

# PARABLES

— TRUTH HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT —

## *Lesson 4: The Ethics of Kingdom members (Luke 14:1-14)*

### **Introduction**

- Dealing with Christian conduct and ethical behaviour, not so much about the Kingdom of God but those who are members of the Kingdom of God
- Jesus calls out the pride and hypocrisy of the Pharisees
  - While pretending to be devout, the Pharisees were actually hypocrites who failed to live up to even their own strict teaching regarding the law

### **The Context (14:1-6)**

- Jesus boldly confronts and silences the hypocritical Pharisees as they seek to catch Him out
- By using the example of the son and the ox Jesus shows that their love for themselves far outweighs their love for others
- The conduct of the Pharisees shows us that self-absorbed people not only show contempt for others (14:1-6), but have an overly inflated opinion of themselves and gain their identity from associations (14:7-14)
  - Jesus has exposed their lack of love for others (14:1-6)
  - Next he exposes their love for themselves (14:7-14)

## **Jesus teaches about the ethics of the Kingdom of God by confronting two groups of people (14:7-14)**

- Luke introduces two unique sets of ethical teachings about Christian behaviour
  - The first set of sayings is directed toward the guests of a banquet (vv. 7-11)
  - The second set of sayings is directed toward the host of a banquet (vv. 12-14)

### **Those who attend a banquet (vv. 7-11)**

- Jesus confronts the idea of gaining one's identity by association.
- Understanding the layout of the banquet table helps us understand Jesus' teaching (v. 7).



- **Where not to sit (vv. 8-9)**
  - Jesus warns the people not to take the place of honour lest they are called to move
  
- **Where to sit (v. 10a)**
  - Jesus tells the people to take the lowest place
  
- **Why? (vv. 10b-11)**
  - Is Jesus teaching the Pharisees the right way to gain honour from the world while avoiding shame? No!
  - Jesus is not providing the method for how to behave at a wedding banquet. Rather, He is showing the ethics of members of the Kingdom of God.
  - Kingdom members place themselves in the lowest position and wait patiently and humbly before God, whose praise alone is the most important thing to them.
  
  - ‘You will be honoured’ is used in the divine Greek passive which means God is the agent of the honouring
  
- **Principle:** As in life so in the kingdom of God, self-importance and the self-promotion that goes with it do not lead to honour but to shame

## **Those who host a banquet (vv. 12-14)**

- **Who not to invite (v. 12)**
  - Friends – people whose company you enjoy
  - Brothers and relatives – those linked by blood
  - Rich neighbours – those from whom you can gain advantage

- **Who to invite (v. 13)**

- The poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.
- The link with the parable of the banquet (14:15-24) suggests that we are being told to plan our hospitality list on the same basis as God does as he makes arrangements for the great end-time banquet

- **Why? (v. 14)**

- The prospect of blessing is squarely based on the inability of those who have been invited to return the favour
- Jesus connects our care for the needy with rewards in heaven

- **Understanding the judgment of the just**

- It is called the Bema seat judgment where rewards will be granted to believers (1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:10)
- Three characteristics of the judgment of the just
  - (1) We are going to be judged fairly
  - (2) We are going to be judged individually
  - (3) We are going to be judged thoroughly
- Three implications of the judgment of the just
  - (1) Every day counts
  - (2) What we can gain
  - (3) What we can lose

- **Principle:** God will reward the truly generous who, like Himself, extend their generosity to the most unlikely of people and who have no thought of reciprocal gain for themselves