

ST JOSEPH THE WORKER
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



Luke 14

The Parables of the Guests and the Banquet
Invitations to Humility, Hospitality, and Discipleship:

Luke 14 confronts us with the upside-down values of God's Kingdom – the last shall be first, the humble exalted, and the excluded welcomed. It challenges our societal norms of status and self-promotion, comfort and convenience, entitlement and exclusivity. Above all, the call to discipleship resounds with clear and compelling urgency, demanding total commitment and fearless surrender to follow Jesus, the greatest invitation of all.

Verses 1-6: Healing on the Sabbath

Once again, Jesus heals on the Sabbath – this time, a man suffering from dropsy, silencing the Pharisees who watched Him closely.

Verses 7-14: Lessons on Humility and Hospitality

Jesus observes guests choosing places of honor at the meal and advises them to take the lowest position instead. He then encourages the host to invite those who cannot repay him – the poor and disabled, promising blessings for such generosity.

Verses 15-24: The Parable of the Great Banquet

Jesus tells a parable about a man who invites many guests to a great banquet. All invited guests make excuses and decline the invitation, so the host invites the poor and outcast instead, illustrating the rejection and acceptance of God's Kingdom invitation.

Verses 25-35: The Cost of Discipleship

Addressing large crowds, Jesus stresses the cost of discipleship, using the metaphors of building a tower, waging war, and salt that has lost its taste.

In Luke 14, Jesus confronts religious leaders' hypocrisy, teaches on humility and generosity, and underscores the costs and demands of discipleship. This chapter provides profound insights on Kingdom values that contrast sharply with societal norms, emphasizing humble service, generous hospitality, ready acceptance of God's invitation, and unwavering commitment to following Jesus.



Themes

Humility and Exaltation
Generosity and Recompense
Invitation and Excuse
Discipleship and Cost

Topics

Healing on the Sabbath
Lessons on Humility and Hospitality
The Parable of the Great Banquet
The Cost of Discipleship

People

Jesus
The Pharisees
The Man with Dropsy
The Invited Guests
The Poor, Crippled, Blind, and Lame
Large Crowds

Locations

The House of a Prominent Pharisee
The Road

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Healing of the Man with Dropsy on the Sabbath.

1 On a sabbath he went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully.

2 In front of him there was a man suffering from dropsy.

3 Jesus spoke to the scholars of the law and Pharisees in reply, asking,

“Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath or not?”

4 But they kept silent; so, he took the man and, after he had healed him, dismissed him.

5 Then he said to them,

“Who among you, if your son or ox falls into a cistern, would not immediately pull him out on the sabbath day?”

6 But they were unable to answer his question.

Luke 14:1-6 is a powerful confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees about the nature of the Sabbath and the role of mercy in the life of faith. Jesus uses the opportunity to demonstrate that God’s law is not about rules for rules’ sake, but about bringing healing, restoration, and love to humanity. This passage calls believers to embrace a faith that prioritizes compassion, healing, and service over mere ritual and legalism.

Luke 14:6 Inability to Respond:

The silence in response to Jesus' challenge reveals their moral and theological dilemma. They could not defend their position because they knew it lacked consistency. Their **legalism had no answer for Jesus' pointed question.**

Revealing Their Hypocrisy: This moment of silence serves as a critique of the Pharisees' rigid, rule-centered

Conduct of Invited Guests and Hosts.

7 He told a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the places of honor at the table.

8 “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at table in the place of honor. A more distinguished guest than you may have been invited by him,

9 and the host who invited both of you may approach you and say, ‘Give your place to this man,’ and then you would proceed with embarrassment to take the lowest place.

10 Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you, he may say, ‘My friend, move up to a higher position.’

Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table.

11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

12 Then he said to the host who invited him, “When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment.

13 Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind;

14 blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The Parable of the Great Feast.

15 One of his fellow guests on hearing this said to him, “Blessed is the one who will dine in the kingdom of God.”

16 He replied to him, “A man gave a great dinner to which he invited many.

17 When the time for the dinner came, he dispatched his servant to say to those invited, ‘Come, everything is now ready.’

18 But one by one, they all began to excuse themselves. The first said to him, ‘I have purchased a field and must go to examine it; I ask you, consider me excused.’

religion that lacked compassion and the true spirit of the law.

Teaching on Humility

(Luke 14:7-11)

Jesus observes how guests at the banquet choose places of honor. He advises them to take the lowest seat at a banquet so that when the host sees them, they may be invited to move up to a higher seat. The principle is: “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” Jesus emphasizes humility as a key characteristic of His followers, reversing the common cultural values of self-promotion

Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:12-24)

Jesus tells a parable about a man who invites many people to a great banquet, but when the time comes, they all make excuses not to come—one says he bought land, another has bought oxen, and a third is getting married. The host becomes angry and tells his servant to invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame, extending the invitation to those who would not typically be invited. When there is still room, the servant is sent out to bring in more, until the house is full.

Message: The banquet symbolizes the Kingdom of God. The initial invitees (the religious leaders and the Israelites) reject the invitation, and so the invitation is extended to the marginalized and outcasts. Jesus is teaching that God's grace is available to all, especially to those who

19 And another said, ‘I have purchased five yoke of oxen and am on my way to evaluate them; I ask you, consider me excused.’

20 And another said, ‘I have just married a woman, and therefore I cannot come.’

21 The servant went and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house in a rage commanded his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame.’

22 The servant reported, ‘Sir, your orders have been carried out and still there is room.’

23 The master then ordered the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedgerows and make people come in that my home may be filled.

24 For, I tell you, none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner.’”

Sayings on Discipleship.

25 Great crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and addressed them,

26 I “If any one comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

28 Which of you wishing to construct a tower does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if there is enough for its completion?

29 Otherwise, after laying the foundation and finding himself unable to finish the work the onlookers should laugh at him

30 and say, ‘This one began to build but did not have the resources to finish.’

31 Or what king marching into battle would not first sit down and decide whether with ten thousand troops he can successfully oppose another king advancing upon him with twenty thousand troops?

32 But if not, while he is still far away, he will send a delegation to ask for peace terms.

recognize their need for it.

The Cost of Discipleship

(Luke 14:25-33)

Large crowds are traveling with Jesus, and He uses this opportunity to teach about the cost of discipleship. He says that anyone who wants to follow Him must be willing to:

Hate their family members (**meaning to love Jesus above all others**).

Bear their cross daily and follow Him, signifying a willingness to endure suffering and sacrifice.

Count the cost, like a builder considering whether he has enough to finish a construction project, or a king preparing for war.

Message: Discipleship requires total commitment, self-denial, and a willingness to prioritize Jesus above all else. It’s not a decision to be made lightly but requires serious thought and dedication.

33 In the same way, everyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.

The Simile of Salt.

34 “Salt is good, but if salt itself loses its taste, with what can its flavor be restored?”

35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear.”

Parable of the Salt (Luke 14:34-35)

Jesus tells a brief parable about salt that has lost its flavor. He asks, "What is it good for?" and answers that it is neither good for the soil nor the manure pile, but only to be thrown out.

Message: Disciples who lose their effectiveness—by compromising their commitment or failing to live according to the values of the Kingdom—are useless. Salt symbolizes the distinctiveness and purity of Christian discipleship.

Key Themes in Luke 14:

Humility and Servant Leadership:

The way of Jesus is one of humility, where greatness is measured by servitude, not by status or position.

Grace and Inclusion: The parable of the great banquet highlights God’s open invitation to all people, especially those who recognize their need for His grace.

Cost of Following Jesus: True discipleship demands sacrifice, self-denial, and a willingness to embrace suffering for the sake of following Christ.

Being Salt and Light: Christians are called to be effective in the world, maintaining their distinctiveness and commitment to God’s Kingdom.

Overall, Luke 14 challenges the values of pride, self-importance, and self-sufficiency, and calls believers to adopt humility, grace, and total commitment to the Lord’s calling.

Bible Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' healing on the Sabbath challenge religious traditions?
2. What does Jesus' advice to the guests at the Pharisee's house teach us about humility?
3. How can we apply Jesus' instruction about whom to invite to our feasts in our daily life?
4. What does the parable of the great banquet reveal about God's invitation and human responses?
5. How do Jesus' teachings on the cost of discipleship resonate with your personal experiences of following Him?
6. What implications does the idea of choosing the lower position have for our interactions with others?
7. How might inviting the less fortunate to our table change our perspective on generosity and hospitality?
8. How does the parable of the great banquet challenge societal norms and expectations?
9. How do you understand Jesus' requirement to "hate" family and life in the context of discipleship?
10. How does the metaphor of tasteless salt shape our understanding of Christian influence?
11. In what ways can we exhibit humility as depicted in Jesus' advice to guests at a feast?
12. How might the generosity shown in inviting those who can't repay influence our attitudes towards giving?
13. How do the excuses made by the invited guests in the parable reflect common attitudes towards spiritual matters today?
14. In what areas of your life have you experienced or are experiencing the cost of discipleship?
15. How can the metaphor of unfinished construction work inspire you to plan and count the cost in your walk with Christ?
16. How can Jesus' discourse on salt losing its flavor motivate us to maintain our distinct Christian values?
17. How do we reconcile Jesus' statement about hating family with His other teachings on love?
18. How can Jesus' teachings in this chapter guide our interactions with those considered least in society?
19. How does this chapter influence your understanding and response to the invitation to God's Kingdom?
20. How do we ensure we are not like the tasteless salt in our Christian's Walk?