

Luke 14:1-24

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Preacher: Greg Hendrickson

[0 : 00] We're looking at the Bible, page 873, and we're going to read chapter 14, verses 1 to 24.

There are three stories we're looking at tonight, but they all have one main point. So, they all happen in the same place, and at the same time, Jesus is eating dinner on Sabbath, probably after going to synagogue worship for the service this morning, somebody invited them over for lunch, and the leaders, and this is where the conversation happened.

So, let's read chapter 14. One Sabbath, when Jesus went to dine in the house of the ruler of the Pharisees, they were not too good to care for him. And behold, there was a man before him, and a drop seat.

And Jesus responded to the Lord's comparison, saying, Is it all the people of the Sabbath were not? They were made of silence. Then he took him and healed him, and said, Quick.

And he says to them, Which of you, having a son or an aunt, who is only in the well, except that they have not immediately blown out, and they have not replied to these things?

[1 : 14] Now, he told him, there are a lot of those who were invited. He noticed how they took a place of honor, saying to them, When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, don't sit down in the place of honor.

By someone who are distinguished, then you be invited by. And he would invite you to go, He will come and say to you, Give your place to this person, and then you will be with shame, to take the lowest place.

Go anywhere, and write him to the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, Friend, who have fire, and will be honored. And the brethren who have said, He will give you, For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

He also said to the men who have invited him, When you give a dinner or a banquet, don't invite friends or brothers or relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also divide you in return and you be your king.

For when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they did not pay. For you will be with the resurrection of the house.

[2 : 20] And one of those who would find a table with him heard these things, he said, Blessed is everyone, will eat bread in the kingdom of God. But Jesus said to him, A man once gave a great banquet, and quite a minute.

And at the time of the banquet, he sent his servants to say to those who have been invited, not for him, and he is now ready, but they all alike can't make excuses. The first said, I bought a field, and I must have bought a field, and I said, please have any excuses.

And another said, I bought five yoke boxes, and I go to the center, and please have any excuses.

And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So the servant came and reported to this, and he was a master.

So then the master of the house became angry, and said to the servant, go out quickly to the streets and lay in the city and bring in the floor and purples of wine and laying. I realized that the wife was unlisted.

So it was a little, that was a little, okay, okay, okay, cool. I'm just coming over again. Let's look back a few minutes. Thank you.

[3 : 24] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

of Luke is the song of Mary. And Mary says this. Mary says, He has scattered the crowd and come off their hearts. He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted but lifted up those who have humbled the state.

He has filled a hundred good things and richly extenciated. So that's Mary's opening song that's where he opens the book of Luke. And then, if you look at the first sermon that Jesus preaches in the Gospel of Luke, this is what Jesus says, chapter 4.

Jesus says, The Spirit of the Lord is upon you because he has appointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He will claim liberty to the captives and the poverty of sight to the blind. He said that the people who are oppressed and claim to hear the Lord's favor.

[5 : 04] So we've already got a hint by those two things. The first public proclamation that the whole Gospel is going to be about God bringing down the crowd and praise and how it's for the poor and love.

And that's what we see tonight. So let's look section by section. The first section of the story we see Jesus is on the brain healing for the afflicted. Verse 1-6.

And we want you to count it to the news for this man with dropsy. Now, dropsy is a word that means swelling due to excess fluid in the body.

It's usually a problem with your heart or your kidneys. We can't be a process of fluid. And so it's a sad condition because you're always thirsty. But the more you drink, the more bloated and so your body becomes.

Right? And back in Jesus' day, some people think people didn't quite know about that condition. And some people thought, well, maybe that condition is caused by excessive craving for physical pleasures.

[6 : 14] And so people thought, maybe that's that's why you have this this experience where many people kept their distance from people with dropsy and swelling. But what we see with Jesus is that he was different.

He was actively compassionate. It says he took him and healed him and sent him away. Now, that word sent him away is actually the best translation because literally it means to release him.

So it would mean he sent him away but it would also just be he sent him free. It's actually the same word that was used back in chapter 13 when Jesus healed as a woman who had been punched over for 18 years that she straightened down.

And he talked about Jesus as a blue circle instead of free. So in both of these situations Jesus brings healing and freedom to someone who's been afflicted by disease for a long time.

And, you know, it's actually not an accident. And Luke really likes him to put two stories next to each other. He does a lot. Two characters right next to each other of confidence one man and one woman.

[7 : 27] So here's a woman who's healed in the synagogue on the Sabbath in chapter 13 and now here's a man who's healed after the worship of the synagogue also on the Sabbath.

And Luke has a lot of these pairs throughout his gospel so like Mary and Zachariah and St. talking praise and the beginning and the beginning or Simeon and Dan are both standing in the temple. Mary and Joseph together obey God's commands. And it's interesting to notice this pattern. I think there's two things this is just a bit of a side note but I think there's two things that Luke is doing with this.

One is there's the principle of two witnesses establish a valid testimony. In the Old Testament it says every man must be established by a testimony of two or three witnesses. And so Luke often gives us two people often men who went side by side who are both testifying to in this case the healing and liberating power of Jesus.

And that's a reminder of how God originally made human beings in his image male and female and Jesus comes to restore and heal male and female alike.

[8 : 42] So I think that's why we see these pairs in the gospel. So we see there's good news for the conflicted man. We also see in this section there's bad news for the passive Pharisees, right?

Notice the Pharisees what they do in this section. In verse 1 it says they were watching and careful but then they don't do anything and they don't say anything. And most likely they invited this guy with swelling in his body to test Jesus.

Most likely they probably wouldn't have invited him to their house otherwise they wanted to put him there and they said watch with Jesus carefully. Oh, right in front of Jesus there's this man. Right? They're testing him. And then Jesus asks them a question.

He says, Paul, is it right to get on the seventh or not? They can't really say anything. And then Jesus reminds them and he reminds them of something that the law said in New York it says, you

shall not see your brother's donkey or ox fallen down by the way and be born and you shall help him to lift him up again.

Because of the man in the Old Testament law and Jesus reminding him that we have to say well, would you obey that command on the Saturday? And how much more should I lift someone up who has been afflicted and marginalised and lift them up again?

[10:07] Isn't that what the Sabbath is about to restore and heal God through creation especially God's people? And in the end, I can't say a thing. There's nothing they can say.

They're sort of in order because Jesus has been faithful to the scriptures and they just can't say anything against him. So, for each of these sessions I'm going to draw one point.

One practical discipleship point because it makes, as we said, this whole session include Jesus teaching us how to be his followers what he used to be in disciples. So the point I'm going to draw from this section is Jesus teaching his disciples that he shows active compassion rather than passive indifference when he sees people have faith.

He sees people grow afloat. And he wants his disciples to learn from them and share that same heart of active compassion rather than passive indifference.

That's the first section. Second section. Second section, I mean, second section is actually 7 through 14. There's two parts to this. In verse 7 it says, Jesus told a parable to those who were invited, that is to the guest.

[11:24] then you look at verse 12 it says, he also says to the man who had invited him presumably the host. So Jesus had verse of the guest in 7 to 11 and verse of the host in verse 18.

And they're talking about sacred and evil. So we see this section, the first section we saw giving for the afflicted and here we see honor for the humble.

So going through this section in verse 7 it's interesting in the beginning it says people were watching Jesus carefully but he was also watching them carefully. He noticed that some of them chose the best seats and they wanted to sit at the end of the table and they wanted to sit next to the host that was really the best seat because then the host would introduce you to his best friends and he would sort of make connections.

That's what he would do at these inner parties. That's why a lot of people would have these parties and attend these parties because he wanted to make connections and he wanted to sort of advance your social status without that.

So I'm going to buy some of his house I'll go there maybe I'll meet somebody else maybe I'll help you get a better job maybe I'll connect with so-and-so right as the ancient version of networking is going to these dinner parties and people of course were trying to touch what they could to get as close to the top as they could and Jesus challenged them.

[13:03] He says don't promote yourself it's better to take a worse seat and be invited to move up than take the best seat and be embarrassed to have to move down.

Now at first that advice seems it almost seems calculated right? You know it's sort of like well you may know you might get a little boosted you may be too high you might get to come down so you don't need to come down now that's sort of proverbial advice in a lot of cultures Proverbs 25 6 7 but Jesus is actually verse 11 Jesus is actually going to eat so I'm just saying well okay so put yourself in a lower place and most most will serve on God and that'll make you better right?

Jesus says everyone who exalts himself and promotes himself to become brought down and the one who promotes himself to be exalted and in that verse Jesus is speaking in what is sometimes called the divine acid so it's a passive voice basically saying the active voice would be saying God will humble those who exalt himself Jesus just says everyone who exalts themselves they will be humbled the question is by who?

and the application is by God right? so if there was a common fact speaking and you were speaking they will be humbled they will be exalted and you knew oh he speaks about God and that's what Jesus is speaking about in verse 11 and so what he's really challenging us to say is where do you get your honor and security?

are you trying to sort of advance a level by your connection to other people or are you seeking the honor that comes from God?

[15:00] and he's really telling me the Pharisees because the Pharisees as we've seen in other parts try to exalt themselves and try to appear as rulers and models and Jesus warning them you're trying to exalt yourself about a holy but we see that Jesus confident in his identity from God Jesus is willing to humble himself Jesus had this complete security and so he could humble himself in the

lowest place without despairing addressing that God would exalt him so this is the discipleship point from this section which he is teaching his disciples he's reminding us again who he is that he is willing to follow himself and in his resurrection he will be a father but he's saying as followers of Jesus we call to humble ourselves instead of promote ourselves because we will be secure in who we are in

Jesus part of following Jesus is learning to be comfortable in being who you are and not try to be somebody else because you're secure in who you're not being and you're comfortable being that person because you know that comes to me and you know that's God's child and you know that he's never going to take more for safety so you can be secure and strong and so you can humble yourself without losing yourself and then Jesus goes on verse 12-14 he's applying the same principle honor for the humble and he applies that to the host right he's talking to the guests 7-11 now he talks to the host of 14 and I mean just imagine this Jesus has been invited to this man's house and here's what he says to the man who invites him when you have a dinner go and invite friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors let's say you invite you to return go when you get a feast invite the poor cripple the name and the lion and you'll be blessed as a can evade you now that was like the opposite advice of what almost anyone else will give right why don't throw a heartache

I throw a heartache to hang up with people they like and then they'll invite them to their house or you can invite them strategically so you can network and connect with them maybe get associated with people you want to associate with so you can feel a little bit more secure and Jesus says don't look back I would just imagine saying have had somebody saying that to the person who invited them for dinner like don't invite all people you just invite them invite the poor the people of the women of money what do you say right what do you say for those who are like whoa who is this guy now doesn't Jesus mean that we should literally never invite friends family or wealthy people for dinner no

I think sometimes Jesus uses hyperbole or overstated to make a point. You look down in verse 26 Jesus talks about you have to hate your father and mother and in order to follow me.

Now that does not mean that you should hate your mother and father. That's what Bible says. Honor your mother and father. But it means you should love Jesus more than anyone else. Right? And so Jesus needs to be a strong language to make a point.

[18:54] Right? That we need to love him more than anyone else. And so he needs to be a strong language here to make a point. I think one of the reasons Jesus uses strong language is that if he states everything more politely, he would just politely ignore it.

And so he says it strongly so that we have to deal with it and have to really press with what he's saying. So Jesus is saying, but what he's saying in Paul 14 is he's saying you should love people generously and trust God and take him back.

You should love people without calculating how much they can pay you back and what benefits they can give you if you're connected to them. You should love people without measuring any of that.

And trust that God will repay you again in the resurrection of the righteous. That's a challenge. I think it's really easy to get into a rut and basically default into living as if this world is mostly all there is.

You think, oh yes, you believe in eternal life, I guess we'll sort of figure out what that's like when you get there. But I want to try to make as much of this life as I can, but I haven't.

[20:26] Jesus is saying, my kingdom is about loving people generously and trusting God and bring faith in the end. And then there will be a resurrection and that will be, that will outweigh everything else on the scales of history.

That will outweigh everything else. What I think Jesus is trying to teach us as his disciples is something like this.

Invite people who can't pay for themselves, who can't pay back, men who can't get there on their own, you need to go and pick them up.

I've been through a blind person like that, but I think it's something to lead them wherever the party is. People who you can't imagine how associated with them would help you advance in society and might those people be your parties.

You see, Jesus, Jesus, I think a lot of us think, well, okay, showing compassion to people who are indeed beings, that's sort of part of my work.

[21 : 36] But when I want to have fun, I'm going to go have fun with my friends. And people might all have to be burdened with their difficulties. And Jesus says, actually, you're going to have fun.

Invite people who have partners. Invite people who are part. Invite people who are crippled. Invite people who are blind. Invite people nobody else would invite. Because God will be made for that. He will be blessed by God. Because you will be acting like God. Isn't that what Jesus came to do? To come to earth and give his blessings to all of us who are spiritually speaking, not just poor, crippled, and lame and blind, but far worse than that.

Rebels against God. Messed up, twisted, broken. And Jesus came to our work to raise his hands. He is a sign of them.

To show them what that means. Go and love people. You can't think of any benefit that they will be able to give you to this. And just love them.

[22 : 51] Pour out your love on them. And you might, they might never pay back. They might never pay back financially. They might never pay back socially. They might never pay back in another way. But you will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to do that if you do what you would say to Jesus.

So, this is a man I think we don't talk a lot about, but I think we should have, we should take Jesus literally here when he says, invite people who are poor, blind, and they are rich.

You know, and there's other people who are vulnerable by the kind of those passages, but really thinking, how can we do this quite? The next time the Bible comes over for dinner, or planning to go to a party, can you bring some light on them?

And sometimes, I think it will teach you a kind of joy that you wouldn't even expect. And, and all the time you realize that the people that you talk to will help you in any way are actually helping you in all kinds of ways that only God could have known in advance by the people.

and so, there's a blessing that comes with the resurrection, but sometimes, I think God will give you that blessing ahead of time. So, Jesus is saying, don't just show compassion out of pity or duty as a party of work.

[24 : 12] Show compassion in sharing joy. And why should we do this? because these are the people who God has invited in his manger.

So, now we go to the third part. You see, healing from the afflicted, on earth, and humble. And third, hospitality, leading outcasts. Verse 15, 24. And this is sort of the concluding parable of the section. And Jesus tells the story of a great manger. And it begins with a guy who's behaved like a typical host.

Right? He invites his friends. And as you'll see, the friends he invites, they own property, one of them has got married, they're sort of doing well. Five goat coxin, that means he probably got at least a hundred acres five goat coxin to plow by the field.

So, we have the host when he sort of starts off in the story behaving like a typical host back then. He compares the meal, sends out the service with a reminder and then disaster. Everyone rejects the invitation and no show.

[25 : 19] He can't do it at the last time. Every single last one of them. Bad news for the host who only invites his friends and relatives and rich neighbors.

But then the host actually changes his plan verse 21 to 23. And he invites everyone. The poor, the poor, the blind, the language, even people outside the city gates, the people sleeping under the bridges.

people that nobody else will think they invited. And he takes special initiatives to include the ones who would be normally left out.

It's interesting. At first, he just sends out invitations and sends his servants to tell people to come in. But in verse 21, he doesn't just say, well, will he then invite the poor, the little blind, the blind.

And he says, bring them in. Right? They'll need help if somebody's crippled. They'll need a hand to actually get there. You can't just go to a cripple man and say, hey, come to the parties a mile or two away.

[26 : 23] He says, okay, I'll give you a ride. And in verse 23, he says, go out to the highways and headsets, that is, the end of the earth, and compel people to come in.

Now, that word compels a little confusing. It doesn't actually mean use force and force people to come in against their will. That's not what it means. Now, people visit her from the Adam and the middle agents and that was a test.

But what it does mean is it's the images of someone coming and taking the hand of somebody who feels hesitant or afraid and saying, come with me.

Yes. Because it goes to people right back then if you would invite, if you were a rich person and you invited someone who was poor at nothing, right, they only have clothes on their back and those clothes weren't really good, they would say, oh no, I can't do two hands.

Oh no, I would be too embarrassed. I don't have the right clothes on. Right? Sometimes you believe you go this way about church, right? You don't have, you don't have, you know, fleets out of clothes that look sort of nice.

[27 : 36] Sometimes people like, I don't know, I can't make sure of something else. And so what does the guy do is he says, I'm calling to come and that is take their hand and if they're afraid or ask them, say, come with me and I'll read it and I'll walk in with you.

you know, it takes more effort than initiative to bring in some type of people into God's kingdom but Jesus says that is worth it.

This guy goes for about 15 years to worship at the Columbus House. His name is Ken Bergen and he's part of their outreach and engagement team. So you see those who like, when it's 10 below zero on the coldest night of the year, he's out going under the bridges and where people are sleeping out in tents and he goes to find people who would never commit to a shelter otherwise and he goes out there with his team of people and basically just tries to bring as many people in to safety and warmth as possible.

And he's probably saying people fly away. I don't know, I haven't heard all the stories of the big break and you never know what would happen otherwise but he goes in great lengths to bring people in who are generally resistant to coming in and don't want to be in a shelter but really need a warm and safe place to be.

And I think that's a picture of the kind of what it means to be one of Jesus' disciples inviting people in history is to have that kind of perseverance and willingness to go wherever it takes and to meet people wherever they are and to take the time and play the need and to be not just throwing out an invitation and saying hey, if you ever want to come you can come but to come alongside people and to bring them in to not see them to his bank of people.

[29 : 35] So the point of this parable parable of the great night is good news for the guests who would never normally be invited and bad news for the guests who refuse the invitation to take for granted.

Jesus says there's a place where I need for everyone no one is excluded the only people who don't make it in are people who exclude themselves and are refusing the invitation.

Now one last thing notice the excuses that people make sometimes we read these excuses and we sort of think well aren't they all sort of lame excuses I feel you know I have to go out and see it bought some oxygen to test it well you should probably test the oxygen before you buy it so I test drive the car before you buy it rather than say I just bought a car you can test drive it sounds lame okay you want to test it okay you want to drive your car that's fine that just sounds like a lame excuse for you know ditching the party at the last minute and bagels are normally only in the evening so we're going to actually be able to inspect the field if it's almost keeping so on one hand basically seems sort of lame but the third excuse is best of all because there's a verse in New Robby that says if you just get married it says when a man is going to be married he shall not grow out before he can be liable for any other mother do he shall be free at home one year and be happy with his wife and be a saint so basically in ancient

Israel if you just don't marry you have a free pass for all military and civic duties not bad and so you know what that's about the best you should come up with to refuse an invitation to a dinner because you don't have anything else you have all year you just be happy be happy with your new spouse but what's the point that Jesus is talking about something more important than military more important than serving a club office more important than anything else that commands our attention more important even that marriage makes this you can center our marriage Jesus is talking about being invited to God's faith invited into the relationship with God to become part of God and he said that's more important that takes priority over anti-excuses and so even the best experiences not just the really laid ones it sounds like somebody made a lot but even the best experiences are not good so Judas is inviting us to be part of a banquet that lasts forever and then in the end he says

I tell you none of these men to invite us will taste my banquet very interesting he starts as the guest at this man's house he talks to the guest he talks to the host and he tells this story about being

