

An urgency, an invitation. 251 years ago today, the Continental Congress enacted the first institution of our country, which came to be known as the US Army. Washington appointed commander. Urgency, militia of farmers and shopkeepers in April involved in 'a shoot heard round the world' at Lexington and Concord.

The invitation went out for soldiers. Plenty of reasons, excuses not to pick up arms and fight. Only 40% of the colonists were patriots, the rest were neutral, pacifist, or loyalist. 1000 men came forward and this army will grow and brings us to celebrate 250 years this July 4th Declaration of Independence, even as Revolutionary war goes on for 5 more years until Yorktown.

A small group of men left their fields, their yoke of oxen, their wives, to join a cause worthy of sacrifice, even their life and this repeated many times over in our country for the freedoms we now enjoy.

Jesus gives a parable about an urgency, an invitation, of eternal matters. A man said, **Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.** The parable, meant as a rebuke. The urgency, invitation is not in the future **will eat**, but the Bread of Life, Kingdom of God, now in the person of Jesus before them, before you. Parable, so many reject Him then, as now. Plenty of excuses.

Blessed is he who hears the Word of God –now. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven –now. Blessed is he who recognizes in Mary's Son the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world –now. **Blessed are you who eat bread in the kingdom of God** -now from this Altar. The Kingdom of God intimately tied the Messianic banquet celebration given in the Lord's Supper.

Land, oxen, wife, are absurd excuses; but are any of our excuses, not attend to the things of God any better. Why we don't do more in the Kingdom, serve more, give more, love more. Why we don't seem to have much time for Bible study, devotions, prayers. But we can get to things later. Certainly God understands any our excuses. Or does He? In the parable He's angry, brings judgment. Repent.

An urgency and invitation. But for how long? You have a duty in your household, to loved ones, family, friends, neighbors: to teach the faith, confess to others, encourage them, prayer for them, don't give up on them, invite them, that they too may feast in this Kingdom, for the invitation is coming to an end; for outside of this feast is only judgment and hell.

An urgency. An invitation. Make no excuses. The Lord invites the dregs of society: **Bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.** The likes of us. If not physically, just as much true regarding your faith.

Poor, pathetic in eyes of the world, poor -robbed of our joy, our strength, in struggles against the devil and world. **Crippled** to take actions according to God's word. **Blind** to see the things of God by faith, blind to the needs of others. **Lame** in motivation for good works, to serve others. God help us.

Learn this: we are beggars. Those who cannot help themselves, not satisfied with their own righteousness, will find mercy. The banquet is given in grace. To you nothing to offer, no worthiness, nothing to give in return.

The death of Jesus, His resurrection covers your sins; come into the banquet as beggars but be seated as kings. **There is still room** refers even to you.

An urgency, invitation. There's no war within you that Jesus cannot end with peace. There's no wound in your soul so deep that he cannot heal it with his love. Your life may be filled with chaos and failure, whether you're beaten down, worn out, feel defeated, despair, loneliness, come and receive His Kingdom now to restore you, feed you, strengthen you; what comfort, that no man or evil can take this Kingdom, this feasting from you.

This Kingdom, this great banquet, embrace the urgency, invitation, to join a cause worthy of sacrifice, even your own life, for yours is a life that cannot die. Feast now from this Altar the bread of immortality. Blessed are you to eat the bread of life and have the Kingdom. **Come for everything now is ready.** Be filled by Him.