

The Life and Ministry of Christ, Part 35

After Jesus wept over Jerusalem, the Pharisees came and told Him that “Herod wants to kill You.” Some time after that Jesus was invited to come for a Sabbath dinner at the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees. Luke 14 covers the events at the Sabbath dinner. The LORD had just spoken about those who were going to be excluded from the kingdom. Included in that group were many professional religionist who ate and drank in His presence and heard His teachings. During this instruction in the Pharisee’s house, Jesus said many outcast and Gentiles would be part of the kingdom. It should be noted that the invitation to this supper was not a genuine act of hospitality but rather another attempt to find fault with Jesus.

Luke 14:1 NKJV 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.

While at the meal, Jesus did one miracle and told three parables.

Man with Dropsy Healed - Luke 14:1-6

Luke 14:2–4 NKJV And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go.

Dropsy is a symptom and not a specific disease. It would be known as edema today, a condition that causes excessive fluid retention in the tissues. Throughout the previous weeks and months, the Pharisees and legalists had challenged Jesus’ doing good works on the Sabbath. Now Jesus asked, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” The lawyers and Pharisees remained silent indicating their lack of concern for the suffering and needy. When they did not answer, Jesus “took him and healed him, and let him go.” The word “took” indicates that Jesus took hold of the man in order to focus attention on what was being done.

After the miracle, Jesus addressed the question Himself.

Luke 14:5–6 AMP And He said to them, Which of you, having a son or a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a well, will not at once pull him out on the Sabbath day? And they were unable to reply to this.

Once again their logic and lack of empathy was demonstrated in their unwillingness to help the sick, hurting and ceremonially unclean. After saying this, Jesus gave a parable to those who were invited to the Pharisee’s house. He noticed how the guests rushed to get at the head

of the table and pick places of honor. In the parable, Jesus challenged them to consider some spiritual realities in relation to the kingdom and He gave instructions about humility.

Parable on Humility - Luke 14:7-14

Luke 14:8-9 NKJV When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.

Luke 14:10-11 NKJV But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Is there anything wrong with seeking the best place to sit at a banquet? Obviously, Jesus was giving instruction on more than having a good seat. Consider the mind or attitude of Christ.

Philippians 2:5–7 NKJV Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

Philippians 2:8 NKJV And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Jesus gave us the perfect example of humility. Take note of the fact that although He was in the form of God and equal with God, Jesus Christ humbled Himself to the form of a bondservant. The extent of His humility is seen in His full obedience to the point of death. Rather than exercising His rights as the Son of God, Jesus chose to surrender His rightful position of honor to take on the likeness of men. Think about the role that humility has with obedience. Do you remember Jesus praying, *“Father, not My will but Your will be done”*?

Luke 14:12 NKJV Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.”

Luke 14:13–14 NKJV But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

Remember that Jesus is talking about kingdom living and having the same kind of mind (attitude) that He has. Rather than showing honor to those who can repay you with a kindness, Jesus said show charity to those who cannot repay you. Notice what Jesus said about showing kindness to the poor, maimed, lame and the blind. We could add to this list anyone who cannot return an act of kindness or benevolence. Jesus promised that your acts of kindness will be rewarded at the resurrection of the righteous or the Rapture of the Church.

Luke 14:15 NIV84 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

Some day God will have a kingdom feast in heaven. As a response, Jesus gave the parable of the marriage supper of the Lamb that is revealed in Revelation 19.

Revelation 19:7–8 NKJV Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Revelation 19:9 NKJV Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”

The Parable of the Great Supper - Luke 14:16-24

The first part of the parable addresses the invitation to come.

Luke 14:16–17 NKJV Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’

The invitation into the Kingdom is massive. Revelation 22:17 tells us whoever is thirsty, let him come and take of the water of life. Anyone who will hear is invited to come.

The second part of the parable address excuses for not accepting the invitation.

Luke 14:18–20 NLT But they all began making excuses. One said, ‘I have just bought a field and must inspect it. Please excuse me.’ Another said, ‘I have just bought five pairs of oxen, and I want to try them out. Please excuse me.’ Another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’

The people who make these excuses are the very ones who received an invitation. Notice how ridiculous their excuses are. The first put the love of material possessions above the invitation. The second put his

occupation or business ahead of the call of God. The third allowed family ties and social relationships to hinder accepting the gospel call.

Notice how the master responds to those who refuse or reject Him.

Luke 14:21 NLT “The servant returned and told his master what they had said. His master was furious and said, ‘Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’

Luke 14:22–24 NLT After the servant had done this, he reported, ‘There is still room for more.’ So his master said, ‘Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full. For none of those I first invited will get even the smallest taste of my banquet.’ ”

The danger of not responding to Christ’s invitation carries severe consequences. We should be careful how we respond to the call. It is apparent that Jesus left the Sabbath supper at the Pharisee’s house.

The Cost of Discipleship - Luke 14:25-33

Luke 14:25–27 NKJV Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

Discipleship refers to more than the twelve or those who closely followed the Lord as He ministered in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. A disciple is someone who follows another or the way of life of another, one who submits to the teaching of another. Most people today refer to them as Christians or believers. To be a true disciple of Christ, one must live a life of self-denial and commitment to God regardless of the cost.

We should consider the cost to be a true believer or disciple of Christ.

Luke 14:28-30 NKJV For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

Luke 14:31-32 NKJV Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.

Luke 14:33 NKJV So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he

has cannot be My disciple.

Jesus was talking about total commitment to Him. The message of this parable is total denial of selfish interest for Jesus. Those words “forsake all” indicate the extent of the commitment that is expected. This is loving the LORD your God more than anything or anyone. We must love the LORD our God with all of our heart and all of our soul. Look at those words “*cannot be My disciple.*” These words are exclusive and indicate that not everyone will be saved. There are several things involved in this that exceed the cost of discipleship. We should consider the cost verses the reward. There is a great resurrection day coming and a time of judgment and reward. It will be worth it all to be granted entrance into heaven and to be made a partaker of the marriage supper of the Lamb.