

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (September 11, 2022)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Today is a day those of a certain age will not forget. We remember the tears, the lost lives, the shock. And we remember that buildings will fall, and life itself will end, but Jesus remains our only hope.

Part I (14:7-11): In Jesus' day, as today, there were "status symbols" that helped people enhance their high standing in society. If you were invited to the "right homes" and if you were seated in the "right places," then people would know how important you were. The emphasis was on reputation, not character. And so, in the first parable, Jesus counsels us to take the lowest seat, to forget our public image, because the Kingdom of God is about finding our identity in the One who knows us best.

Part II (14:12-15): When we are invited to a dinner or banquet, we enjoy time with family and friends. We want to return the favor. That's the way we often live, it's our comfort zone.

But Jesus teaches that we should invite those who are in need, and those who need Him. Jesus wants us to invite those who cannot repay us. We follow Christ when we do just that. Our reward, we are told, will come later.

Part III (14:16-24): The third part of Jesus' dining etiquette reveals the heart of the host, and the hearts of each invited guest. Each makes an excuse, and each excuse seems, at first hearing, reasonable. But they reject the generosity of the host, the door is shut, they are forever outside. Oh, may we stop with our excuses!

The Invitation ... in Three Parts (Luke 14:7-24)

^{14:7} Now He (Jesus) told a parable to those who were invited, when He noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, ⁸ "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, ⁹ and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

¹² 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.'"

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. How does Jesus view being honored (v.v. 7-11)?
2. What will be our reward if we invite those who cannot repay?
3. How would you describe the man providing the banquet?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

4. What does this passage teach you about the differences between Kingdom values and current social values?
5. In verse 7, Jesus observes subtle social behavior. What does that tell you about his ability to observe your behavior?
6. What does, "bring in the poor, crippled, blind and lame" mean?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

7. Who do you invite to your home for dinners and banquets?
8. What excuses have some used to keep God at a distance?
9. Who should you invite over for a meal? Think and discuss.

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering, part of your day. Pray for a generous and compassionate heart. Ask God to help you invite others. As you invite those who cannot repay, remember God's gracious invitation to you. God invites you because He loves you.