

## LUKE – CHAPTER 14

### PRAY

Spend a few moments together in prayer asking that you would be open to God's voice speaking through his Word today.

### READ

Take time to read through Luke chapter 14

### EXAMINE

This chapter is a combination of a meal at a Pharisees house (v1-23) and further teaching on the way to Jerusalem (v25-35). Meals were very important settings during Jesus' day. Indeed they continue to be so today. There is a certain privilege with being invited into someone's home for a meal. Alongside that there are certain social expectations that come with entering into someone's house. We have already discussed one of these settings previously in 7:36-50. At this meal, again at a Pharisees house, Jesus is present and "is being watched" (v1). Presumably, to see if he will commit either a social or religious error. He does both! He asks the question of the Pharisees and experts in the law "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" Their silence is probably a reflection of their embarrassment, which constitutes the social error (don't embarrass your host). Jesus healing of the man on the Sabbath constitutes the religious error. But then, is it? This is the third time Luke has made the point that Jesus reinterprets (or perhaps corrects the false interpretation) of what the Sabbath is for (see 6:1-11 and 13:10-17). On all three occasions the healing of a person is performed in order to demonstrate that the Sabbath is not just a "no work day;" for the Pharisees themselves would rescue a child or an ox if it fell into the well. Rather the Sabbath is a day of restoration. This is what the healing(s) represent.

1. Following on from the healing, Jesus looks around and sees people taking places of honour at the table. What does "picking places of honour" look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

This can happen in all sorts of ways – self promotion, prideful action, even the way we present ourselves on social media etc.

2. In contrast, what does "humbling yourself" in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century look like?

Encourage people to be specific in their responses here not just generic. Encourage each person present to consider how they can humble themselves in a specific situation.

3. Jesus encourages those hosting meals to "invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind," (v.13-14). Note, too, that in the next parable (v.16-23), those who received the invitation first (rich landowner, rich farmer, recently married) are the ones who make the excuses. Again, the instruction is to go to "the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame" and then anyone else and "compel them to come in." This is Luke's particular emphasis coming through, but it is also a kingdom emphasis. Who are the people on the fringes

in our society? How can we “compel them to come in”?

4. There is a deep personal change in this parable as well, “not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.” (v.24). In terms of the social expectations of the day, to ignore the invitation is to bring great shame on the host. Rather than see this as a statement of revenge on those who refused the invitation, look at this statement as a confession of a change of heart from the host. No longer will the old system of “invite those who can invite you back” govern his way of thinking. Rather, he will now invite the poor first. Imagine you’re the host. How can you apply the principle of verse 13-14 in your life?
5. Finally, as Jesus’ journey continues on, he teaches once again about the cost of discipleship. The lesson from the two parables here is spelled out in verse 33; “those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.” In effect, the cost of discipleship is to become like the poor in every way. How do we apply that?

## REFLECT

1. How can you make institute Sabbath (God’s restoration) into your life? Where do you need restoring? Where can you be a restorer?
2. Who tends to get the first invitations to your “banquets”? Is it people who can repay you, or is it the poor?
3. How can you become like the poor by “giving up all you have” to follow Jesus? Is there still something you are hanging on to?

## IMAGINE

1. List three things that have really stood out from this study.
2. Without worrying about any restrictions, what would the church look like if those things were always present? You might like to consider this from a global or local perspective (or both).

## PERFORM

1. What action can you take today (taking account of real world restrictions) that is a step towards that dream becoming a reality?

## PRAY

Spend time in prayer for each other, particularly for the actions you've committed to.

*For next week....*

1. Long Slow Read (LSR). Read chapter 15 slowly over the course of week. You can do this as many times as you like.
2. Tempo Read – Read and reread Chapter 15 several times. Take note of verses/phrases/characters that stand out – e.g. Jesus, Holy Spirit, poor, women.
3. Repeats – Choose one verse to memorise. Repeat it many times throughout the day and over the course of a week or so. Meditate on the verse and pray it in and out. Repeat the verse many times throughout your day.