

“A Dinner with the Son of Man” Luke 14:1-24

Please Stand and Open Your Bibles to Luke 14:1-6

As we are continuing our verse-by-verse study of the Book of Luke, we are reminded that we are in a long section called the “Travel Discourses”. These started back in Chapter 9...

Luke 9:51

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem

And we were reminded last week...

Luke 13:22-23

And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

These stories on His journey to Jerusalem will continue until Chapter 19:28 when He begins His Triumphant Entry. Most of these discourses are directed toward the Pharisees and religious leaders that are rejecting Him as the Messiah. He confronts them and then teaches His disciples. This pattern will continue today as we see Jesus being invited to dinner by one of those that do not believe in Him.

Luke 14:1

Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.

Now this is another story that is unique to Luke, and we have no context except it was one of the places that He is passing through on His way to Jerusalem. It was a common practice that these leaders would have a dinner on the Sabbath and invite people to come. These dinners were often extravagant to show off how religious they were. They would prepare the feast in advance so as not to do any work on the Sabbath and thereby showing they are the example. They would keep the door open so the people could gather outside and listen to the ruler share and, in this case, they purposely invited Jesus so that they could keep an eye on Him. Let's remember some of the things we have learned about this group during His journey to Jerusalem...

Luke 10:14-15

And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

Luke 11:53-54

And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.

Luke 14:14

But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”

Luke 14:31

On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”

So now these guys want to eat with Him? See how you can now look at the statement “they watched Him closely”? This makes me think this is what David had in mind...

Psalms 23:5

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies...

With that thought let us look back over what we just read when we opened.

Jesus heals on the Sabbath, again!

Luke 14:1-6

Doctor Luke makes sure that we know what kind of condition this man has. Dropsy, only used here in the New Testament is a Greek word that means “A Countenance Full of Water”. Dropsy is a condition where your body accumulates a dangerous excess of fluids. Again, we have ample evidence from the scriptures that this guy was most likely a plant to see if Jesus would heal on the Sabbath but before they could say anything Jesus speaks to the Pharisees and Lawyers. I think they know this has happened before and that is why they don’t answer Him. Then He heals the guy and says the same thing He said in the last chapter, and they just kept silent and did not know how to answer. Do you know that I have counseled people that are just looking for me to say what they want to hear? When you give them a Biblical answer that does not suit them, they just sit there and shake their head. They don’t like Jesus because He doesn’t follow their traditions.

Now Jesus is going to share three different teachings to those who are part of this dinner. You need to understand something about the way they ate dinner in those days. They sat at a table that had three sides to it, and they all leaned on one side facing one side. They had a place of honor for the main guest and one side of the table going down was the pecking order. So let us look at these with this in mind...

Jesus Speaks to those Invited
Luke 14:7-11

One of the things that is probably happening here is that the Pharisees who put on these feasts would invite all their religious buddies but to show the community that they were so generous would have few of the poor or less notable people join them in the dinner. This is most likely where the man with Dropsy fits in. But Jesus noticed that these religious guys came in and took the best seats and left the lower ones for the others. This story is not a lesson in hospitality; it was a stern rebuke. Jesus can see right through their hypocrisy. If Jesus is in the place of honor, He would be able to point at those at the head and those at the back. It is interesting how a lot of what Jesus taught is reflected in the Proverbs...

Proverbs 25:6-7

Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, and do not stand in the place of the great; for it is better that he say to you, “Come up here,” than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, whom your eyes have seen.

Another of the problems that the Pharisees had was thinking that they would hold a higher place in God’s economy just because of who they are. It was an entitled attitude that God hates. This problem was still in the hearts of the early church and had to be dealt with by James.

The Danger of Partiality

James 2:1-7

If you want to be great, be humble. You don’t always have to be first in line. One of the things I had noticed at some of these pastor’s conferences that I have been to that they either have a “Green Room” where all the “Big” speakers and “Special” folks would be segregated or a certain section of the sanctuary. There was this kind of atmosphere around pastors that is like this dinner that I found distasteful, and I really started to notice it more after Pastor Chuck went to be with the Lord.

Now He talks to the one who did the inviting...

Jesus Speaks to the one who invited Him

Luke 14:12-14

Jesus now turns to the one who invited all the hypocrites that took all the best seats and shows him that there is no reward in that. You know sometimes we are guilty of the same thing. We used terms like “It’s your turn to pay the bill” or “I got this last time” thinking that the favor from before needs to be reciprocated. These Pharisees and Lawyers, all held each other up in high esteem as they all assumed to be blessed by God for their position. Luke has already recorded for us these words by Jesus...

Luke 6:32-36

“But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back...

Luke 6:32-36

...But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of

the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.
Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

Remember God showed us what love is by paying the debt we owed that we could never repay. Again, James had to deal with this problem in the church too...

James 2:15-16

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

A sure sign of someone who is born again is willingness to give and not want anything in return. Now Jesus says they will be rewarded at the “Resurrection of the Just”. Who are the Just?

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

We are saved by faith and not works but we will be rewarded by our works.

Now someone hears Him mention the resurrection and responds...

Luke 14:15

Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, “Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!”

Now we need to understand those at the table are the Pharisees and Lawyers, I.E. the best seats. So, you need to be thinking of that as we look at this last section today...

The Parable of the Great Supper

Luke 14:16-24

The first thing to note is that being invited to a dinner in those days was considered one of the greatest honors you could receive. And also, to be invited and then not come was one of the biggest insults you could give someone. What’s interesting is the unbelievable excuses they gave. It is the old “My dog ate my homework” idea. No one would ever buy land without looking at it first. The same with oxen. And the guy with the wife

could have just brought her along! Now, can you see why the master is so angry? But the accusation towards these guys is unmistakable. Jesus is the master that has invited Israel to the dinner. And what have the leaders done? Rejected His invitation! I can imagine the look on their faces when He says that none of those invited are going to get in. I am sure they had their smug smiles while inside they are thinking “Who does this guy think He is!”. But on the other side of room. In place where the servants sat. in the lowest place where some who were invited as just a token have heard this. I smile when I think of the look on their faces. This Man from God who is healing the sick and raising the dead. Who is not afraid to point out the hypocrisy of these guys. Who sits with them and wants to see them exalted is seeing themselves as the ones invited in. Not for any work they could do but just because the master wants to fill His house. Oh, the joy that should fill their hearts! And what joy should fill ours because the people that are invited are you and I. Notice this...

Luke 14:22

“And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’”

Do you know there is going to be plenty of room in Heaven for you? Do you know there is plenty of room for more? I like what the master then says...

Luke 14:23

“Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’”

The master tells them to “compel” them to come in. God has given us that charge to go out into all the world and compel them to come in.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.

Don't make the same excuses as the Pharisees and Lawyers. There is no excuse. The banquet is getting ready, and you have an open invitation.

John 1:11-13

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.