



FAITH AND GRACE CHURCH

LEARNING FROM THE MASTER (JESUS CHRIST- OUR CHIEF CORNERSTONE)

STUDY 21-54 – THE PARABLES OF JESUS - Parable No. 29-The Parable of the Lowest Seat at Feast

TEXT: Luke 14:7-14

LAST WEEK: The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (LUKE 18:9-14)

LESSONS: If we are truly broken-hearted over our sin, we can be assured of God's boundless love and forgiveness in Christ. In addition, we must not make the mistake of comparing ourselves with others and gaining confidence from what we see in that comparison. In fact, Jesus specifically warns us against this attitude at the beginning of the parable. When we try to justify ourselves by comparing ourselves to others, we naturally end up despising them. Our standard for comparison is God Himself, and we all fall short of His glory

The parable of The Pharisee and the Lowest Seat at Feast (LUKE 14:7-14)

INTRODUCTION

In most of Jesus' parables, he puts the burden on the listener to interpret it and figure out what it means in his life. However, in the parable of the lowest seat at feast, Jesus tells the listener how to behave. For Jesus to speak so plainly means he did not want anyone to miss the meaning, i.e., that humility really matters. Note though, that he presented his message in a very tactful way to his Pharisee listeners. He told his listeners that he was speaking of a marriage feast, perhaps to avoid anything which might offend them by any air of direct reproof. This was actually nothing new as similar advice had already been given in Proverbs 25:6-7

Why is humility so important to a Christian?

The Bible has 106 stories emphasizing humility. Faith is featured in 104 stories, and love is featured only 47 times. Does this tell you something? Humility may well be called the queen of the Christian graces. To know our own sinfulness and weakness, and to feel our need of Christ, is the very beginning of saving religion. In the kingdom of God, humility forms the foundation laid by Christ for which nothing else can supply.

For an example; consider these spiritual gifts: teaching, administration, healing, prophecy, knowledge, charity, humility. From this list, humility is a grace within the reach of every true Christian. Not everyone has money to give away. Not everyone has time and opportunities for working directly for Christ. We don't all have gifts of speech and knowledge for preaching and teaching. We're not all good managers or administrators. We can't all heal. But everyone can demonstrate his commitment to Christ by his humility. If you can do nothing else, you can strive to be humble.

Go and sit down in the lowest place: When we are at the lower place, we aren't there just to be noticed so we can go up higher. Nor are we miserable there, and letting everyone know by our facial expressions that we really don't belong there.

Jesus isn't merely teaching good manners, but a lifestyle that in lowliness of mind esteems others better than himself. (Philippians 2:3)

Instead, we joyfully embrace the lower place; we aren't filled with such a high opinion of ourselves that we think we don't "belong" there. Then we are rewarded before the Lord. To truly humble yourself is to get your eyes off yourself, and to start living an others-centered life.

When we seek to take honor to ourselves, we will always be humbled-if not on earth, then for all of eternity. The promise of exaltation for the humble and humiliation for the proud is one ultimately fulfilled in eternity.

Jesus had the right to teach on this subject, because He fulfilled it perfectly. He is the ultimate example of someone who deserved the highest seat, but took the lowest seat, and was "moved up" to the highest seat. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Jesus warns His host about the danger of pride when it comes to the guest list. (Vs. 12-14)

We can show pride not only as the guest, but also as a host -and we do so through our "guest list."

Do not ask is actually "do not habitually ask." It isn't wrong to ever invite your friends, your brothers, and so on; but it is wrong to only invite such people.

Do we associate only with people who can "advance" us or give something to us? Or are we willing to be "givers" in relationship also? It is easy for us to limit our "guest list" to a few comfortable, easy people, instead of reaching out to others.

Jesus is telling us to not associate with people on a "what's in it for me?" basis. That is self-centered living; we are called to follow Jesus, and He showed others-centered living.

You shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just: This kind of living will cost us something, and the full repayment comes only at the resurrection of the just; but it is worth it!

The second point in this parable is the great importance of looking forward to the resurrection of the dead.