



***We live in a culture
that tends to
worship at work,
work at play, and
play at worship.***

2

The context of Luke 14:16-24

“¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and **he who humbles himself shall be exalted**.¹² And He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return, and repayment come to you. ¹³ But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴ and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for **you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.**”

Note when the repayment takes place!

¹⁵ And when one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, “**Blessed is everyone who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!**””

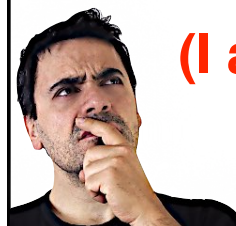
3

“¹⁶ But He said to him, “A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; ¹⁷ and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’¹⁸ But they all alike began to make **excuses**. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ ¹⁹ And another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ ²⁰ And another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.’ ²¹ And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became **angry** and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ ²² And the slave said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room’ ²³ And the master said to the slave, ‘**Go out into the highways and along the hedges**, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴ For I tell you, **none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.**’”⁴⁴

What are we to learn from this?

Sometimes it’s “good works” that keeps us from a relationship with God.

(I am not referring to the works of the flesh.)



5

Matthew 22

“³⁶ Teacher, which is **the great commandment** in the Law?” ³⁷ And He said to him,

‘You shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the **great and foremost** commandment.

³⁹ The second is like it, ‘You shall **love your neighbor** as yourself.’”

✓ The two are **inseparable**.

✓ The **order** is significant.

6

What's served at God's table?

shalom

John 14:27

“**Peace** I leave with you; My **peace** I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you, Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

koinonia

1 John 1:3

“what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have **fellowship** with us; and indeed our **fellowship** is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

NOTE what is not emphasized!

7

Insight #1

The blessings of God were missed by Israel in spite of her covenant relationship with and zeal for God along with conformity to the law.



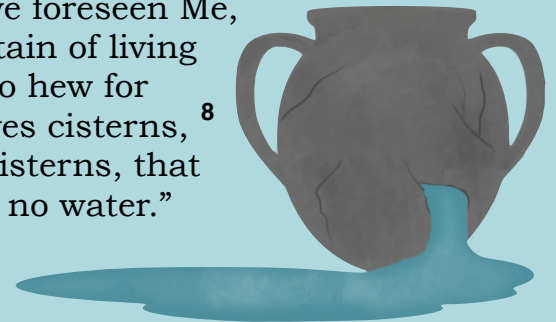
Why?

8

Ancient Israel's refusal to come to the table

Jeremiah 2:13

“For My people have committed two evils: They have foreseen Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, ⁸ broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”



9

Romans 10

“¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. ² For I testify about them that **they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge**. ³ For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who **believes**.”

Romans 9:30

“What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even **the righteousness which is by faith**.”

10

Luke 14:16-24 (Romans 11:17-24)

Gentiles are grafted in because of their belief.



Israel is cut off because of unbelief.

11

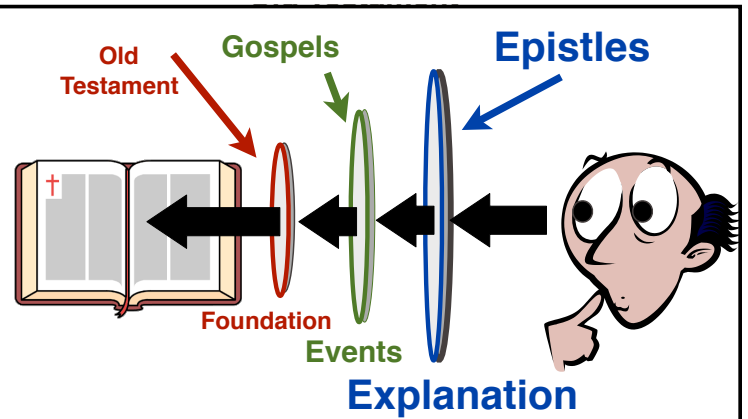
Romans 11

"17 But if some of the branches (**Israel**) were broken off, and you (**Gentiles**), being a wild olive, were grafted in . . . 20 . . . they were broken off for their **unbelief**, but you stand by your **faith**."



At first the Christian faith was entirely Jewish.
Today the Christian faith is almost entirely Gentile.

12



We understand the Biblical message through progressive lenses.

13

Romans

Righteousness and Faith	Righteousness and Israel	Righteousness and Living
(Faith)	(Hope)	(Love)
ch.1-8	ch.9-11	ch.12-16

Romans 1

"16 For I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the **righteousness** (moral virtue and just actions) of **God** is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'But the righteous man shall **live by faith**.'"

14

Romans

Righteousness and Faith	Righteousness and Israel	Righteousness and Living
(Faith)	(Hope)	(Love)
ch.1-8	ch.9-11	ch.12-16

If this is true then -



What about the promises to **Israel?**

What about **Christian Living?**

15

Romans

Righteousness and Faith	Righteousness and Israel	Righteousness and Living
(Faith)	(Hope)	(Love)
ch.1-8	ch.9-11	ch.12-16

✓ The Jews had reason to believe that Paul's gospel, which included Gentiles, **was excluding Israel**.

✓ These chapters address the question of **God's promise to Israel in light of the Christian Gospel that included Gentiles**.

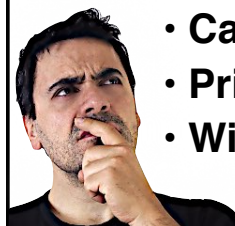
✓ Rom.9-11 provide a commentary on **Luke 14:16-24**

16

Insight #2

"Reasonable" excuses can be as damaging as "works of the flesh".

- Works of the flesh - Gal.5
- Cares of the world - Lk.8,10
- Prideful religion - Lk.15
- Wiles of the Devil - Matt.4



17

• Works of the flesh - Gal.5

Galatians 5

“19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: **immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these**, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Most of us would agree that these things are on our **“don’t do list”**.

18

• Revised version

Galatians 5

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which can be: **caring for marriage, family and property, showing hospitality, having zeal for God, enjoying the good things of life, claiming the promises of Scripture, and taking dominion in the world** of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who are distracted by such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”



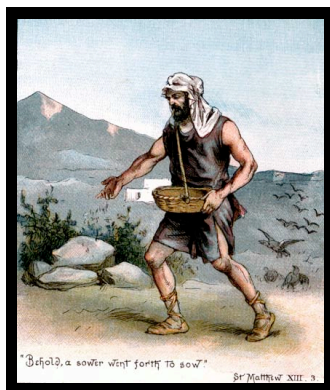
**Be a Berean
and check it out.**

19

• Cares of the world - Lk.8

**The
parable
of the
Sower**

Luke 8:4-15



20

Luke 8

“11 Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. . . . 14 And the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are **choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life**, and bring no fruit to maturity. 15 And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.”

Most of us might find these issues **less obstructive**, which is a big mistake.

21

“It is your work
in life that is
the ultimate
seduction.”

Pablo Picasso



22

• Cares of the world - Lk.10

**Mary and
Martha**

Luke 10:38-42



23

Luke 10

³⁸ Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was listening to the Lord's word, seated at His feet. ⁴⁰ But Martha was **distracted (drawn away)** with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." ⁴¹ But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are **worried** and **bothered** about so many things; ⁴² but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

This is getting closer to the edge of a "reasonable" excuse, but **it is still an excuse.**

24

"We take a new convert and immediately make a worker out of him. God would first have us teach him how to worship so that his work would have God in it."



***Worship comes
after God's work
and before ours.***

A.W. Tozer

25

• Prideful religion - Lk.15

**The
Prodigal
Son's
brother**



Luke 15:28-29

26

Luke 15

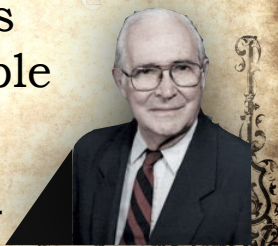
²⁸ But he became angry, and was **not willing to go in**; and his father came out and began entreating him. ²⁹ But he answered and said to his father, "Look! For so many years I have been serving you, and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a kid, that I might be merry with my friends;"

The Older Brother had "good works" yet he was **self excluded from the celebration** by his prideful spirit.

27

"The main thing between you and God is not so much your sins; it's your damnable good works."

John H. Gerstner



28

• Wiles of the Devil - Matt.4

**The
Temptation
of Jesus**

Matt.4:1-11



29

Matthew 4

“² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” ⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘*Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*’”

⁵ Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘*He will give His angels charge concerning You*’; and ‘*On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.*’” ⁷ Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘*You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.*’”

⁸ Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; ⁹ and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘*You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.*’”

30

Physical NEEDS.

“² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” ⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘*Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*’”

SCRIPTURAL promises.

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Kingdom DOMINION.

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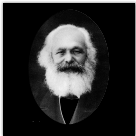
Are these really excuses? **YES INDEED!**

31

God’s Image, Creation, Conscience, and Suffering are God’s clues and call.

Don’t miss the call.

Marx



(detachment from the spiritual world)

Humanity needs social revolution.



Humanity needs Redemption

Buddha

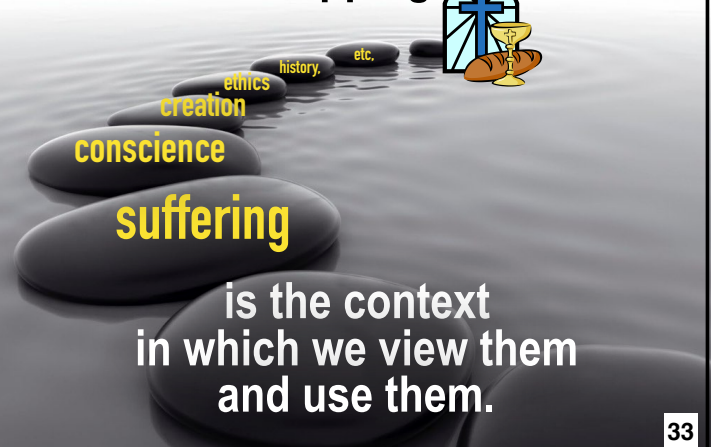


(detachment from the material world)

Humanity needs inner renewal.

32

The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones



is the context in which we view them and use them.

33

What should we take away from this lesson?

Knowing
(enlightened understanding)

The “good” can be an obstacle to God.

Believing
(inspired faith)

The main thing is to not let things that are not the main thing, become the main thing.

Doing
(action steps)

Identify and change my attachments to things that are keeping me from “the main thing”

34