

2nd & 3rd Quarter 2021 Bible Study Outline



THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST - STUDY 24

Taking The Lowest Place - Lk.14:7-11

INTRODUCTION:

1. We have seen that Jesus did not limit His use of parables to instructing only His disciples:
 - a. He often used them in responding to those who challenged Him...
 - i) "The Two Sons" - Matt.21:28-32
 - ii) "The Wicked Vinedressers" - Matt.21:33-46
 - iii) "The Wedding Feast" - Matt, 122:1-14
 - b. He also used them in more casual settings...
 - i) As a guest in a Pharisee's home - "The Two Debtors" - Lk.7:41-43
 - ii) Replying to a lawyer's question - "The Good Samaritan" - Lk.10:25-37
 - iii) Responding to a request to settle a family dispute - "The Rich Fool" - Lk.12:13-21
 - iv) In offering His perspective on a calamity - "The Barren Fig Tree" - Lk.13:6-9
2. It was in another casual setting that we find Jesus using a parable to teach an important lesson...
 - a. The parable is found in Lk.14:7-11
 - b. It can be called "Taking The Lowest Place", and it illustrates the value of humility

I. ANALYZING THE PARABLE:

A. The Setting...

1. Jesus had gone to eat at the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on the Sabbath - Lk.14:1a
2. They had watched Him closely - Lk.14:1b
 - a. Perhaps to see if He would heal the man with dropsy? - Lk.14:2
 - b. Jesus posed a question about the lawfulness of healing on the Sabbath - Lk.14:3
 - i) To which they did not respond - Lk.14:4
 - ii) To which they could not respond, after Jesus...
 - a) Healed the man - Lk.14:5
 - b) Posed another question revealing their inconsistency - Lk.14:6

3. Jesus had also been watching them closely - **Lk.14:7**
 - a. He had noted how those invited were selecting the best places to sit
 - i) It is thought that the seating arrangements at that time may have involved three tables in the shape of a flat-bottomed "U"
 - ii) **"The triclinia, or Grecian table, then in use had three sections which were placed together so as to form a flat-bottomed U. The space enclosed by the table was not occupied. It was left vacant that the servants might enter it and attend to the wants of the guests who reclined around the outer margin of the table."** (MCGARVEY)
 - iii) **"The central seat of each of these three sections were deemed a place of honor. This struggle for precedence was a small ambition, but many of the ambitions of our day are equally small."** (MCGARVEY)
 - b. This petty positioning around the tables prompted Jesus to teach a lesson using a parable...

B. The Parable Itself...

1. The setting is a wedding feast, a common social event in those days - **Lk.14:8**
2. Jesus warns against sitting down in the best place - **Lk.14:8b-9**
 - a. Someone more honorable may have been invited
 - b. When they arrive, the host will ask you to move
 - c. With shame you will have to move to the lowest place (likely the only place left!)
3. Instead, He counsels them to sit in the lowest place - **Lk.14:10**
 - a. That way, the host will come along and say **"Friend, go up higher"**
 - b. So instead of shame, brought about trying to sit in the best place, you will receive glory among those who sit at the table with you
4. Jesus then concludes with this maxim: **"For whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."** - **Lk.14:11**
 - a. A "maxim": a fundamental principle, general truth, or rule of conduct
 - b. It was one of our Lord's favorite
 - i) Used in the parable of **"The Pharisee And The Publican"** - **Lk.18:14**
 - ii) Spoken when teaching His disciples not to be like scribes and Pharisees - **Matt.23:6-12**
 - c. It is found in the Old Testament - **Ps.18:27; Prov.18:12; 29:23**
 - d. And repeated in the New Testament - **Jam.4:6; 1Pet.5:5**

Remember that this is a parable; Jesus' purpose is not just to have us focus on the story (in this case, the advice about attending wedding feasts), but the main principle illustrated by the parable.

With that in mind, here are a few thoughts in regards to...

II. THE PARABLE APPLIED:

A. We Learn The Danger Of Pride...

1. The wise man wrote:
 - a. **"Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall."** - **Prov.16:18**

b. **"A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honour." - Prov.29:23**

2. The danger of pride is not just in social settings (as per the parable), but in our relationship with God!

a. The Lord hates pride - **Prov.8:13**

b. It is defiles man - **Mk.7:21-23**

c. It is of the world, not of the Father - **1Jn.2:15-17**

B. We Learn The Importance Of Humility...

1. The Lord blesses the humble - **Ps.25:9; Prov.3:34**

2. Humility is a mark of wisdom - **Prov.11:2**

3. Humility precedes honour like arrogance goes before destruction - **Prov.18:12; 22:4**

C. Therefore, As Disciples Of Christ Let Us...

1. Be clothed with humility - **Col.3:12**

2. Be humble before God - **1Pet.5:6**

3. Be humble in our dealings with our brethren in Christ - **Phil.2:3**

4. Be humble in our dealings with those around us, even those who oppose us - **Tit.3:2; 2Tim.2:24-25**

CONCLUSION:

1. Through this simple parable, Jesus has taught us a most important truth: the need to be humble in our relations with God and those around us!

2. Humility is not a popular grace in our culture...

a. It is considered a sign of weakness by many

b. People fear that they will be made a floor mat by others

3. But we must remember that God is watching, and it is He who said:

"For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isa.57:15)

4. If we desire the Lord to dwell with us, then let us walk humbly before Him, as Micah wrote...

"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." (Mic.6:8)

May God give us the grace to so walk before Him!