

## Jesus, the Host

Luke 14:1-14

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 28, 2016

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Broadlands

Be careful praying the common table prayer. Be careful of praying it mindlessly. When I was little the common table prayer was said so fast that I thought it was all one long word: comelordjesusbeourguestandletthesegifstousbeblesed. Amen. It took me a long time to figure out that we were actually saying something. We were inviting Jesus to come and be a guest in our home while we ate. Be careful inviting Jesus into your home at supper time. You never know what He might do. He has a way of becoming the host in your own home even though you invited him to your home as a guest.

There was a couple who got married in Cana of Galilee. They invited Jesus and His disciples to the wedding. Even though Jesus was a guest at that wedding by the time all was said and done Jesus had become the host serving fine wine to the entire company.

There was a Pharisee named Simon who invited Jesus into his home. Even though Jesus was a guest in Simon's home He soon became the host welcoming a sinful woman and telling her that her sins were forgiven. Before the day was out Jesus was correcting Simon on his manners in welcoming the Lord of all into his home. If anyone invites the Lord of all into his home, the Lord of all will expect at least the common courtesy that you share with others.

And so Jesus goes to another Pharisee's home. While He is there, He heals a person with dropsy. So when you pray, "Come Lord Jesus, be our guest," you can expect that you are inviting healing into your home. You can expect that diseases will be healed whether in this life or in the life to come.

Be careful not to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing while He is in your home. He will correct you. He will point out any hypocrisy that you are doing. He will not be afraid to point out your hypocrisy in front of all of your guests. He will not be afraid to correct you for your sins in front of your entire family. He will not be afraid to tell you what an invitation is really for. He will not be afraid to tell you what the Sabbath is really for.

After all, Jesus is the guest in your home who has taken the lowest place.

That is what we mean when we say that He bore the sin of the whole world. He became the lowest person. That is what the Scriptures mean when they say that He emptied Himself and became obedient. Jesus was the One Person in all of the universe who could count Himself equal to God, but He did not consider equality with God something that someone should hang on to. In other words even though Jesus is God, He did not insist on His divine rights. If He had He would never have allowed Himself to be invited to the Pharisee's house. And He certainly would not allow Himself to be invited to your houses when you pray the common table prayer to Him. If He insisted upon His divine prerogative He would insist that He invite you to His home and you had better accept His invitation. But He does none of those things. He empties Himself. He does not make use of His divine prerogatives. He subjects Himself to hunger and even though He can feed five thousand men plus women and children with five loaves and two fish, He submits Himself to be someone who receives invitations and He accepts the invitation to the Pharisee's home and He accepts the invitation to yours.

But just being human is not enough for Jesus. There is still lower that He will go. He will bear sins that are not His. He will take on uncleanness that is not His. He will die a death that is not His.

He is the righteous One you see. He has earned all things. He has achieved all things. He has done all things well. Even without His divine prerogative He deserves eternal life. He deserves a blessed life under His Father's favor.

Jesus lays aside such prerogatives in order to bear our sins. He takes the uncleanness of the people who were defiled and by taking their uncleanness He takes yours as well. He forgives the sins of the people who repented before Him and by doing so grants your forgiveness as well, but in granting such absolution He commits Himself also to make the necessary atonement in order that such sins should be forgiven. He commits Himself to death.

When Jesus dies God forsakes Him. When Jesus dies He is the lowest of the low. He is despised and rejected by all even by God the Father. There is no one who occupies the lowest place like Jesus does.

And because Jesus became the lowest of the low God the Father has made Him the highest of the high. God the Father has invited Jesus to come up to heaven and to sit in the highest place, at the Father's right hand. There is no higher place except that of the Father Himself. While Jesus had a right to that place simply by being who He is He has now also earned the right to sit there by His obedient submission to suffering and death in order to atone for our sins. Therefore the place that Jesus occupies cannot be taken from Him. And He occupies that place precisely because He took the lowest place. Be sure that you understand that accurately. You Christians who confess that Jesus is God also confess that He is human. He earned His place as God's Son. He earned the highest place. He took the lowest place in the universe and sure as the word of Jesus is sure the Father invited Him to take the highest place and so He is honored before everyone.

Thus anyone who exalts himself will be humbled and the one who humbles himself will be exalted, no matter who they are.

So when you go to a dinner or a wedding feast, would you do any different?

When Jesus made atonement, He invited the strangest of people into His home.

Jesus has an everlasting home. His home is the new creation which He is preparing for Himself. In that home will live His family. His family is those whom He invites to Himself. They are those who hear the Word of God and do it.

In the home of Jesus will be the righteous and the devout and the pure. And He invites the sinners to be with Him in His home. He invites those who are cursed with the effects of sin in the creation. He invites the lame, the crippled, the blind, and the poor. He does not invite someone who could pay Him back, as if He could do such a thing. He invites people who cannot pay Him back. What would the poor give Him? It is not like they can put money in the offering plate or adorn His home with good things. What can the crippled do for Him? It is not like they can exert strength for the sake of His kingdom. What can the lame do for Him? It is not like they can come a running to Him. What can the blind do for Him? It is not like they can seek and find Him.

These are the people who suffer the corruption of their flesh. They suffer from sin's deteriorating affects on the creation. They suffer the brunt of what we have all brought upon ourselves. They stand as signs in our world of what all of us deserve and we deserve far worse. The poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind serve as standards by which we may measure the grace of God in our lives and give Him thanks and sing Him praises. They can offer nothing to God and they can offer nothing to you.

And Jesus welcomes them into His eternal home. He welcomes them into the creation. In the new creation they will not be poor, crippled, lame, or blind. In the new creation He restores all things. And by welcoming such people who suffer the effects of sin in their lives more than the rest of us, He indicates that He welcomes sinners as well.

Jesus welcomes the adulterers, the fornicators, the stingy, the greedy, the selfish, the proud, into His eternal home. He welcomes the likes of you. He welcomes the unloving and the violent the lustful and the liar. He welcomes those who damage the reputations of others. He welcomes the sinners. They come and fill His home and eat His banquet meal.

None of these people can repay Jesus for what He has done for them. Not one of them can sing sufficient praise to make up for what He has done for them. They cannot repay Him because He has given them all things.

So when you throw a banquet and invite people into your home, would you do any different?

In the Name of Jesus. Amen.