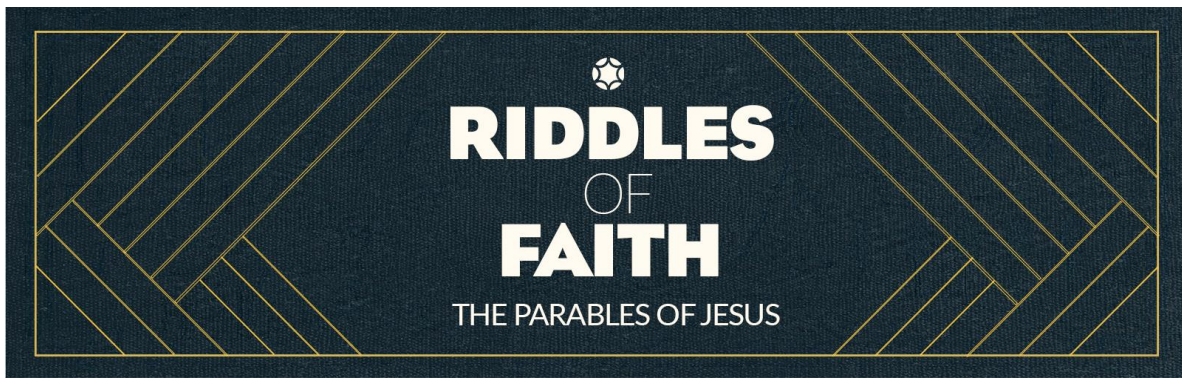




Group Guide

Week Nine // How to Build a Great Excuse

Scripture Focus

Luke 14:15–24

Big Idea

God graciously invites us to experience life in his Kingdom, and his invitation calls for a response. Jesus challenges us to recognize the excuses and competing priorities that can keep us from saying “yes” to God.

Read Together

Read Luke 14:15–24 aloud. As you read, notice the excuses the invited guests make and what the host does when they refuse to come.

Setting the Scene

Jesus tells this parable about a man preparing a great banquet. The host invites many guests, and when the banquet is ready, he sends his servant to tell them, “Come, for everything is now ready.” But instead of coming, the invited guests begin making excuses. One has purchased a field and says he needs to go see it. Another has bought five pairs of oxen and wants to try them out. Another has recently married and says he cannot come. One by one, people who have been invited to the banquet decide that something else deserves their attention.

Digging Deeper

At first glance, the excuses may not sound especially terrible. The problem is that good things have become reasons to reject the invitation. The parable invites us to consider the excuses we make in our own relationship with God. We may genuinely want to follow Jesus, grow spiritually, serve others, forgive someone,

become generous, or respond to something God is asking of us. Yet it is easy to say, “Not right now.”

When the original guests refuse the invitation, the host sends his servant into the streets and alleys to bring in “the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.”

When there is still room, he sends the servant out again so that his house will be full. The banquet reveals that there is room at God's table for people others might overlook or exclude. God's grace reaches beyond the boundaries people naturally create.

Group Discussion

Getting Started

- What stood out most to you from the sermon?
- What's the most creative excuse you've ever heard, or used, to get out of something?

Digging Into Scripture

- What do you notice about the excuses given by the invited guests?
- Why do you think Jesus uses ordinary things like property, work, and marriage in the story?
- What does the host's response tell us about the kind of people God welcomes to his table?

Personal Reflection

- What good things in life can most easily compete with your attention to God?
- How can busyness or good intentions become excuses for avoiding something God is inviting us to do?

Looking Forward

- Is there an invitation from God that you know you need to respond to?
- Who might God be inviting you to welcome, include, or make room for at the table?

Individual Application

This week, pay attention to the excuses you make for delaying something you already sense God inviting you to do.

- What have I been saying I will do “when I have more time”?
- What good thing might be competing with something God is asking of me?
- Where have I allowed good intentions to replace action?

Consider memorizing:

Luke 14:17

“Come, for everything is now ready.”

Closing Prayer

God, thank you for graciously inviting us into life with you. Forgive us for the times we allow busyness, comfort, or even good things to become excuses for not responding to you. Give us wisdom to recognize what competes for our attention and courage to say yes when you call. Help us also make room for others and reflect the generosity of your invitation. In Jesus' name, amen.