

The Upside-Down Kingdom

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[0:00] So we're going to look at the first 14 verses of chapter number 14, where the Bible says this, And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched him.

And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and the Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?

And they held their peace. And he took him and healed him and let him go. And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an oxen fallen into a pit and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?

And they could not answer him again to these things. And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms, saying unto them, When thou art bidden of a man to a wedding, or this would be just a feast type of situation, A dinner party is kind of what's going on here.

Sit not down in the highest rooms, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him. Now, kind of the idea, just real quickly, is the houses in this time period in Israel weren't massive houses.

[1:16] They didn't have giant living rooms and patios. They would have smaller rooms, and so there would be a better room and a more prominent room. Basically, they wanted the best seat in the house.

You know, when you go to a sporting event, you generally sit in the nosebleeds because that's what you can afford, but you want to be on the courtside seats. It's kind of what's going on here. He said, Listen, you think you belong on courtside, but you might be in the wrong room, and Jesus is teaching them something here.

Verse number 9, And he that bade thee, and him come to say to thee, Give this man place, and thou being with shame, to take the lowest room.

But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room, that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that set at meat with thee.

For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Then said he also to him that bade him.

[2:17] So now Jesus, he's kind of talking to the crowd, but now he's talking to the host of this dinner party. When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and recompense be made thee.

But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, and the maim, and the lame, and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

So we've seen that Jesus has kind of had these interactions, these run-ins with the Pharisees. And as he's moving closer to the cross, he's laying out how we should live our life.

Because some of the things that we see here in this text with the Pharisees and the lawyers, if we're honest with ourselves, we're prone to the very same thing. We like to be noticed. We like to have maybe a little bit of recognition here and there.

But Jesus is showing, that kind of shows where our heart is. And he's going to show us kind of this upside-down kingdom. Because the way you read the Bible, Jesus takes everything we know and turns it upside-down.

[3:27] He said, this is actually how you live your life. And so there are going to be some great truths here. But let's ask the Lord to bless us this morning. Father, thank you for this time that we can open up your word. Lord, I pray that you would just calm our hearts and our minds, that with the

busyness of the week and maybe all the things that we've been carrying with us, that we could set those aside for just a few moments, that we would attentively listen to your word.

And Lord, I pray that you would help me to say what needs to be said. Lord, that it would be a help, that it would be encouragement, that it would be a challenge where need be for the hearer this morning. Lord, I pray that you would help us to take these truths and you would help us to apply them to our life.

I pray you would empty me of self, cleanse me of sin. Lord, fill me with your spirit. I need you so much, Lord. I need you right now. And I ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you so much for standing. May be seated. I remember growing up, and me and my sister, we would, you know, be going.

Mom says, hey, we're going to get in the car. Everybody needs to be in the car in five minutes, you know. And 20 minutes later, we're outside. Or we're coming out of Walmart. And, you know, there's this game that I think every child plays when you have a sibling or a cousin or something.

It's called shotgun. Am I the only person that ever played shotgun? You know, sometimes you try to act like you're not interested in shotgun. Because you can't say it when you're in the store. You can't say it when you're in the house.

[4:43] You have to be outside the store. You have to be in a certain area. But as soon as it is, I mean, it is shotgun. And then, you know, unfortunately, thankfully, I didn't get hit by a car running across Walmart parking lot. Because then it is a dead sprint to who gets the front seat of the car.

I mean, that's just kind of how it was in my house. That's kind of how it was growing up. That I wanted to have the best seat. You know, there was times that who gets to sit by mom? Because that just seems to be the premium seat. You know, because maybe she'll give you some snacks out of her purse or whatever it might be.

When dad's not there, who gets to sit in his chair? Who gets the premium? I mean, every house has this. There's always a seat on the couch that's better than the other seats. Is that not how it is?

Because when I come home and somebody's sitting in that premium seat, I'm like, hey, you got to get up. That's dad's spot right there. I mean, we want the best seats. We want that. And it's really growing up as a kid, it's all about who got there first.

I mean, we live for the best. We wanted to be in the premium position. We wanted to be in premium seating. And then we grow up, and honestly, not much changes. We just get a lot more sophisticated about it.

[5:45] We get a lot more sophisticated about what we want. And now we want maybe that best table at the restaurant. I want a better seat at the ball game when I go. I want a good parking spot.

I'm at the age where I want to be close enough, but I can still get out easily. You know what I mean? Because sometimes the best parking spot is not the best because then you're stuck in the traffic. I want to be close enough where I don't have to walk too far, but then I can get out of there and get home because I'm tired and I want to go to bed.

Okay. Are we awake? Okay. Just making sure. Maybe you want the best office, the better title, the more recognition. And what's funny is we all want to be noticed in some form or fashion, but we just don't want anybody to know that we want to be noticed.

Okay. Just at least that's me. I'm just going to lay it all out here because y'all are super spiritual. Y'all need to come up here and preach this message. I mean, but I think that it's kind of innately built into us.

You know, when somebody comes and compliments you and they tell you how great a job you did and you say, oh, it was nothing. But in your mind, you're thinking, man, if you knew what I had to do to do all this stuff, thank you for saying that.

[6:54] I've been slaving night and day about this situation. Or maybe somebody thanks you publicly and we respond, oh, praise the Lord, it's not a big deal. But you're thinking, it's about time somebody sees what I do around here.

I mean, like, come on, now we're waking up a little bit. Maybe you had that situation at your workplace or whatever it may be. But our flesh wants that. And the truth is our heart is naturally drifts towards that recognition.

I mean, we want to matter. We want to be important. We want people to notice us. And in certain forms and fashions, there's nothing wrong with that. But if that's the driving force of our life, if that is why we are doing what we're doing, if that's what we're doing to maybe try to impress God, we've

missed the point.

And that's what we see here in Luke chapter number 14 is Jesus walks into an environment that is saturated with self, that is focused on success, that is all about admiration.

And on the surface, this might look like a normal dinner party. And Jesus has been invited and there's a great group and some prestigious men are there, the religious elite and the rulers of Israel are in this room.

[8:06] But everybody in this room, from what Jesus is letting us know, is so concerned about their position. Everybody in this room is extremely infatuated with appearances.

And that's what the Pharisees lived for. They love to be seen of men, the Bible tells us. Jesus mentions this in other places. They love to walk real slow through the marketplace. Everybody's like, wow, look at them.

I mean, look how good looking they are. I mean, they're just super religious. Wow. And they were concerned about that. This room was full of people who wanted to know who's the most important person in the room.

Who matters the most in this room. And really, it hasn't changed since the first century. And this has been going on long since then, long before then. Because the world still says today, promote yourself.

Build your brand. Well, Jesus says, humble yourself. The world screams, look out for yourself. Take care of number one.

[9:07] And Jesus shows up and is saying over and over and over again, serve other people. I mean, this is Jesus' mission. Mark 1045 says, the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

If anybody should have came and received everybody serving Him, it should have been Jesus. And yet, He came as a humble servant, as an obedient servant. The world says, hey, just use people to get ahead.

And Jesus tells this group right here, love people who can never do anything for you. Love people who have no ability to repay you. And here in Luke chapter number 14, Jesus introduces this crowd and introduces us to this upside down kingdom.

And really, the big idea here this morning is this, is that Jesus reveals that true kingdom living, people that are living for Him and are living for the kingdom, it's so radically different from the way the world thinks and the way the world lives.

It goes completely contrary to it. So, if you're taking notes this morning, the question we're going to answer is this. What does kingdom living actually look like? If Christ is our Savior, if He's called us to live for Him, what does it look like?

[10:21] Because He's going to contrast it here in this text. Because here at this dinner, Jesus really shows three marks of genuine kingdom living. The first thing we see is this, is that kingdom living shows compassion over cold religion.

It shows compassion over cold religion. We read there in the first verse that Jesus has been invited to a dinner. He's been invited and we see, well, hey man, that seems like a really good thing.

This Pharisee has invited Him to his own home and He's there to eat bread on the Sabbath day. But I want us to make no mistake, this was not a casual meal. They weren't excited that Jesus was there because they just wanted to spend time with Him.

They weren't really thrilled that He was going to be there so they could learn all about the Scriptures. That's not what was taking place. I think you can see it in these first few verses, but this is a carefully orchestrated environment.

This is a setup all the way. You ever been in a spot like that where you start looking around and thinking, man, I'm being set up. There is a plan behind the scenes. That's what's taking place right here. I mean, think about it.

[11:31] They carefully chose the place. A prominent Pharisee's house. And in these days, it would be kind of weird, but when a Pharisee, I mean, they would open their gates and they would let all the poor people kind of just sneak in and look around.

I mean, this was a complete show. They wanted everybody to come see what was going on. So they chose the place, a Pharisee's house. They chose a very specific day, the Sabbath day. And that wasn't by chance either because they were trying to catch Jesus repeatedly breaking their laws. Because we've already seen a couple times in the Gospel of Luke that Jesus likes to heal

people on the Sabbath day.

And the Pharisees care nothing about it. Because we know he needs healing, but just heal him on Sunday. Heal him on Monday. Don't heal him on the Sabbath. So we see the place was chosen. The day was chosen. And very conveniently, out of just complete chance, there was an extremely sick man there. And I'm being sarcastic.

[12:37] I wholeheartedly believe this. They planted this man there. They wanted this man. Because here's the reality. They didn't want to be anywhere near somebody that was sick like this.

This wasn't their type of people. It didn't elevate their status. And verse 2 tells us that there was a man which had the dropsy. What is the dropsy? We would call it edema today, but it was severe fluid retention.

And this man, generally, it would have been connected to serious organ failure. Kidney failure, heart failure, things like that. I mean, the idea is this man was extremely sick, probably terminally ill, especially here in the first century.

They had no reason. He would have been very swollen. He would have been very bloated. He would have kind of looked real awkward. And they set him there. And we see this snare has been set for Jesus.

And they knew exactly what they were doing. Because, you know, when Jesus looks at anybody, here's what he sees. He has compassion. Jesus loved people. And he saw this man that was struggling.

[13:42] And they baited him into it. And they assumed he would find this man irresistible on the Sabbath day. How dare you even think about healing somebody on the Sabbath?

That's their plan. Don't you love when you think you have a really good plan? Anybody ever have an airtight plan? Like, there's no way this plan fails.

Like, every day of my life, kind of. And then it just crumbles in front of us. But that's where these men are. I mean, they think they're so smart. I mean, they got to, this is the setup of all setups. There's no way Jesus can wiggle out of this one. And they thought they had trapped him. Because here's the thing. If he healed the man, he would, he would be, they would immediately accuse him of violating the Sabbath.

But if he didn't heal the man, then Jesus looks like a jerk in front of everybody. So they think, hey man, he's between a rock and a hard place. How's Jesus going to get out of this one?

[14:43] Well, verse number three, Jesus gets out of it real easily. I mean, who knows how long they've been planning this specific thing. And here's what Jesus did in verse three. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and the Pharisees.

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? There was nothing said about it. But Jesus, he looked around. He looked at the house. He looked at the day. And he saw that man. He said, I see what's going on here.

He said, I got, I got one question for you before we start eating. Is it lawful to do good things? I mean, look at this poor man over here. He's got the dropsy. I don't know how he got here, but he's here.

And I'm thankful that he's here. I got a question. Is it lawful to heal him today? And that's what Jesus does. He throws out this question. And he answers their trap before they even say anything. And how the tables have turned. Because they went real quickly thinking Jesus was trapped. And now they're stuck between a rock and a hard place. Because if they say, well, of course it's okay to heal on the Sabbath day.

[15:42] Then everything they live for. All the rules that they are just hammering on other people. All the burdens they are placing on everybody else. It's kind of null and void now.

Because now they say, oh yeah, you can do that. But if they say no, then they openly admit that they care more about the rules and the regulations than human suffering.

See, what they thought was this fail-proof plan. Now they're trapped between trying to condemn Jesus and having to take responsibility for denying the healing of an extremely sick man.

I'm sure the Pharisees, I would love to be a fly on the wall in these situations. Because they're looking at the other ones. Maybe the guy that was the brain behind this operation. They're thinking, what is going on?

I mean, what do you do? No, but that's where he's at. So what do they do? Because he asked the question. Just like any time that you don't want to answer the question, they did the same thing.

[16:42] They held their peace. Sometimes I ask my kids a question. I'm like, what do you think about this? And they just, I was like, no, that was an actual question. I'm trying to see what you say. But you know why they don't answer, why you don't answer, and why they didn't?

Because they already knew they were caught. What do you say? They have nothing to say to this situation. I mean, put yourself in this room, in this house, at this dinner party, around the table. I mean, you talk about hearing a pin drop.

I mean, Jesus asked a question, kind of looking around like, anybody? Anybody have an answer? Uneasiness filled the air. Why? Because Jesus exposed what was truly in their hearts.

They had a lot of talk about how godly they were. They had a lot of talk about how religious they were. But yet, when a situation came that was obvious to everybody, this man needed a healing, and there was somebody in the room that could do it.

They were willing to deny him of that. So Jesus asked the question. They hold their peace. And here's what Jesus does. He proceeds to heal him. The Bible says, and he took him.

[17:49] And he healed him. And he let him go. Because this situation, what Luke is focusing on, is not just the healing, but the healing is a wonderful miracle. This is a picture of what the gospel does, by the way.

The gospel doesn't give you just a little bit of medicine and send you on your way. No, the gospel completely transforms you. It completely changes your life. And that's what happened to this man. But Jesus is taking, and he's going to focus on these Pharisees.

So they're sitting there. I mean, can you imagine somebody getting healed like this, and you're still just mad about it? Nobody's celebrating. No, because we see in verse number five that Jesus just turns to them, and he's got another question for them.

He said, hey, while we're on the subject, I've got another question about the Sabbath that I think maybe you know the answer to. Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?

He said, how many of you, and they would have had it because they had wealth, and wealth in those days would have been livestock and agriculture. They would have had all of these things. Notice verse six.

[18:58] And they could not answer him again to these things. Dead silence. And see, Jesus asked this question because within all their Sabbath regulations, you know what they made sure that they could do?

Take care of their animals. Because, you know, that would affect their pocketbook a little bit. But they loved God. But, you know, here's what it really was about, about what was in their pockets. How they could have the things that they wanted to have.

And here's what Jesus is saying. Listen, you treat your animals better than this man right here. This man is on his deathbed. This man has no chance, has no healing. I mean, and you are willing that he would just continue to suffer.

But if your ox fell into the ditch, you'd go get it. And he's really just calling them on the carpet. And here's the problem. It's kind of like you ever play a game with somebody growing up.

They like to make the rules as they go. That is the Pharisees. They love to make the rules that benefited them. You know, this man didn't benefit them at all.

[20:02] But their cattle sure benefited them. So they made sure there was some little regulations within the Sabbath. Well, if it's an animal, you can take care of it. See, they thought they were so spiritual.

They thought they were on track for the kingdom. And they thought since they were the leaders of Israel, they were basically just a shoe-in. But here's what Jesus is showing. That they are so far from the kingdom.

I mean, they're right up next to the door. But they refuse to go in. See, Jesus is building off.

Remember we talked about there's a narrow door. There's a narrow gate. There's one way. And they felt, I want to go my way.

Jesus said, that's not how it happens. So I just want to remind us that true righteousness is not about rule-keeping. Real righteousness is not outward performance.

Righteousness in our world, whether it's the first century or right here today in 2026, is not some external religion. You know what Jesus told them multiple times throughout his ministry?

[21:05] Here's the two great commandments. On all these commandments hang the law and the prophet. Love God and love people. You know who these men loved? Themselves.

They didn't love God. They said they did. They pretended like they did. All the facades said they did. But they really did not. They were infatuated with themselves.

And they just wanted to keep elevating and elevating and elevating themselves. Now don't misunderstand. We're going to see here in a minute. And this text actually continues on. We'll look at it next week. But Jesus is not trying to bury them.

That is not the heart of Jesus. The heart of Jesus is not to show them how awful of a person that they really are. No, but we do need to see who we truly are. No, he's not trying to put a nail, their final nail in the coffin, so to speak.

Here's what he's doing. He's going after their souls. Because that is his mission. He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

[22:09] And it doesn't matter how religious you are, how put together you might be, how well you keep the rules, how moral you are. None of that saves you. And that's what Jesus is saying.

Here's what saves you. Humble yourself before God. Realize that you are broken by sin. Because Jesus, we see this over and over again, he did not come to congratulate religious people for being good, moral, upstanding citizens.

No, he came to save sinners. And the Bible says that all have sinned. So he's come for all people. And before we're too hard on these Pharisees, I just want to remind us that we can even fall into this trap today.

Because it is possible to be doctrinally sound, morally conservative, deeply religious, and not know Jesus at all. Be at the table with him.

But you're trusting yourself and you're trusting what you can do and how all of these things. You can be all of those things and completely lack compassion even if you know Jesus. But Jesus says that's not how my children live.

[23:12] That's not the life that I've called them to. That we can't be so focused on systems and structure and all of these things. And there's nothing wrong with that. Don't, don't, there's stuff wrong with me, but.

I don't know if you caught that, but I just wanted to get that out there. There's nothing wrong with structure and rules and systems. But that's not the goal. That's not the aim.

You know what the bar is? Jesus Christ. That's the bar. That's the aim. And so we can be so focused on being right that we stop loving well. You know what changed my life?

Somebody that loved me. Somebody that loved me enough to share the gospel with me. Not somebody that just beat me down with a bunch of rules and I realized, man, I want what they have. And you know what I found out they had? They have Jesus.

And I want that. And Jesus is reminding us that true kingdom living, it doesn't ignore human suffering to focus on rules. No, it goes out and reaches out to those that are in need.

[24:10] Because that's where we were. If you know Christ as your Savior, don't forget where you came from. You know what the Bible tells us? The psalmist says we were in a pit. We were in the miry clay.

We had no hope. But you know who reached down? God did. And he reached down and he picked us up and he set our feet on a rock and he put a song in our heart that we can praise God and we can share his truth.

And so Jesus is kind of exposing them saying, listen, you think you're on the way to the kingdom. You don't even love people. And here's the thing. You don't even love God. You just love yourself. Because that's what religion does.

It's all about self. And what salvation changes the way that we think. It changes how we view other people. It should give us some compassion because God has given us compassion.

He's given us grace. He's given us mercy. The question is, are we sharing it with others? But Jesus isn't done here. Because beneath their cold religion was an even deeper problem.

[25:10] It was kind of the root of the problem. It's really been the root of the problem since, I don't know, even before the garden. It's called pride. And here's what kingdom living does. It chooses humility over self-promotion.

It chooses humility over self-promotion. Verse number seven, the Bible says this. And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms.

So as Jesus is there, he's sitting there and watching these men come into this dinner party. And he's kind of seeing how they operate.

That word marks, he's just kind of watching. Kind of observing. Anybody like to people watch? Yeah, just go to Walmart. It's fantastic. Go sit at the mall on the bench while your wife walks around. You'll find, you'll be like, what are they doing? You know what you're doing? You're marking people. You're kind of figuring out and you're assuming things about them. Here's the thing. Jesus didn't assume. He knew. But he was watching how they did it.

[26:13] And he's carefully watching them scramble for the seats of honor. Kind of like we mentioned at the beginning with the shotgun. Sometimes you try to play it cool. And the men would try to come in. Oh, how are you doing today?

As they're moving closer and closer to the chair of prominence. Oh, yeah, you know, I'm just going to make my way up here. Don't mind me. And he's watching them do this and watching them take these steps and he's seeing it play out.

And just like their silence towards this suffering man, their obsession with the prominency reveals where their focus truly was. That's what Jesus says. See, despite all their God talk and religious posturing, they were deeply selfish and self-seeking people.

And I know we're not going to like this, but that's just in all of us. You know, sometimes it just comes out.

You think, where did that come from? It's in there. And we had to battle this. This is not a one-time thing where, oh, I dealt with pride a long time ago. We're just going to move on right now.

[27:15] I can't say anything else about it. It rears its ugly head all the time. In all kinds of ways. See, selfishness, here's what it does. It always reduces the importance of others while enlarging the importance of ourself.

That's what Jesus is seeing at this dinner party. And his disciples would have been there and he's teaching them, this is not how you live when you're part of my kingdom. This is not how you live when you're part of my family.

Because here's what pride does. It constantly asks, how do I look? Am I being noticed? Am I important? Am I honored? Am I appreciated? Because these men, that's why they're at this party.

They're not at this party because of the food. That's why I go to the parties. That's why I go to a wedding for the cake. I mean, I thought that's why you went. But they went because they wanted to be seen. They wanted everybody to know that, hey, did you know so-and-so was there?

Wow. I didn't know so-and-so would lower himself, but he must just be so humble about it. And that's kind of the idea that they had. The recognition that gave them identity. The honor, it gave them significance.

[28:20] And in their twisted way of thinking, if they were greater than others, if they were greater than even these other Pharisees, then naturally they must be greater in the eyes of God. Then God must look on them in a special way.

That's what Jesus does in verse 8 through 11 that he kind of illustrates how foolish this way of living and this way of thinking is. He describes a man that arrives early to the party.

It's not because he wanted to be on time. It's because he wanted to have the best seat. So, I mean, he's there. He's there way before everything. The host is like, what are you doing here? The party's at 6. It's 3.30 in the afternoon.

Like, why are you here so early? And he gets there. He says, well, you know, I just wanted to be on time. I didn't know how traffic was going to be and all those things. And he finds the best seat. And he just proudly sits down.

And he loves everything about it. As the crowd comes in, they see. I'm like, wow. I didn't know he was up there. How did he get that seat? I mean, how much did he pay for that seat?

[29:19] I mean, I didn't think he had that in him. And he loves it. And he loves it. And he loves it. And he's just, everybody's looking at him. He's just soaking in the admiration. But then the host comes and says, hey, man, so good you're here today.

I got a favor. So-and-so's here. So I'm going to actually need your chair. If you could just go over there, that'd be much appreciated. Instant humiliation. Because he thought he was something. But somebody walked in that maybe was something. And he got bumped down the ladder. And Jesus is saying that's not how it works. And really what he's saying, instead of exalting yourself, why don't you just take the lower seat?

Why do you think so highly of yourself? Because true honor, true recognition, true exaltation is not something you seize.

It's something that is graciously given to you. That's what Jesus is teaching here. That's what he tells us in verse number 11, kind of the central principle of this entire section. Verse number 11.

[30 : 20] I would imagine the majority of us in this room believe in gravity.

Listen, verse 11 is just as true as gravity. That's how this works. This is a law of God. It is unchanging. And the Bible says this, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.

It implies this, that God is the one that does both. God is the one that exalts people. God is the one that abases people. That God is the one that he will make sure that this principle takes place.

And I just want to remind us that this principle, it still applies today, even though we live in a world that does not believe it. I mean, you think about it. I watch the news a little bit.

I don't watch it a lot because I want to be happy in my life. But I don't care what side of the aisle you're on. I don't think Washington, D.C. believes this principle.

[31 : 22] I don't think corporations necessarily believe this principle. I don't think the celebrities and the influence and the professional athletes, in a general sense, I know there are some that know the Lord is the Savior, but I'm just saying in a general sense, our world, they don't believe that.

You know why? Because pride says, you get what you want. Hey, you climb that ladder. Hey, you take care of number one, and then everything else will take care of itself. No, that's a backwards way of thinking.

But here's the real question. It doesn't matter if any of those people believe it. Do you believe it? Do you believe that Jesus said, for whosoever exalted himself shall be abased, and whoever shall abase themselves shall be exalted?

I mean, do we believe that as followers of Christ, as those that claim to know him as our Savior? Do we live that principle? Because if we're being real, there's some principles we know in the Bible to be true, we think, eh, not going to worry about that one today.

Jesus says, no, this is how you live. This is how kingdom living works. See, God calls us multiple times throughout Scripture to live differently than this world.

[32 : 28] We're to let our light shine. We're to point others to Christ. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5, likewise ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder, yea, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God, listen to this, resisteth the proud.

Can you imagine God resisting you? Who would God resist? The proud. God resists the proud. He says, I don't want anything to do with that. And giveth grace to the humble.

What should we do? Peter says this, humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. See, kingdom living is not about elevating yourself.

It's about humbling yourself before God. Jesus is making that very, very clear. And now as we kind of close out this text here this morning, Jesus shifts his focus from the guest and kind of those there, because I'm sure this went over real well for the guest.

I'm like, what kind of dinner party is this? And now he turns to the host and kind of confronts the host that we see there in verses 12 through 14. Because kingdom living not only changes how we view ourselves, here's what it does, it changes how we treat other people.

[33 : 42] So we see lastly, kingdom living practices selfless grace over selfish gain. So Jesus looks out amongst the crowd and he realizes something about everybody in that crowd.

They were elite. They were wealthy. They were well-to-do. They were the movers and shakers, so to speak, of Israel. And here, don't misunderstand. He's not discouraging hospitality towards friends and loved ones.

It's not saying, no, if you're trying to get an excuse to get out of your family gatherings, sorry, this is not it. This is not what he's doing. Because he does say, don't invite your friends and your neighbors. No, Jesus himself, we see throughout the Gospels, he spent time with friends.

Lazarus and Mary and Martha, they invited him multiple times. It was a place he went for rest and reprieve and a good meal. That's not his point. The point Jesus is making in these closing verses is he's saying, the issue I have is you're inviting people who could only return the favor.

You know what he sees in this room? All these relationships are transactional. Hey, I'm going to invite so-and-so, because I heard so-and-so's wife's a really good cook, so then he'll invite me and then I can eat his food.

[34:56] Oh, I'm going to invite so-and-so, because I know he's in a little better synagogue, and maybe I can get into that synagogue, and then I can climb up my ladder, and then I can go here, and I can do that. You see what he's doing there? That everything about this room and everybody on the guest list was about personal advantage.

Everything was calculated. So here's what Jesus says. Here's who you should invite, man. Next time you have a party, invite the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.

I mean, just hearing those words come out of Jesus' mouth, some of these Pharisees probably had to take a bath. Because they don't associate with people like that. They're not going to rub shoulders with somebody that can't do anything for them.

Why would you have somebody like that? Why would you be involved with somebody that could offer you nothing socially? The poor and the lame and the blind, they had no influence.

They couldn't advance you. In this culture, it set you way back. Like, hey, don't go into so-and-so's house. He invited some blind person. Like, who does that? Because they viewed those things as sin.

[36:00] They viewed those things as those people are being judged by God. They would only invite people that could repay them, that could recompense them. And that's what Jesus is making that point.

That's why you should invite these people. Because kingdom love, the way that God calls us to live, is not driven by personal gain. And I just want to remind us, the same is true today.

That Jesus calls us to love people who cannot benefit you. They have nothing really to give to you.

That we should serve people who cannot repay you. That we should show grace where there is no advantage.

That's how God's kingdom works. Because guess what? It's not our job to keep score. God knows. And that's what he says in that last verse. He says, listen, don't worry. It will all pan out in the end. God knows why you're doing it and who you're doing it for.

He knows the motives of our heart. See, the world asks, and we fall into this so quickly, what can this person do for me? How can they help me?

[37:05] Jesus says, maybe this is the question we should ask. How can I reflect Christ to this person? How can I show this person that Jesus loves them just as much as he loves me? Because the sad part is they didn't think Jesus loved these type of people as much as he loved them.

Because they kept all the rules. I mean, they were the uppity up. See, it just reminds us that the gospel is for everyone.

And Jesus, we're going to see this next week. He's going to give a parable about who should be invited to the wedding feast. He gives a picture of why he came.

And you know who's going to invite? Anybody and everybody. He said, go into the highways and go into the hedges and compel them to come. Invite them. Hey, give them a wedding garment. Let them know, hey, we're having a feast and everybody's welcome.

And it just reminds us and it should encourage us to reach out and love people and share the truth and show compassion. Because that's what Jesus Christ did for you. Because we were, I mean, if you know Christ your Savior, you had something a lot worse than dropsy.

[38:12] You were dead in your sins. And Jesus showed up. And he called you out. And he gave you life. And he changed everything about you. Not just here, but for all of eternity.

But sometimes we can fall back into that old way of thinking. Saying, you know what? I'm a little better than that. You know, that could be somebody else's ministry.

No, it's your ministry to love people. Love God and love people. See, people of God don't build their lives around social advancement.

They build their lives around Jesus Christ. And he's going to talk here at the end of this chapter.

Here's what it looks like. You're going to take up your cross. You're going to deny yourself and follow Christ.

That's what Christ-like living looks like. And he's laying it out in a practical sense. See, the Pharisees, they thought they had this perfect setup to destroy Jesus.

[39:11] And really what it turned into was a master class on how life actually works. How people can make a difference. They presumed that they were safely in the kingdom.

But their hearts revealed they were actually complete outsiders. They thought, well, we know the Bible. And we live in Israel. And Abraham's our father. Jesus says, you haven't humbled yourself.

They were so focused on exalting themselves. And what they desperately needed was to humble themselves before God and say, God, forgive me. I'm a sinner. And he would have done it. You see, Jesus is mercifully exposing the pride that was keeping them from God. He wanted these men to be in the kingdom. He wants everybody in this room to be in the kingdom. To be in the family. To be on their way to heaven. To know him as their savior. To love God and to love others and walk humbly and show compassion and extend grace. See, they thought it was all about the law. But Micah said, hey, he has showed the old man what is good. To walk justly and to love your God with all of your heart. [40:19] That's what he wants you to do. And that's how Jesus lived. Listen, no one was more humble than Christ. No one was more compassionate than Christ.

No one gave more selflessly than Christ. We read a few of these verses already and we'll close with them. Paul said, let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus.

Who being in the form of God thought it not Robert to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation. And took upon him the form of a servant. And was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself. And became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him. And given him a name which is above every name. That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

[41:17] To the glory of God the Father. These men were in this room saying, who is he saying what seat to take it? Well, the king. He came and took the lowest seat.

The king, he came a servant for us. The king went to a cross for us. And here's what Jesus says. If you're going to live like I did, this is what it looks like.

If you're going to make a difference, this is how you do it. So how do you know if you're truly living for the kingdom? Well, I think one of the clearest evidences that you're doing that.

Is you begin to look more like the king. You know we should look more and more like each day? Jesus Christ. What did Jesus do? He showed compassion.

He chose humility. And he extended grace to others. Would we live that upside down life? Because that's what Jesus calls us to. And if we're following him, that's what our life should look like.

[42:16] Let's stand with our heads bowed. Thank you.