

Sermon Text: Luke 14:1-24 Dining with the Pharisees

Jesus teaches us how to enjoy the bounty of the Kingdom.

1) The merciful delights in the power of the Kingdom (14:1-6).

- a) Jesus keeps the Sabbath.
- b) Jesus challenges the Pharisees' self-serving application of the Sabbath command.
 - i) "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"—the immediate case being the guest with dropsy
 - ii) "Which of you having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?"—this case involves personal family and personal property
 - iii) "And they could not reply to these things."— powerless to answer
- c) Jesus is at a feast when He tells three parables/instructions involving feasts. Contrast the joyful feasting of the Kingdom of God in Christ and the oppressive "feast" of the Pharisees (14:1).
- d) The contrast is strong when it comes to showing mercy.
 - i) Jesus allowed the delightful rest of the Sabbath to be interrupted for the sake of healing this man.
 - ii) The Pharisees would not stain their spotless record of Sabbath keeping even to speak in favor of the man's healing.
- e) **Application:**
 - i) The Sabbath is a gift from God for holy-resting the entire day. It should not be used for business endeavors, feckless entertainment, or anything that would distract from enjoying God.
 - ii) Showing mercy on the Sabbath is good because it participates in the reign of God to show mercy.
 - iii) The Sabbath commandment is of high importance. The fact that it can be "violated" in order to show mercy, demonstrates how important mercy is in God's Kingdom.
 - iv) Withholding mercy leaves one powerless, because such action refuses to operate in the reality of God's Kingdom.

2) The humble delights in the honor of the King and His people (14:7-11).

- a) "A parable"—not calculating insincerity designed to get ahead
- b) The glory of Christ (our host) is our priority.
- c) The honor of our brothers and sisters in Christ is our next concern (Rom. 12:10).
- d) **Application:**
 - i) Ambition for personal honor is self-absorbed, and thus unsatisfying. It actually puts one in conflict with God and His purposes; so, it can only end in humiliation (14:11a).0
 - ii) The glory of Christ is the soul's satisfaction.
 - iii) Honoring fellow believers is a means of delighting in Christ's work in their lives, and thus a means of delighting in Christ Himself.

3) The generous delights in the Master's commendation of his stewardship (14:12-14).

- a) Meals were social capital for exchanges of honor. Jesus condemned this use of God's resources, because it did not seek God's glory, but the glory of the steward.

- b) In the end, each person will be judged for how he managed God's resources. If they were not used lovingly in service to others, but only to advance the steward's honor, then he will be stripped of his stewardship.
- c) On the other hand, if they were used lovingly, without any thought for personal advancement, then the steward will be honored by the Master in the resurrection (cf. 19:11-27).
- d) **Application:**
 - i) God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to others. When we regard our possessions as generous gifts from God, then our hearts are enlarged to give generously to others.
 - ii) Ingratitude and miserliness go hand in hand.
 - iii) Social capital comes in many forms (wealth, position, influence, time, invitations, etc.). Are you using your social capital to advance your own honor? Or, are you using your social capital to serve others in Jesus' name?

4) The believing delights in the banquet of King Jesus (14:15-24).

- a) "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"—Pharisaic Presumption
- b) Jesus replied with a parable that calls for faith in Jesus as God's banquet.
 - i) The man who throws the party and invites the guests parallels God's call to the Jews to enter His Kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - ii) The refusal of the guests to come parallels the Jews' rejection of Jesus as the Messiah.
 - iii) The poor and crippled and blind and lame and those from the highways and hedges represent the most unlikely people to make it into God's kingdom.
 - iv) "For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet."—The majority of the Jews were excluded from the Kingdom of God because they rejected Jesus as the Christ.
- c) Recall the question of 13:23: "Lord will those who are saved be few?"
 - i) Only a few from Israel will enter through the narrow door of Jesus (13:24). The rest will be shut out (13:25-28).
 - ii) Many will come from the nations to recline at table in the Kingdom of God (13:29)
- d) **Application:**
 - i) The presence of the Kingdom now brings great joy to those who have faith in Jesus.
 - ii) The fulfillment of the Kingdom in the future strengthens that joy with hope for those who have faith in Jesus.
 - iii) Those who have been welcomed as guests, have the joy of inviting others to join them at the banquet.
 - iv) The Kingdom of God is not a means to gain honor in the world's eyes. It is to enjoy the blessed presence of God and His reign over us.

Doxology: "Oh the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!"—Romans 11:33