

Go! Compel them to Come In

Luke 14:23

Our text verse comes from a parable of our Lord, where once again He addressed the hypocrisy and self-righteous arrogance of the Pharisees. Having dealt with their teachings regarding the Sabbath and their desire for recognition, one of them spoke of the blessedness of having the privilege of eating bread within the Kingdom of God. Jesus seized this opportunity to deal with the eternal matters of salvation and the responsibilities associated with salvation.

While Jesus revealed much regarding the doctrines of salvation within this parable, I want to focus on our text verse and the how it relates to our obligations as believers. Those who are in Christ, saved by His grace and pardoned from condemnation, should have a compelling desire to reach those who are yet to receive salvation. I will admit, this verse brought deep conviction to my heart as I prepared this message.

I trust the Lord will deal with our hearts as we examine the [aspects](#) of this command. I want to preach on the thought: [Go! Compel them to Come In](#).

I. The Details within the Command (23) – *And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.* Our text is set within the context of a great supper. The master of the house had prepared a great feast, and most of the invited guests made excuses and asked to be excused from the feast. Determined to see people enjoy the meal, the master bade his servant find those to fill the house. With that context in mind, consider:

A. The Place Described – Had we taken the time to read the entire parable, we would have learned that the servant had already searched the streets and lanes of the city, and yet there was room for more (V.21.) The master then bade the servant to go out into the highways and hedges to find additional guests for the great feast. No doubt the servant may have known where to search, but he was not as familiar with the highways and hedges surrounding the city in the outlying areas. Nevertheless, at the master's command, the servant searched the highways and hedges, determined to find additional guests for the feast.

- Considering our responsibility to reach those who have yet to be saved, this presents a sobering challenge. We usually don't mind serving the Lord in those places that are familiar, the streets and lanes of our towns or communities, but that alone is never enough. We cannot be content to seek out those, solely within our areas of comfort. We too must be willing to go out into the highways and hedges, wherever the lost and perishing exist!

B. The People Desired (23) – *And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel **them** to come in, that my house may be filled.* Did you notice whom the master bade the servant to invite? He was sent out to compel “them” to come in. There is no description given, no prerequisites established. This was an open invitation for those the servant encountered, whoever they were. (Praise the Lord we serve One who compels all to come – whosoever will!) However, we do need to realize, those the servant encountered in the highways and hedges would have been considered “undesirable” by the Pharisees, and the majority at large. The master was unconcerned with their credentials or background; he wanted guests to enjoy his feast.

▪ As I pondered those the servant would have encountered, I imagined how some of them may have been. He likely encountered:

➤ **The Desperate** – We do know he had invited those within the city who were poor, maimed, halt, and blind, [V.21](#). If these were present in the city, it stands to reason they would have existed in the highways and hedges as well. We too encounter many who are desperate today. They are separated from God in sin, and seeking a means of hope. We must seek them out and share the Gospel with them!

➤ **The Defiant** – The highways and hedges were frequented by bandits and robbers, those who purposely chose to live a life of rebellion. Surely the servant encountered some of these along the way. Our world is filled with those who are living their lives the way they choose. They see no need of Christ and are uninterested in the Gospel. However, they are included in the “them” of the text. They may refuse our invitation, but that doesn’t excuse us from sharing our faith! In fact, if we are rejected the first time, we must be willing to go again, and again if necessary.

➤ **The Difficult** – Surely the servant encountered some who presented particular challenges. They may have appeared ungrateful or uninterested at first. These would have needed a little encouragement to respond. We all know those who are “difficult.” Some desire to argue, and have all those unanswerable questions. They may be mixed up spiritually, and need some patience and compassion. We cannot write them off just because they are difficult at times. We must be willing to compel them for Christ.

➤ **The Different** – No doubt the servant encountered many in the highways and hedges that were different than those in the city. Their dress was different; their preferences and way of life was different. They may not have been of the Jewish race. Remember, the servant was not given any prerequisites, just a command to compel “them” to come. We encounter many in our modern society who are different, but they need Jesus too! We cannot reserve our conversation for those who appear just like us. We too must seek out those who are different!

II. The Desire of the Command (23) – *And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.* As we read the command of the master of the house, it is easy to sense the desire he possessed. Consider:

A. The Passion – *and compel them to come in.* This reveals more than a mere invitation. It involves more than a casual, unconcerned conversation. It speaks of the “*power of persuasion, the sense of necessity.*” It doesn’t refer to physical force, but through our witness and persuasion. The master was passionate about the guests coming, and he expected the servant to convey his passion through a passionate and convincing invitation.

- Clearly, we need to regain our passion about the Gospel. As we share our faith, we are not speaking of current events or the latest cultural fad. We are speaking of the eternal God, coming to earth to die for our sin, so that we might be saved and reconciled to God. We can go with the power of the Spirit working on our behalf. (Take a moment to consider your salvation. Does that not create a sense of excitement in you? If it doesn’t, I’m not sure you have genuine salvation. The excitement we feel for what we have received, should motivate us to share our faith with passion, literally compelling others to come to Christ by faith!) [1 Cor.9:22-23 – To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.](#)
^[23] [And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.](#)

B. The Purpose – *Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.* The search of the servant was not without purpose. The master of the house had prepared a great supper; the meal was ready, and he desired the house to be filled with guests, enjoying the fruit of his labor. There had been too much time, effort, and expense put into this meal for the table to be empty. He wanted the house filled with guests to enjoy his offering of grace.

- Our command to share the good news of the glorious Gospel is not without consequence or purpose either. Like the master of the house, our Lord has made provision for mankind. He laid aside the glories He enjoyed in heaven, came to earth robed in a body of flesh, bled and died for our redemption, and rose again for our justification. He paid the ultimate price, offering Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin. Jesus desires the house to be filled. He is preparing a home in heaven for the saved. We will one day sit down at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
- This grace is available to all who come to Him by faith. The Master desires all to come and partake of the gracious provision He has secured. Our witness has divine purpose – reaching those who have yet to come to Christ in salvation. We have been given orders to take the Gospel to the world for the salvation of men!

III. The Directive in the Command (23) – *And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.* There is a small word within this command that we cannot overlook. The servant was commanded to GO! This was not given for his consideration, but with full expectation of his obedience. Consider:

A. The Urgency – There was no time to waste. The meal had been prepared and yet there was room for more guests. The master desired more people to attend the supper. There was a specific timeframe in which the task must be completed. Tomorrow would be too late; the servant had to find and compel the guests to attend the meal that day!

- I pray we are beginning to sense the urgency of our day. The return of our Lord is at hand. Those who are saved by His grace, included in the body of Christ, will be called out to meet the Master when He returns. None are promised tomorrow. Preparations to be included in the Lord's eternal plan must be made in this life. Death is certain, and it is coming to all of us if the Lord doesn't soon come. Tomorrow may be too late! We must compel them to come while the invitation to come and dine is being extended.

B. The Activity – The word Go is an action word that expects and requires participation. In order to fulfill the master's command, the servant had to actively and purposely pursue guests for the supper. Knowing where to find them was great, but that wasn't enough. In order to hear the invitation, he had to go where they were and invite them. He had to seek them out.

- For years the church has had this command turned around. Instead of going out and pursuing those who have yet to come to faith in Christ, we expect them to come to us. Churches use radio, internet, and social media to broadcast their service and event times, and simply assume the masses will show up. We know that approach has failed miserably. Jesus did not command us to sit and wait for them to come to us; He commands us to go to them! If Fellowship is experience the salvation of men, women, and children, we must be willing to take the Gospel to them, compelling them to believe in Christ by faith. That is the biblical model we read over and over again. Reaching our community for Christ requires some good, old fashioned work.

Conclusion: This is a passage most of us know well, but how often do we practice its teaching? Are we willing to go out into the highways and hedges of our community, to engage people where they are, and as they are with the Gospel? There are no prerequisites. We are commanded to compel "them" to come in. Will you join me in the pursuit of those who need Christ? Will you make a renewed commitment to follow our Lord's command to share our faith with the world?

If you have yet to receive Christ, the invitation is extended to you. Come to Him by faith today, repenting of sin and believing in Him for salvation!