

# A FORMAL APOLOGY

*"I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."*

**Proverbs 25:6-7**—Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great; for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

The Rule of the Congregation (or Messiah)—  
1Q28a; Dead Sea Scrolls

**Luke 14.1-6**—One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. There in front of him was a man suffering from abnormal swelling of his body. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him on his way. Then he asked them, "If one of you has a child or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull it out?" And they had nothing to say.

**Luke 14.7-15**—When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this person your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. For or all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed are those who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

**Luke 14.16-24**—Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.' "The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' " "Sir," the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and urge them to come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

"That the world may be healed." — John 3.17

All Texts Quoted from the NRSV Unless Otherwise Noted

### Advocacy and Activism:

The Christian community, therefore, is that community that freely becomes oppressed, because they know that Jesus himself has defined humanity's liberation in the context of what happens to the little ones. Christians join the cause of the oppressed in the fight for justice not because of some philosophical principle of "the Good" or because of a religious feeling of sympathy for people in prison. Sympathy does not change the structures of injustice. The authentic identity of Christians with the poor is found in the claim which the Jesus-encounter lays upon their own life-style, a claim that connects the word "Christian" with the liberation of the poor. Christians fight not for humanity in general but for themselves and out of their love for concrete human beings.

- James H. Cone ; The God of the Oppressed

### Warning:

"For I tell you, none of those who were first invited will taste my dinner."

Basis of Your Assurance

### Promise:

So the my house will be full and the wedding garment of Matthew 22.

No one outside of the invitation.

All Siblings of the same Parents.

## Egalitarian Vocation Vs Hierarchical Status

### Accommodation, Concession and Ideal

"King-dom"

Patriarchy

Slavery

National Exceptionalism

Violence

### Evangelical Christianity Today:

#### Examples of Status:

Righteousness

Holiness

"Saved"

Favor

Blessing

Morally Superiority

#### What Vocation Looks Like:

1. Humility

2. Service

3. Advocacy and Activism

4. Love

## Is This What We Are Known For?

### Attraction vs. Avoidance

"I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."—Mahatma Gandhi

We find ourselves back in the story, with the same events transpiring again:

We must allow this parable to confront us:

### A Warning and A Promise

### My Story

