



Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.



When I was growing up in Barbados, one of my favorite holidays was Christmas. We didn't make a big deal about a tree (this was the tropics after all) or presents, but we made a big deal about food. For months before Christmas my mother and grandmother would make preparations for Christmas Day; black cake had to be made, drinks had to be ordered, and chickens had to be fattened (we raised our own).

In my house, no detail for planning Christmas Day was left unattended. When Christmas finally came we all donned our Christmas best and off to church we went. We were fed at Christ's table so that we could go home and feed others. All the preparation, all the planning, all the food was for unknown guests.

The tradition in my family was that we put out the most amazing food and drinks for whomever showed up at our door. The roasted chicken, the baked pork, and the endless supply of drinks were for the random people, both known and unknown, who would make their way to our door. The Christmas hospitality that my family offered to family, friends and strangers alike was about sharing not just what we had but about giving out of the abundance of blessings we had received throughout the year.

Our family's Christmas table is how I imagine the church. We offer a table that has been set with the finest we have to offer, not to showcase ourselves but to offer welcome and refreshment to everyone and anyone who stands in need. Like the king who threw a rich banquet, we can get caught up in inviting the "right" people to the table; but God is in the business of drawing circles wider and wider. God sends us out into the highways and street corners to call everyone to the lavishly prepared feast. Our generosity is about inviting others to richly appointed banquet. As people who follow Jesus our concern isn't about the kind of feast prepared but about the invitation to the scrumptious meal.

We are a people of hospitality, generosity, and welcome. The greatest gift we can offer others is a place at a table that has been set by the One who loves us infinitely and cares for us eternally. Our calling isn't just to say good things about Jesus but to live lives that declares to others the transformative presence of God. The wedding banquet is ready...



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Reflection Questions

- How do you experience the generosity of hospitality in your congregation?
- How do you find joy in being generous?
- Do you give from a sense of God's abundance in your life?