

Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin
August, 2020
Isaiah 55:1-5

Nothing in life is free. When you hear of something that is too good to be true, it probably isn't true. There has to be a catch. You have to read the fine print. There's no such thing as a free lunch, is there? I'm sure the people of Isaiah's time had similar expressions.

What a surprise it must have been when Jesus fed the crowd of 5,000 men, not counting women and children, with five loaves and two small fish. Free fish and bread! All you can eat! Everyone ate and there were twelve baskets of leftovers!

Wouldn't it be great if Jesus did that for us today? Maybe not fish, but how about all you can eat free burgers and fries? Or, all you can eat free fried chicken? Or, all you can eat free pizza? Or, all you can eat free prime rib? I know what you are thinking; Pastor Meier, stop it! That's not going to happen! There's no such thing as a free lunch!

Or is there?

In our text God tells us that He wants to feed us, and what He offers is better than anything you can get anywhere. God gives us spiritual food that satisfies our souls. And that "soul food" is free! There is no limit on how much we can eat. This food is for everyone. It is God's "free lunch" for you, for me, for everyone, everywhere.

This is a great offer! But you have seen good offers before, haven't you? I recently read an ad that said, "Buy one ear piercing at twice the cost and get the second ear pierced free." That's a deal, isn't it?

In every deal there seems to be a catch. You get a free phone, but you are locked in to overpay for the service for two years. You get a free dinner, but it's only good for a meal that is of equal or lesser value than the one you have to purchase.

OK, God, free food? What's the catch? Let's read the fine print to see who the offer is for and when this offer will expire. Isaiah, the spokesman for God records the offer: Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Like a vendor in a stadium, the Lord calls out, "Get your water! Get your wine! Ice cold milk here! Grab a bite to eat!

The best food around is right here, folks. Come and get it!"

Who is this offer for? God didn't say, "Come, all of you who have \$1 million in your retirement account. He didn't say the offer was for those with a great credit score. He didn't say the offer was good for those who never got a speeding ticket. God doesn't exclude anyone!

This offer is not just for the Jews, God's OT chosen people. God said it is for the "nations", a word that was often used to refer to the Gentiles, the non-Jews. No one is excluded based on nationality, race or where you live.

When does this offer expire? God says, I will make an ever-lasting covenant with you. The word "everlasting" means that this offer will last forever. There is no "while supplies last" disclaimer. This is no "limited time offer." There is no "expiration date" to this offer of God's grace. This offer is good for all people of all time.

The Lord says exactly who the offer is for: Come, all you who are thirsty. He says, Your soul will be delighted. This is a spiritual offer. It is for those who wish to enter God's heaven.

This offer is an open invitation. It is not a limited offer. It will never expire. It is a great offer for – you!

But can we afford this spiritual feast? No, we can't afford it! The cost is too high. You can't buy your way into heaven with a credit card, no matter how good your credit score rating is, no matter how high your credit limit is. To enter heaven requires absolute perfection, no sin, ever, always doing what is right in God's eyes. And we can't do that!

But, look at what God says, You who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come without money and without cost. But we are spiritually bankrupt. God says, There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins. This offer doesn't cost us anything but it cost Jesus, the Son of God, everything! Salvation is a free gift of God's grace to all who are spiritually thirsty.

You don't have to listen to a salesperson for hours trying to sell you a timeshare property. God simply says, Listen...give ear...and hear me... Do

nothing. Pay nothing. Just listen to Jesus tell you that He paid for all your sins!

Although it sounds too good to be true, God's offer of heaven is free! There is nothing we can do. Listen to Paul's words, It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God!

We often think that if it doesn't cost much, a gift can't be worth much. After all, "You get what you pay for." Well, not in this case. God's free lunch is a real value, a real treasure, a great deal.

What is God offering in this free lunch? He says, Give ear and come to Me; hear Me, that your soul may live. The offer is for eternal life. The Lord says, I will make an everlasting covenant with you. God does the work. We do nothing.

The everlasting covenant the Lord offers to all who thirst, is none other than Jesus Christ. Jesus became a human being, giving up His home in heaven. Jesus suffered God's anger in hell for us so that we could eat God's free lunch of salvation without cost. Through Jesus we enjoy the food and drink of God's grace.

- As water refreshes the body, drink the refreshing waters of God's forgiveness and quench your thirst.
- As wine makes you relaxed, drink the wine of the gift of heaven that is ours through Jesus and be glad.
- As milk nourishes the body with its vitamins and proteins, drink from the milk of God's Word and nourish your faith.
- Enjoy what God offers in the feast of His grace.

It is only through Jesus that we can have true peace and happiness. Only through Jesus!

When we consider how great our sins are and the punishment of hell that we deserve, the value of our possessions quickly changes as well. The feast of God's grace in Christ is all that matters in this life. Our Savior, our forgiveness, our peace with God, our sure hope of heaven is more important than anything this world has to offer!

Make the feast of God's grace your priority in this life. When people see

the peace that you have in spite of the problems you have, they will wonder why. When those people come running to you, take them out to lunch! Share your Savior and the hope for eternity He gives you.

God's free lunch is for everyone. It is free. It is good for you. And you will enjoy it forever.

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