLY ... w/out STUTTERING ... there will be CONSEQUENCES.

Now, REMEMBER, Jesus is addressing a STATEMENT by a JEWISH MAN at a DINNER in a PHARISEE'S HOME. He's SPEAKING of the REJECTION of an INVITATION to ACCEPT JESUS as their MESSIAH ... and as they REJECT JESUS, The MESSIAH will be OFFERED to the OUTCASTS! Just a FEW DAYS after JESUS TELLS this STORY, He is REJECTED and CRUCIFIED by the CHOSEN people of GOD ... The INVITED.

Within a FEW MONTHS, the APOSTLES will GO into the STREETS, ALLEYS, and COUNTRY LANES ... to the SAMARITANS in ACTS 8 and then the GENTILES in Acts 10!

BUT this MESSAGE from JESUS ALSO APPLIES to US TODAY ... in the present!

#3 = The PRESENT

This STORY from JESUS APPLIES to the LOST. It applies to THOSE who have NOT SURRENDERED to JESUS as SAVIOR and LORD. JESUS is the MASTER in the STORY. WE, Followers of Jesus, ARE the SERVANTS ... and the MESSAGE is the SAME: **“COME! It's ALL READY for YOU! NOTHING ELSE needs to be DONE for the SALVATION of your SOUL. JESUS has PREPARED the FEAST in His KINGDOM by DYING for YOU on the CROSS and COMING BACK to LIFE ... Eternally! Your REDEMPTION is FINISHED! The FEAST is READY! The INVITATION is FREE! COME! For ALL ETERNITY!”**

But PEOPLE make the SAME MISTAKE TODAY that JESUS spoke of in the PARABLE. They DELAY in RESPONDING to the INVITATION to SURRENDER their LIVES to JESUS. WHY? They have **“BETTER THINGS TO DO...”** Oh, they are SUCH IMPORTANT THINGS...

YES, there are things in our lives that are IMPORTANT to do, as LONG as they do NOT PREVENT YOU from COMING to JESUS! Do NOT let the TEMPORARY CROWD OUT the ETERNAL! BTW – **“NOT NOW” = “NO! I do NOT accept your INVITATION!”**

Listen, the LOST (Sinners who do not TRUST JESUS for their SALVATION) who REFUSE JESUS INVITATION may NEVER get ANOTHER CHANCE. Jesus takes His INVITATIONS VERY SERIOUSLY. WE should TOO!

And the LOST are so IMPORTANT to JESUS. That is what LUKE 15 is ALL ABOUT ... LUKE 15:4, 8 = *“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? 8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won’t she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it?”* You should READ IT! Following JESUS in THIS LIFE is a FEAST, NOT a FUNERAL, and ALL are INVITED to COME.

IF we are BELIEVERS in JESUS, we will TAKE SERIOUSLY Jesus’ COMMAND to TAKE the MESSAGE to the STREETS, ALLEYS ... COUNTRY LANES, and BEHIND the HEDGES. Jesus SAID IT – **HE WANTS HIS HOUSE FULL!**

Hey **CHURCH, THIS is WHO WE ARE!** According to JESUS, YOU and I are the SERVANTS and WE are to GO WHEREVER The LOST ARE and INVITE them to ETERNITY in GOD’S PRESENCE ... a FEAST!

WHY? Because The LORD YOUR GOD wants HIS HEAVEN FULL!

THEREFORE, WE ... GO! **The COUNTRY ROADS and BEHIND the HEDGES ... OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ... The BACK ROADS. (Back Roads Church Slide Here)** THIS is WHO WE ARE, CHURCH (The BRIDE and BODY of CHRIST) ... SERVANTS in HIS KINGDOM, willing to HIT the BACKROADS to SERVE / INVITE / FILL HIS HOUSE!

BTW – If you’ve NEVER SURRENDERED to JESUS as your **SAVIOR** (The ONLY ONE who can FORGIVE YOU) and **LORD** (The RULER of your LIFE / HE now has CONTROL ... *you WORK to BECOME more LIKE HIM ... a SERVANT!*) ... IF you’ve NEVER SURRENDERED to JESUS for FORGIVENESS and LIFE DIRECTION, then you are NOT a MESSENGER / SERVANT. You HAVE NO MESSAGE to SHARE!

We are the SERVANTS! His COMMISSION: Go into ALL the WORLD and MAKE DISCIPLES... Let’s GET to WORK! Let’s HIT The BACK ROADS...

From TODAY ON ... We (7 LOCATIONS, + ONLINE) are BACK ROADS Global Methodist CHURCH. More about GMC soon...

Let’s Pray!

Next Steps: *Memorize Luke 14:23*

Read Luke 13-15

Invite someone to Worship with you Next Week for Truth for Relationships

Hosting (Closing)

HEY, it has been a GREAT DAY here at BMZ... Glad you've been here with us!
In a moment, we are going to RECEIVE the OFFERING so please take this time to finish COMPLETING any information.

- Or NEXT STEPS on your CONNECTION CARD (**FULLY FILLED OUT!!**)
- AND when our ushers come around to RECEIVE our OFFERING
- You can drop that card in the offering basket.

IF you are a First-Time Guest with us today

• We are so glad you joined us ... And we have a GIFT for you.
It's this book "**UNSHAKABLE**" and it's at the BACK TABLE / By the DOORS...

- all you need to do is HIT "**SEND**" your COMPLETED Connection Card

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As our ushers GET READY to come forward

- I just want to remind you ... STEWARDSHIP is DISCIPLESHIP ... we RECEIVE an OFFERING EVERY Sunday BECAUSE it's BIBLICAL ... AND it HELPS us GROW in our FAITH!
- STEWARDSHIP VERSE ... LUKE 14:22-23 = ²² *After the servant had done this, he reported, 'There is still room for more.'* ²³ *So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full.'*
- FIRST of our EARNINGS go back to the ONE who Blessed us in the first place! That's why WE/I do Automated Giving! I get paid ... the TITHE comes OUT FIRST!
- God's plan for BUILDING His Church was through TITHING and GIVING of the FOLLOWERS ... Share the GOOD NEWS! To REFRESH OTHERS!
- As Developing Followers of Jesus Christ, WE need to KNOW what the BIBLE says about GIVING ... NOT just what we THINK it should say.
- **MONEY is a HEART ISSUE.** And GOD wants what is BEST for your HEART! Listen, if GOD LOVES US so much that HE is willing to GIVE UP His OWN SON FOR US, WHY would GOD LEAD us ASTRAY in FINANCES?! USHERS ...
- Next Week: **TRUTH for RELATIONSHIPS ... What does GOD'S WORD SAY?**

"Truth without Grace is Fundamentalism (Brutality). Grace without Truth is Sentimentalism (Hypocrisy)."

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