

"The Hospitality of God" | Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt | August 22, 2021

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

7 And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.

9 It will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Romans 12:1-2, 9-13

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. **13** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, **17** even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Luke 14:12-24

He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. **13** But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, **14** and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

15 When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" **16** But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. **17** And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' **18** But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' **19** And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.' **20** And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' **21** So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' **22** And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' **23** And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. **24** For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"

Key Points and Discussion Questions from Tim's Sermon:

Introductory Discussion

Tim read from C.S. Lewis essay titled *The Inner Ring*. Do you identify with the notion of an inner ring? What is the most prevalent Inner Ring in your life at present? How are you experiencing it?

Tim's Sermon presents the Fundamental Calling of The Church in a culture of people desperately seeking "inner rings."

1. The Challenge (Luke 14:12-14)

Tim likens the metaphor of the banquet to any *quid pro quo* (this for that) culture.

- What are some of our current "banquets" that, if Jesus were to attend, He might challenge us to change our guest list? What sorts of gatherings do we host?
- Have you ever invited someone to an event who you didn't have to invite, or who you didn't stand to gain any benefit from? Conversely, have you ever been invited to an event/place/location where you knew you could never offer anything like that in return? Discuss.
- True/False. It is wrong to build relationships with those who can help us advance in life. Discuss.

2. The Excuse (Luke 14:15-20)

- What is the common theme/element behind the excuse offered by those who decline to attend the banquet?
- How would these men be described in our culture?
- What is the excuse behind the excuses?
- Imagine a stranger were allowed to survey your life, interests, commitments of time and energy, including social media. What would that stranger say are your "priority banquets"? Discuss.
- Share about your personal "Return on Investment" of your time and energy for one or two of your priority banquets? What have these pursuits given back to you?

3. The Image (Luke 14:16)

- Tim suggests that the image of a man hosting a great banquet might be the most fundamental image of God in the Bible. Do you agree/disagree?
- How do you feel about that image informing our mission/vision as a Church?
- Tim suggests two competing images of God that dominate our culture. What were they? What failure (to describe God) do they share?
- Tim presents a montage of Biblical "feast" images from the Bible. What were some that he mentioned?
- Tim points out how Jesus is both Host and Guest at the heavenly banquet. What did he mean by this?

Closing Exercise

- In very practical ways, what would it mean for you to identify with Jesus as a host of the heavenly banquet? As a guest?
- What about us (All Saints) as a Church?