



08/18/2019
Luke 14:7-24

BIG IDEA

Biblical hospitality is fueled by humility and intentionally focuses on others.

LOOKING BACK

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Invite members to share any questions or points that came up in their family discussions regarding last week's study. Invite them to share ways God continued to speak to them as they sought to apply those truths throughout the week.

- What's the most interesting place you've stayed on a trip?
- What are some of the main qualities you look for when you consider where to stay when you're traveling?
- What about when someone comes to stay at your house? What preparations do you typically make? How do you make them feel welcome in your home?
- How did watching the video by Jen Wilkins make you feel about your own hospitality?

Gracious hospitality is nothing new. It doesn't matter what a hotel manager's beliefs or motives are, if they want customers to return, they're going to value, practice, and emphasize hospitality. However, being hospitable is, in fact, a very spiritual characteristic. Hospitality is a command and one Christians must embrace if we want to live in a welcoming posture to those coming into the faith. Our graciousness and hospitality to individuals outside our circle of friends attracts people to the gospel we profess. In today's passage from Luke, Jesus helps us understand the effect the gospel should have on our hearts, and how that should impact our relationship with Him and with others. In other words, biblical hospitality is marked by some attitudes that sets it apart from simply being a good host or entertaining well.

LOOKING IN

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Ask a volunteer to read Luke 14:7-11.

- According to these verses, why should followers of Christ strive for humility?
- What does humility have to do with hospitality?

- When have you encountered situations similar to the wedding party in Jesus' parable? In those situations, how did you (or the other people involved) respond?
- You're not likely to go sit on the front row at a wedding in which you're not part of the family. So, in your context, how can you apply this parable practically?

We live in a culture that encourages people to do whatever it takes to get ahead. However, in God's kingdom, the person who humbles himself will be exalted by God. Of course, Jesus did not advise adopting a veneer of humility to gain honor from God. To do so would be self-seeking ambition. Humble people draw their sense of self-worth from their relationship with God. They don't seek or need honors bestowed by humans. They know who they are—God's children—and are secure in that confidence. Such solid self-identity carries with it strength to serve others in Christ's spirit.

| *Ask a volunteer to read Luke 14:12-24.*

- Look at verses 12-14. What is difficult for you about what Jesus is teaching here? Does this mean God doesn't want you to invite your closest friends over for dinner? What does it mean?
- What are some steps we take relationally if we are going to implement Jesus' teaching in verse 13?
- How does Jesus' view of honor vary from that held by others at the meal? How does it differ from our culture's view?

Jesus taught that people demonstrate true humility by acting on the basis of what others need rather than on what others can do for them in return. He explained that God Himself would repay such humility. By reaching out to those who could not repay the act of kindness, the host would not expect to receive anything in return. But by this action he would be inviting a much greater reward, God's special blessing. In dying on the cross for our sins, Jesus demonstrated such humility to us; love requires that we demonstrate the gospel by following His example.

- What does this passage teach you about the differences between kingdom values and social values?
- How do things like status and customs get in the way of loving others in your family? Church? Work place? Community?
- Which of the characters in this parable can you most identify with? Why?
- What would it look like for our hospitality to reflect the Kingdom of God?

Jesus took this opportunity to stress another characteristic of the gospel's humbling effect on the heart. When you see that the Creator God is offering you the banquet feast of grace, you want in. You don't care where you are sitting, and you don't make excuses. When you see how lavish God's grace is, you drop everything and run to Him.

LOOKING FORWARD

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

- Of the two points of application we learned about this week—strive for a humble posture in your hospitality and intentionally reflect the Kingdom of God in your hospitality—which are you most struggling to exhibit? What steps can you take this week to grow in that area?
- What excuses do you use not to be hospitable and, in effect, do kingdom work? How might Jesus respond to them?

FAMILIES

Use the following questions and truths to disciple your children throughout the week.

- How can we know if we're demonstrating humility and hospitality at home? What does it look like when we don't?
- What are some ways we can better practice hospitality in the ways we treat each other at home?

PRAY

Thank God for involving us in His kingdom work and for allowing us the privilege of extending hospitality to others. Ask Him to show you how you can pursue a lifestyle of humility that intentionally focuses on and serves others.

COMMENTARY

| Luke 14:7-24

14:7-13 Jesus selected the contents of the parable on the basis of what was happening in the banquet. The best places at a dinner were next to the host. Jesus' parable made the point that the danger of arrogantly taking the best place at a banquet was that the person who invited you—here representing God—could ask you to move to the lowest place at the banquet table, causing humiliation rather than honor. It was wiser to sit in the seat of the humble and then be asked to move up to a seat of higher honor. The point was clear: If you try to gain honor for yourself, you will be humbled and humiliated. But if you show humility, then you will receive great honor.

14:14-15 In contrast to Luke 6:20-22, which speaks of a present blessed state, this blessing occurs in the future at the resurrection. God will bless/repay. Jesus' belief in the resurrection coincided with that of the Pharisees as opposed to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection (Acts 23:8). Jesus' teaching drew a comment from the crowd. A dinner guest pronounced a blessing on those who joined the heavenly banquet (cf. Isa. 25:6; Ps. 22:26; 23:5). Luke again does not concentrate on the man or his motive. Jesus remains center stage. The metaphor of the feast speaks of the messianic banquet and refers to participating in the resurrection of the righteous (14:14). This is another way of describing salvation and the inheritance of eternal life (cf. 18:18, 25-26). While sounding devout, the statement assumes that God's kingdom is a distant abstraction rather than, as Jesus had been teaching, a present reality brought about by his coming.

14:16-24 Another parable ensued, also with a banquet theme. The host issued invitations. Then according to custom, at banquet time with the meal ready, he sent servants to remind the invited guests. Obviously, the gossip line had found something amiss with the banquet. Everyone quickly found an excuse not to come. The host was thoroughly snubbed. No one came. The excuses were ridiculous. You do not make financial deals of such magnitude without having assessed the value of the property purchased. You do not accept an invitation to a banquet in conflict with a wedding. Jesus was showing how easy and absurdly finances and family matters get in the way of more important things. They can cause you to miss God's final heavenly banquet.

The host's response was predictable: rage. Still, he said, we will have a glorious banquet. Go out in the streets and get anybody you can get to come. Those people in rags invited as second thoughts are the very ones Jesus had earlier instructed the host to invite (5:13). Inviting them robbed the host of any social standing in the community or with his family. He placed himself on the same social plane as the new invitees.

He could not immediately find enough of this class to fill his banquet hall. So he sent a second invitation. The upper class required two invitations to the banquet. The simple people on Jesus' list came immediately. The second invitation was issued only in order to find more people. This may hint at Luke's constant emphasis that Gentiles as well as Jews get an invitation to God's banquet. The banquet host must represent God. The banquet is the inauguration of His kingdom. The original hosts are the upper-class Jews who were so tied to their social status, financial business, and family matters that they snubbed God. God rejected them and turned to the very ones the Jewish leaders looked on with contempt to find adequate guests for the heavenly banquet. Those who think they have a place reserved and assured in the heavenly feast find themselves on the outside looking in.