**The Gospel of Luke**

**Lesson 10** Luke 14:1-24 Jesus at a Pharisee’s house/Parable of the Great Banquet!

**Questions:**

1. What important truth did you learn from the lecture, and how does it apply to your life?
2. Read Wiersbe pages 17-25[[1]](#footnote-1)\*.

List the five different kinds of people Jesus encountered in Luke 14:1-24. What did he expose as false in their lives or thinking? With which of these groups do you most closely identify? Why?

1. Read Luke 14:1-6 and review the article from Lesson 8 (question 5) entitled, “Did Jesus break the Sabbath law?”
2. Why did the Pharisees invite the afflicted man to such an important dinner? In what   
   ways were they baiting Jesus?
3. Read Deuteronomy 6:13-16 and Matthew 4:7. What are some ways we test God today?
4. What do you learn from the following verses?

* 1 Samuel 16:7
* Proverbs 21:2
* Jeremiah 17:9-10
* John 2:24-25

1. What did Jesus see in the hearts/minds of these religious leaders?
2. In what ways is Jesus a “dangerous” person to be in the company of?
3. Read Luke 6:45b. Explain this verse. What does Jesus see when he looks into your heart?
4. Read Luke 14:7-14 along with the article below entitled, “What does the Bible say about how to humble yourself?” A Lesson on Humility!
5. Verse 14:11 states, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will bed exalted.” Explain this verse in your own words.
6. Read Philippians 2:5-11 and John 13:1-17. How does Jesus serve as an example of humbling oneself, that is, “taking the lowest place?”
7. From the article below, define humility.
8. Why is humility such an attractive trait to God?
9. In what areas of your life do you need to show more humility? Will you share this with your group?

John Bunyan, in the second part of his book *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, describes the time   
when Christiana and her companions must descend into the Valley of Humiliation. Bunyan describes that place as “a steep hill, and the way was slippery.” In other words, it’s never easy to humble oneself, and when our path demands humility of us, we can easily slip up.

Humility can be defined as the absence of pride, just as darkness is the absence of light.   
We cannot become more humble by focusing on humility, as it becomes a source of pride when we believe we have achieved it. C.S. Lewis describes humility not as thinking less   
of ourselves, but as thinking of ourselves less. With that definition in mind, the Bible has much to say about seeing ourselves in proper perspective. Holding the biblical perspective humbles us.

Humility increases when we are willing to be humbled by God, circumstances, and others. Our sinful natures do not want to be humbled. We tend to protect our pride as though it were our best friend, but pride gets in the way of our relationship with God. He resists the prideful but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). He will work with us when we desire humility, but the development of humility will be painful. Despite the discomfort, we find an added measure of grace to sustain us as we suffer through the refining process.

The first step in humbling ourselves is to challenge our motives for the things we do. Whenever we see that our actions are geared to elicit favorable opinions from others, we should bring it to the Lord. We can pray something like this: “Lord, You see what I’m about to do here. Is this for Your glory or for mine? Examine my heart. Am I desiring to give You praise or keep some for myself?” It’s not always wrong to want to make a good impression, but when we make the majority of our choices based on pleasing people, we may have a pride problem. We can confess our wrong motives and commit to doing only that which glorifies the Lord and not us. That may mean staying off social media for a while, refraining from bragging about our latest promotion or vacation, and deferring the praise we get to another who also deserves it.

Another step in humbling ourselves is to evaluate our response when we are slighted, overlooked, or underappreciated. We admit to ourselves and to God that the sting of self-pity we feel is pride demanding to defend itself. Rather than give in to it, we instead choose to embrace the opportunity to learn humility. We can pray something like this: “Father, I’m hurt and angry right now because they left me out (or didn’t appreciate me, etc.). Thank You for this opportunity to deal with some areas of pride in my life that I wouldn’t have otherwise noticed. If I’m overlooked, I take comfort knowing Christ was also overlooked, rejected,   
and misunderstood.”

Learning to be more humble involves capturing prideful moments and bringing them to   
the Lord so they cannot grow. We allow Him to turn something harmful into something beneficial for our growth. Recognizing areas of pride is a critical part of defeating it, so   
we must be prepared to agree with the Lord when He points them out to us.

The Bible gives examples of proud men who nevertheless humbled themselves when faced with the judgment of God. King Hezekiah struggled with pride, but he humbled himself   
and turned away God’s wrath from Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 32:25–26). The wicked kings Ahab (1 Kings 21:27–29), Rehoboam (2 Chronicles 12:1–12), and Manasseh   
(2 Chronicles 33:10–13) all wisely chose to humble themselves and seek the Lord’s mercy. In each case, mercy was granted.

The Bible lavishes praise on the humble. Jesus, of course, modeled humility (Matthew 11:29). Moses was “more humble than any other person” (Numbers 12:3). Paul reminded   
the Corinthians that, even though he was an apostle and their spiritual elder, he was humble when he was among them (2 Corinthians 10:1). Jesus taught that those who wish to be great must be the most humble (Matthew 23:12). Many places in Scripture command us to humble ourselves (Ephesians 4:2; 1 Peter 3:8; 5:6). If we don’t humble ourselves, God will do it, and that can be even more painful (Luke 1:52; 18:14).

When we abandon ourselves to the will of God, there is no room for pride. He may require us to do some humbling things, but it will be for our betterment. We cooperate with Him in the process by seeking unimportant jobs, working behind the scenes, helping when no one else does, and reminding ourselves that our reward is in heaven (Matthew 6:4). Those whose gaze is locked firmly on eternity find it easier to embrace humility on earth.

As we learn to be more humble, we discover that the place of the humble is a place of beauty. To continue Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, once Christiana and her friends make their descent into the Valley of Humiliation, they find it to be a peaceful, abundant land. The author describes it: “This Valley of Humiliation . . . is the best and most useful brave piece of ground in all those parts. It is fat ground, and . . . consisteth much in meadows. . . . Behold how green this Valley is, also how beautified with lilies (Song. 2:1). I have also known many labouring men that have got good estates in this Valley of Humiliation . . . for indeed it is a very fruitful soil, and doth bring forth by handfuls.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. Read Luke 14:15-24 along with the article below entitled, “What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet?”
2. Who and/or what is represented in this parable by the following phrases:

* Master of the house:
* The great banquet:
* The invited guests:
* The poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame:

1. What are one or two key lessons you learn from this parable? How will these lessons change the way you live this day forward?
2. How do the following texts relate to this parable?

* John 3:16
* Luke 19:10
* Mark 10:17-25
* Revelation 19:7-9

1. Read Proverbs 1:25-33. Have you heeded the call of God? Have you humbled yourself, repented of your sins, and turned to the Master in faith? If not, why not?

The Parable of the Great Banquet is found in Luke 14:15-24. It is similar to the Parable of   
the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-14), but with some significant differences. The story in Luke’s Gospel was told at a dinner that Jesus attended. Jesus had just healed a man with dropsy and taught a brief lesson on serving others. Jesus then says that those who serve others “will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (Luke 14:14). At the mention   
of the resurrection, someone at the table with Jesus said, “Blessed is the man who will   
eat at the feast in the kingdom of God” (verse 15). In reply, Jesus tells the Parable of the Great Banquet.

In the parable, a man planned a large banquet and sent out invitations. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servant to contact each of the invited guests, telling them that all was ready, and the meal was about to start (verses 16-17). One after another, the guests made excuses for not coming. One had just bought a piece of land and said he had to go see it (verse 18). Another had purchased some oxen and said he was on the way to yoke them up and try them out (verse 19). Another gave the excuse that he was newly married and therefore could not come (verse 20).

When the master of the house heard these flimsy excuses, he was angry. He told his servant to forget the guest list and go into the back streets and alleyways of the town and invite “the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame” (verse 21). The servant had already brought in the down-and-out townspeople, and still there was room in the banquet hall. So the master sent his servant on a broader search: “Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full” (verses 22-23).  
  
Jesus ends the parable by relating the master’s determination that “not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet” (verse 24).

The statement that prompted the parable is key. The man who, in verse 15, looks forward to dining in the Messianic kingdom probably subscribed to the popular notion that only Jews would be part of that kingdom. The parable Jesus tells is aimed at debunking that notion, as the following explanation makes clear:

The master of the house is God, and the great banquet is the kingdom, a metaphor that was suggested by the speaker at the table. The invited guests picture the Jewish nation. The kingdom was prepared for them, but when Jesus came preaching that “the kingdom of heaven is near” (Matthew 4:17), He was rejected. “He came to that which was his own,   
but his own did not receive him” (John 1:11).

The excuses for skipping the banquet are laughably bad. No one buys land without seeing   
it first, and the same can be said for buying oxen. And what, exactly, would keep a newly married couple from attending a social event? All three excuses in the parable reveal insincerity on the part of those invited. The interpretation is that the Jews of Jesus’ day   
had no valid excuse for spurning Jesus’ message; in fact, they had every reason to accept Him as their Messiah.

The detail that the invitation is opened up to society’s maimed and downtrodden is important. These were the types of people that the Pharisees considered “unclean” and under God’s curse (cf. John 9:1-2, 34). Jesus, however, taught that the kingdom was available even to those considered “unclean” (cf. Acts 10). His involvement with tax collectors and sinners brought condemnation from the Pharisees, yet it showed the extent of God’s grace (Matthew 9:10-11). The fact that the master in the parable sends the servant far afield to persuade everyone to come indicates that the offer of salvation would be extended to the Gentiles and “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people” (Romans 15:10).

The master is not satisfied with a partially full banquet hall; he wants every place at the table to be filled. John MacArthur’s comment on this fact is that “God is more willing to save sinners than sinners are to be saved.”

Those who ignored the invitation to the banquet chose their own punishment—they missed out. The master respects their choice by making it permanent: they would not “taste of my banquet.” So it will be with God’s judgment on those who choose to reject Christ: they will have their choice confirmed, and they will never taste the joys of heaven.

The basic message of the Parable of the Great Banquet could be stated this way: “The tragedy of the Jewish rejection of Christ has opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles.   
The blessings of the kingdom are available to all who will come to Christ by faith.”

The inclusion of the Gentiles is a fulfillment of Hosea 2:23, “I will say to those called ‘Not my people,’ ‘You are my people’; and they will say, ‘You are my God.’” God is “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9), and “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).[[3]](#footnote-3)

1. \* Unless otherwise noted, all Wiersbe references come from Wiersbe, W. W. (1989). *Be Courageous: Take Heart from Christ’s Example – Luke 14-24*. David C. Cook. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “What does the Bible say about how to humble yourself?” Got Questions Ministries, accessed June 27, 2022,

   [https://www.gotquestions.org/how-to-humble-yourself.html] [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24)?” Got Questions Ministries, accessed June 27, 2022, [https://www.gotquestions.org/parable-great-banquet.html] [↑](#footnote-ref-3)