



# Life of Christ

A study of the life and teachings of Jesus

## Prepared Potatoes

*by Bridget Keylor*

I love a good potato. And until recently, I thought I made a good potato. But over the last few months I realized my potato skills were lacking. Or, better put, my potato timing was off. The first time I realized this, we were spending time with friends at a lovely cabin by an even lovelier creek. We planned a great meal of grilled meats and my only responsibility was to oven-roast the potatoes. But I was enjoying watching the kids play in the creek and my friend attempting to launch his kayak into the water, and I waited too long to put them in the oven. The result was delicious gourmet burgers with a side of semi-raw potatoes. Good friends who overlook your cooking fails are precious gifts.

The second time, I was feeding some of my favorite teenage dudes chicken sliders and waffle fries. I completely miscalculated how many waffle fries would fit into my hot oil skillet. While the fries tasted amazing and were piping hot, my chicken sandwiches were already cold by the time they sat down to eat. Thankfully, teenage dudes are not kitchen critics.

The final time was not my fault. Honestly, I was making my now infamous garlic mashed potatoes. Over the last few months I had perfected my technique and timing because I really want my family to enjoy them, and I really love a creamy, flavorful mound of potato goodness. The peeling, the boiling, the mashing, the mixing: all steps that create a 40-minute process that is worth every bite. I had felt rushed by the dinner time my husband had set with some of our favorites we were dining with, but I was determined to not let the taters get the best of me.

I watched the boiling pot, mixed like a pro, and—minus a few lumps—had a creamy mixing bowl full of mashed potatoes with five minutes to spare. But alas, our people were unavoidably delayed and I did all I could to keep the side dish warm until they arrived. Unlike the other two instances, I didn't feel like I had let down my family this time. I had planned and prepared and had not become distracted by the world around me. When we did sit down to eat that night, I only tasted the victory (and the butter).

Jesus' parable in Luke 14 is a definite challenge to those who had ears to hear to be ready for the Kingdom of God, to be so expectant for it that you are always preparing for it. As the parable unfolds, it becomes obvious that the man giving the dinner was eager to invite people to his table, preparing lavishly for his guests. But it is also clear that his

guests were not as expectant and let other distractions get in the way of the dinner and their relationship with the generous man. So, because of their excuses, they missed it; they missed all that the man had prepared for them.

Am I missing it? Am I full of distractions and excuses?

The thing that truly divides the two groups was hunger. One group was totally unaware of how hungry they were and went about their business. The other group was completely aware of their hunger, and would eagerly head to any table offering them food. As I read the parable, I so want to be one of the people the slave runs out into the streets and finds and brings into the banquet. Although, I recognize I am much more like the busy and excused-filled guests. But I want to be hungry. I want to know my need and be expectant for Jesus to fill that need and leave me longing for more of Him and the Kingdom of heaven.

Are you hungry? Are you longing for His Kingdom to come? Let go of your excuses and focus your attention on what is eternal.

**Question** Are you living every day in such submitted obedience to God that no matter when the moment comes, you are ready to meet Him?

**Family Chat** As a family, ask Jesus if there is something standing between you and God. Is there something standing between you and each other? Pause and listen during your prayer; He will talk to you. :)

**Take Action** Today, share with someone in your sphere of influence what your relationship with God means to you.