

The Lord is Throwing a Party and We are All Invited!

And what a party it's going to be! It is a party that will last forever! There has never been anything like it and once you know more about it, you surely won't want to miss it. Although everyone is invited, there is a catch, a pre-qualification, for admission. You see, it is sort of like a costume party where prizes are given for the best costumes. At this party, however, they will judge the costumes at the gate and only those with appropriate costumes will be allowed in. "Well, you ask, "how does one know what kind of costume will win admittance to the party?"

That's an easy one. This party was planned many years ago, and the Lord wrote a Book of instructions at that time and on this very subject. In fact, He wrote two Books. The first book of instructions, which told how to dress for the party, seemed to be very strict and didn't leave much room for error. And over time it got so badly misunderstood and poorly followed that He decided to come here Himself, in the body of Jesus Christ, in order to both simplify and clarify these instructions, to give us clues as to what the party would be like, and to officiate most directly over the writing of the second Book. He even went so far as to sacrifice His earthly body in order to compensate for some of our weaknesses, as well as to impress on our souls the seriousness of His commitment to us and the depth of His love for us. Then He gave us the ultimate proof of His power and sincerity when He actually came back to life after having been dead for three days. He even walked around for quite a while among His friends, in His resurrected body, demonstrating how the eternally reunited body and soul can transcend time and space. He did this, for instance, by suddenly being in a closed room full of people without entering through any opening. While there, He ate and talked, and some of His friends even touched Him to verify that He was actually there in the flesh. He could even disappear just as easily and quickly as He appeared.

Before He left for the last time, He told His friends that He was going to heaven to get set up for the party. Well, He didn't actually discuss the party at that time, but He did mention it as a parable in Matthew 22. Also, He did, in fact, say that He was heading

back to prepare rooms, that is, places where all of us who qualify, will be staying while at the party and forever more. His friends were so impressed and so excited about the party and all that He had shown them, they spent the rest of their lives, some writing parts of His second book, but all of them spreading the Word and telling everyone what they needed to know about how to get the right costumes so that they could get into the party. There were powerful people who didn't want anyone to hear this message and tried very hard to suppress it. In fact, every one of these friends of Jesus were so certain of His message that they subjected themselves to incredible tortures, and all but one were themselves killed rather than disclaim His divinity.

“Well that's great. I'm impressed,” you say. “He was quite a guy and His friends really believed in Him, but this costume business sounds too complicated and I'm not much for parties, so I think I'll sit this one out.” O.K., you can do that. You can skip this party if you really want to. Certainly your free will allows that choice. However, once you fully understand the significance of that choice, you may feel differently. You see, there are actually two parties going on and you, all of us, in fact, will have to go to one of them; there is no other choice.

There is only one gate leading to the Lord's estate and it is quite narrow. This is because He wants to inspect each costume individually and to greet each of us personally. If you are wearing the right costume, you are in. Otherwise, you must go to the other party where there is open admission, wide open gates, and no costumes, just come as you are, the more raunchy the better. “Hey, I like that better anyway,” you say. “No book of instructions to follow, no costumes, come as you are, that sounds like the better choice, if I have to go anywhere.”

That may sound pretty good, but before you firm up that decision, there are a few other differences to consider. If you could view the approaches to the Lord's gate, you would probably notice an orderly column of people. They would appear quite calm, comfortable, and all having tranquil but smiling faces. It would also be difficult not to notice a beautiful aura of intense spiritual love surrounding each of these partygoers.

Actually this aura is a major part of the costume. The clincher for admission however, and the part that you probably will not see unless you look very closely, is the underlying garment of spiritual armor each is wearing. The stitching and patches and repatches on these garments are the badges of honor, and victories in battles fought for the privilege of reaching this narrow gate.

There you have it, the whole enchilada. It's easy as 1, 2, 3, Read, understand and believe the Word that is the Bible. Learn who Jesus is and why. After this, faith and love are only short steps away from creating the whole costume and thus passage through the gate.

If you were to visit the approaches to the other party, you would probably see a broad boulevard and a wide-open gate. The boulevard would be crowded with people appearing to have a variety of moods. It would be a "no holds barred" atmosphere, anything goes, no rules, no laws, no restraints, whatever feels good is good. Do your own "thing" and enjoy, no costumes necessary here. Be a good guy if you want, follow the golden rule, be honest, do good deeds, even practice any variety of religions, no problem. But just don't come with any of that spiritual armor stuff, no Jesus freaks are allowed to go through this gate. That is the only thing not allowed here. Everything else is O.K.

"Well, I'm still not convinced that I should change parties," you say. "This other party looks pretty good to me."

O.K., then let's try, if we can, to see what's inside each of these gates. We don't know too much about this because no one has ever left either party to come back and tell us about it. However, the Lord, in little sidebars in the Old and in the New Testament, did give us some clues from which we can get a pretty good idea about what to expect, and what our life at the party will be like in the long term. And the long term it is, because once we pass through the gate, it is forever, and that's a long time. It is a never-ending

party we are going to, one from which we can never return, so we had better be sure to pick the right one.

The most that I can tell you about the Lord's party is that it will be great and never disappoint anyone. He is the Host and He will be there making sure that everything is perfect and that you are happy. If you are one of those who chose Him, He already knows it and has a place waiting for you. One thing is certain; you will be in great company with guys like Noah, Abraham, Daniel, Isaiah, and Ruth, Paul, Peter, etc. What stories they can tell! "Who are they?" you ask. They are a few of the greatest people who ever lived! If you get into the Instruction Book, you will learn a great deal about them and many others. Then you will be eager to know them. But, if you choose the other party, knowing them won't be important. I know also that there won't be any pain, suffering, hate, greed, envy, hunger, deceit, lies or crime at the Lord's party. You see, all of those things have been scooped up, put in a container, and shipped somewhere else that I will tell you about in a minute. The most succinct thing that I can say about the Lord's party is that once you qualify for admission, there is nothing that you could conceivably hope for that will not be there waiting for you to enjoy, forever.

Now, let's look through the other gate at the party that is going on there. From outside the gate it is going to look great. Just inside the gate, I'm sure you will see a few smiling faces, because they will be new comers looking at a very impressive façade. But remember this is the great deceiver's party. He earned that name and lives up to it every moment. He is the father of all lies. That façade is one of His finest achievements. It is meant to be seen from outside the gate to serve as a lure, to deceive, and create an impression as false as he is. What you can see is the greatest, the mother of all Potemkin Villages, a movie set façade better than the best that Hollywood could ever create. Behind it is the real party, the real place, where everyone who passes through that gate stays throughout eternity. This is also where our Lord took all that pain and suffering and other bad stuff mentioned above. It was dumped and spread around behind the façade where everyone at the party will be up to their necks in it.

You can meet some great people there too, great in the earthly sense, but absent from any spiritual quality. You might like to converse with the likes of Hitler, Mao, Stalin, or even some of the Caesars, and Popes, as well as other religious icons. There will surely be many others of the world's great leaders, scientists, philosophers and most assuredly many American politicians. But that stuff that was dumped and spread around will be keeping everyone there too busy crying, screaming and "gnashing teeth" to be able to hold any kind of conversation. So, if you go there, you can expect plenty of stimuli, but not the intellectual kind, or any other pleasant kind.

Well, that's about all that I can tell you at this time. Many believe that there are other options such as repetitive re-birth into a series of lives here on earth. Others believe that there is nothing, no heaven, no hell, no God, no Satan. The only limit to how many different kinds of beliefs there are is the limit of Satan's imagination and his ability to plant them in receptive minds. He wants to have the biggest party and will do everything in his power to make it so. He knows that the only truth is God's word, as recorded in the Bible, and does everything in his power to discredit it and to limit its acceptance. Once you are able to shed yourself of his influence, and read and understand God's Holy Words, even the devil's most elaborate concoctions, even his Potemkin village will not fool you.

My advice is that you had better start checking this out, and make your choice based on fact, not fiction. Time is of the essence, because none of us knows when we will be hit by a train, a cancer, or get a really bad cold and suddenly find that "default" made the choice for us. We have all been invited to both parties; we must R.S.V.P. to one or the other. Only your choice and commitment will get you into God's Party. Without specific acts in this matter, you automatically end up at Potemkin village.