

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
Presbyterian Church

“THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT BANQUET”

For individual study or group discussion

Recall from last week’s sermon, Jesus is a guest at a dinner party hosted by a ruler of the Pharisees. The religious leaders at the party are watching him closely, hoping to find fault with him. Despite the trap set before him, Jesus takes the Pharisees’ bait and heals the man with dropsy on the Sabbath in the presence of all the guests. Heaping coals upon their already hot heads, Jesus further reprimands them for their pride, encouraging them to value humility in *The Parable of the Wedding Feast*.

After his lesson on humility in Luke 14:1-11, Jesus concludes with a benediction on those who seek out “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” (v. 13). In a room where you could cut the tension with a knife, a guest exclaims, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” Whether spoken scornfully or from a genuine heart, Jesus doesn’t miss the opportunity to tell another somewhat troubling parable, *The Parable of the Great Banquet*.

A gracious invitation to the Great Kingdom Banquet (vv. 15-17)

In the *Parable of the Great Banquet*, Jesus tells the story of a wealthy man who throws a banquet for his friends. It is a gracious invitation. In ancient Israel, feasts like these were highlights of communal living. To be invited to a feast was considered a great honor and privilege. It would be unusual not to accept such a grand gesture from such a lavish host.

- Read 2 Samuel 9. Discuss David’s kindness to Mephibosheth. How is it similar to God’s gracious invitation to each of us? (cf. Isaiah 25:6-8; Revelation 19:9)
- Reflect on our previous study of Luke 13:22-30. Compare and contrast those who accept and reject God’s gracious invitation. Why is it important for those of us who have been raised in the church to take Christ’s warnings to heart?

An outrageous rejection by religious insiders (vv. 18-20)

But then the unthinkable happens. The master sends his servant out to announce that the feast is ready, “but they all alike began to make excuses,” insulting the generosity of the gracious host (v. 18).

- Reflect back on the three episodes in this mealtime narrative of Luke chapter 14. What common theme do you see?
- What is the attitude of the religious leaders toward Jesus? The sick man? What do the people at the Pharisee’s house care about most?

An unexpected offer to religious outsiders (vv. 21-24)

Although the host of the great banquet is rejected, his response is totally unexpected: “Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame” (v. 21). And not only does he invite the outcasts of society, he compels them and many others like them to come into his house until it is filled (v. 23).

- Note that the host is not satisfied until his house is full. Read 2 Peter 3:9 and Romans 10:13. What does this tell you about God’s heart for all mankind?
- Read Romans 9:22-26. How does this parable relate to the Gentiles?

DATE: October 29, 2023

SPEAKER: Frank/Chad

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 14:12-24

Family Dinner Table

Flimsy Excuses

R. C. Sproul

In a sermon on today’s text, R.C. Sproul invites us to see the ways in which we are similar to those who scorned the host’s gracious invitation: “I see three immediate ways in which we are like these people who failed to show up. The first way is this: every one of us who is a church member has made a pledge, a vow, a commitment to participate in the life of the church. Everybody who is married made a vow to a spouse to maintain honor in the marriage. Every one of us who is employed or are employers have entered into agreements with those who labor with us or for us to do certain things. In a word, we are people who make commitments all the time, in every aspect of our lives, that we do not always keep. So, in that regard we are like the people who said, ‘Sure, I’ll be there,’ but when push came to shove, they were nowhere to be found. That is who we are in our fallen condition. Secondly, why did the people not go to the feast? They were people who put second things first. Jesus had said, ‘Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you’ (Matt. 6:33). Instead, these people fixed their gazes on the horizontal plane, on the terrestrial plane. Their eyes were fixed on the things of this world. Thirdly and finally, my greatest concern for the church is that people who have made a profession of faith do not possess the profession that they have made. I have said many times that no one has ever entered heaven by a profession of faith.”¹

- Read Hebrews 2:1-4. Confess the things in your life that cause you to drift away from God and pray for perseverance.

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¹Sproul, R. C. June 20, 2014. *The Parable of the Great Supper*. <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/sermons/parable-great-supper>