

The Ambitious Guest

Luke 14:7-14

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

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

10 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 sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

As we look in this chapter here, we see he's at the Pharisees' house. He's teaching them. He's going to do so by parables. And there are some messages about the parable of the ambitious guest that will help us out as we get into this.

I. The Message of the Parables. v.7

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

The first one is the message of the parables all together, which there's going to be several in this chapter. And it says in verse 7, He put forth a parable and what he says here is this. They could listen. They're dealing with him, he's giving them a parable.

And there is the definition of a parable, it is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It is to bring them into something he's trying to show them. And I've gathered over the time, looking at this thing, that people understand earthly things better than heavenly things. That's why he had to use earthly things to reach their minds with it. And by looking at this, I want to show you this. He said he put forth a parable to those which were bidden when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms and so forth like that.

When they got him in this place right here, they were trying to get to him. They were trying to catch him in something. The Bible said they was trying to catch him in his words. But they couldn't read his mind, but he could read theirs.

They didn't know what he was thinking. If they'd have known what he was thinking, they'd have known that he was not like them.

But notice this, we've seen the message of the parables, but we see the message of this parable, this very parable right here about the ambitious guest.

II. The Message of this Parable. vs.8-11

And what the message is, is what to expect when pride rules.

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

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

And those houses back in those days, they were laid out with the lowest room. Then the next honorable guest will be on the next level, then the next level, then the highest honor we have for the people sitting around the outside.

And you know what, we look at that and we see the same thing now, except if we put it in a church setting, for instance, the most honorable people sit in one place, the least honorable in the other, and on and on it goes and stuff like that.

You go to, listen, you go to a concert, which one's the highest seats? What do you pay more money for, to sit on the back row or the front row? Front row. I read where these guys are coming out of retirement the last 20 or 30 years, they're coming out of retirement, and they got a special section on the front row. You pay about \$2,000 or \$3,000, you get to sit on the front row.

But I noticed a lot of people when they see things like this, he's referring to a wedding in this instance. And you know what people do at weddings? They make a fool of themselves. They really do. You'll see people at every wedding, I don't think I've ever been to one where this didn't happen, where somebody come in and ushers, I need to go sit you over here.

They have assigned seats at weddings. Who sits on the front row over here? The parents and grandparents of who? The bride. Now who sits over here? The parents and grandparents of the groom.

10 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 sit at meat with thee.

Now why would I expect to be sitting on the front row when I probably don't know them people that well and I'm definitely not their parent or grandparent. Can you say pride?

Don't forget the bible says only by pride cometh contention. When you see people fighting over

something it's usually over pride no matter what the something is. So why would a man come down and do that? Well that's pride.

You see all these people getting these messes like this for a reason. You know what the reason is? Pride. Why would you go sit on the front row at a wedding knowing you are not the mama or the daddy. Why would you do that?

Let me give you the back side of this story. Let's go to a funeral now. You ever go to funerals and see certain seat sections roped off? What is that for again?

You just go sit wherever, except for one particular place that got marked off. And what's that word say on that little thing over there? Family. Reserved for family.

And I look at what he's saying here and what to expect when pride rules, you can expect contention to come because they're going to get mad when they get asked to leave or asked to move or something like that.

But we see what to do instead in verse 10. Jesus tells them this, this is what you do. He doesn't just tell you what not to do. He tells you what to do as well in verse 10. That's the message.

So instead of letting pride rule, you come in humility and you take the lowest seat. Oh, that we would have people in this day and age that would do that. You know, it's a crazy thing in this day and age.

Now listen, what I'm looking at here with this parable, he says when you do come in, take the lowest seat. You find that in very few people. Very few people.

Humility is an often forgotten trait that Christ had that we need to be more like him.

I see him going in the synagogue like all the other Jews did in his day, and the only way he got up in front of somebody is they had to ask him to come do it.

I see the message of the parables, what to do instead, go in and take the lowest seat. That way if something happens, you get to be promoted to the best seat.

And he says, he shows how this thing is determined in verse 11.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

If you apply the parable of this thing right here, this parable of the ambitious guest to the judgment seat of Christ, here's some sound advice: when you come before the Lord at the judgment seat of Christ, get down and stay down. Don't be up in heaven and say, I'll get to the first line and get done first. You won't want to hear what he's got to say. Because at the judgment seat of Christ, that's for saved people, and he's going to give us rewards according to what we did for him on this side of the grave.

You'll be surprised what little you did when you get there, coming out of the Laodicean church. You know what we think in the Laodicean church? We think committees are of God. We really do.

Every church has them. They talk about now, well, we don't call them committees. That's old fashioned. We call them teams.

Really, you call them teams? What do they do again? And then what? Oh, so it's a committee by a different name.

I have dogs in my house. One is a little killer and the other one is just a goofy puppy. If I look at them dogs and say, you identify as ducks, what are they going to do? Bark. No matter what you call them, they're still the same thing.

And this applies to whatever sex you were born into. I don't care what you say you are, what are you? What's your birth certificate say? Given you were born in America and got a birth certificate, what does it say? It says M or F, not multi or optional.

When you get to the judgment seat of Christ there won't be anybody strutting towards the judgment seat of Christ saying look what I did for the Lord. They won't be nobody like that what you gonna see the judgment seat of Christ though you're going to see somebody that's probably some old lady in a nursing home that loves the Lord and God heard her prayers and answer her prayers and then they're going to bring the megachurch pastor in that said I had 25 bus ministries, 354 saved last week in fact we had at least 300 saved every week and done us other stuff. And he'll go to bragging to the Lord and He will tell him one thing, "You didn't do that for Me."

But see listen when people get like that they start bragging and all this other stuff. That's just messed up.

We got the message of the parable the message of this parable then we got another particular message:

III. The Message to the Pharisees. vs.12-14

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

Don't cater to yourself. Jesus said that. You know, they're trying to have this and they're trying to get Jesus there in their outfit and they're trying to be at him there with all their friends so they can catch him in his words. That's what the Bible said they were up to.

Now if they're trying to catch him in his words, why are they doing that else they can use against him later on.

Jesus so far has done things to heal, help, and feed people. You know what they've done the whole time? Criticize everything he's done.

They said, "You can't heal on the Sabbath." They could have shut him up right there and showed him one verse of scripture. They couldn't show him one because there's not one there.

But don't cater to yourself when you invite people to church. Ah there's the word. Go out and get lost people. Go find the lost people. So who are we going to find? Let's see. It says, "Don't get this crowd here that you know" the rich crowd. You know that crowd.

He said call the poor the maimed the lame and the blind in verse 13 go get the crowd that's lost and get them under the gospel at least once before they die!

Now watch this.

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

And thou shalt be blessed, why? Because you've called the poor, the lame, 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 what's the problem? In these same churches where all the deacons stay out drinking on Friday and Saturday night, they got the same problem that every other church does.

You know what the problem is? The same problem, listen, the same problem that all the people that don't go to church have. All of them is the same problem. It's not a problem of how you do things. It's why you do things.

And I'll tell you why they do them. The book of Jeremiah said they got an evil, black, sin-filled heart, and they in need of a transplant. And the hospital can't help you with this one because they can't do this transplant.

Ezekiel tells us over, I believe it's chapter 36, this transplant comes from heaven where God gives you a new heart. When God gives you a new heart, He'll change all the rest of that stuff.

Now watch this. He said at the resurrection of just you'll be recompensed by the Lord for this thing. We are going after the wrong crowd!

Let's just modernize that a little bit. That's the guy ain't got no car. You got to go pick him up. Okay, he might have to walk eight hours one way cuz he's slow. You can get him here in 20 minutes. You see what I'm getting at here?

See don't be the ambitious guess that's trying to get to the front of the line. Get to the back of the line, but when it's your turn to host bring them in the right way.

You want to tell everybody how to do it, but you don't want to listen to anybody's directions. You got to get off that pride and get back to humility. That's where your Lord is.

You can go to Philippians chapter 2. Look at verse number 5. Let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God that's in heaven.

Here's what he did on earth.

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 a man, he humbled himself.

Two things you read right there. He made himself a no reputation and he humbled himself.

You know what you need today, friend? You need to be, you need to be like that. Make yourself of no reputation. Don't try to run to the front of the line. Don't try to sit at the best table. Humble yourself. Let God exalt you. He said he that humbles himself shall be exalted. That will happen.

I want to tell you about something I saw here a while back. This totally blew my mind.

They had a funeral of a very well-deserving individual a while back and they actually broadcast it on local TV.

These fellas showed up at this funeral. They go in there and the church house is full so they walk right over to the gym where they got these big screens set up where they had the overflow crowd, right? They walk in there and walk to the very back of the room and sit down so everybody else could have a seat. And while they're sitting there, this lady comes up and says, "I know you. You're not supposed to be here."

The one man said, "Why am I not supposed to be here?"

She replied, "Well, you're supposed to be in there."

He said, "But it was full in there."

She then says, "I got a couple places. Come with me."

And she got them two guys up and walked them right in there, walked them right into the choir Loft.

The camera was aimed right at the speakers for the funeral and right at them. And the guy that's preaching got him on camera and them two guys. Now, ain't that something?

What's that barge in that back door? Where am I to sit up front? You know how people are.

I'm sitting there watching this and I'm thinking, how is it you go to the back seat and you get the front? that's God doing that!

You say, you preachers tell all them stories, it's always fiction, always about something. Y'all just make that stuff up.

How about it happened to me at a church near here and I was the one it happened to? How about when I got home, my wife says, you've been on TV all afternoon. I didn't even know I was on TV until I got there. And the guy sitting with me was Mike Miller, pastor of the Berry Memorial Baptist Church at the time. Boy, God's got a strange sense of humor to put in.

This was no fictional story, not a theoretical story. I was there when it happened. I couldn't believe it either. My heart went out to them people over that stuff. I couldn't imagine busting in the door and going, give me my seat up front. I was so uncomfortable sitting there because I felt like everybody's looking at me. Now then when I found that out, I really got uncomfortable. I didn't like that at all.

God has a way of putting you in the place he wants you to, friend. All you have to do is make yourself no reputation, humble yourself. That's what your Lord did. It says it right there in print.

What's the Lord taught you today? Has he taught you anything? Is he helping you today? I hope he is.