

Walking with Jesus Week 7

Title: The Guest List

Text: Luke 14:1, 7-14

Big Idea: In Jesus' Kingdom, the way up is down- and the guest list runs to the margins.

I. Introduction: When seats signal status

- Social cringe of choosing the “wrong” seat at a banquet/wedding.
- Jesus uses that familiar setting to confront our reflex for status and payback.
- Set-up: **God is the Host. Let Him do the honors.**

II. Exposition: Luke 14:1, 7-14

A. v.1 -The setting: Sabbath dinner at a prominent Pharisee's house

- Formal Sabbath meal; assigned seating; social optics.
- (Context: vv.2-6, ie, Jesus heals a man with dropsy, mercy over legalism; sets tone for the table talk.)

B. vv.7-10 - The parable of seats: choose the lowest place

- Jesus watches guests pick “**first places**” (*prōtoklisiai*), visible seats of honor.
- Cultural backdrop: seating = public scoreboard of honor/shame.
- OT echo: **Proverbs 25:6-7**: better to be called up than told to move down.
- **v.11- The spiritual principle**: “Everyone who **exalts** himself will be **humbled**, and he who **humbles** himself will be **exalted**.”
 - Divine passive: **God** is the One who ultimately raises/lowers.
- *This isn't a social strategy; it's a spiritual principle.*
 - Beware **performative humility** (image management, humblebrag, servant-posturing for optics).
 - **One-liner**: “A fake low seat is just a high seat in costume.”
 - Contrast: Strategy **plays to the room** and seeks leverage now; humility **plays to the Host**, obeys in the low place, and **waits for His timing** (“Friend, move up higher”).
 - Heart checks:
 1. If no one notices, would I still choose the low seat?
 2. If someone else gets the “move up” moment, can I rejoice?

C. vv.12-14 - The host's guest list: invite those who cannot repay

- Jesus turns to the host: don't invite only friends/relatives/rich neighbors **"lest they repay."**
- Invite **the poor, crippled, lame, blind**-those with **no social return**.
- **Blessed now; repaid later** "at the resurrection of the righteous."
- Clarification: not a ban on family dinners; it's a prophetic upending of **transactional hospitality**.
- **Memorable line:** "If we only invite people who can pay us back, we're not hosting a banquet- we're networking."
- Lucan thread: echoes Luke 4:18 and anticipates the **Great Banquet** (14:15-24).

III. Main Movements / Points

1) Wear the low seat (Humility as placement)

- Humility ≠ self-loathing; it's **self-placement** under God's hand.
- Don't curate your honor; **let God confer it**.
- Grabbing the high seat risks humiliation; **choosing the low seat invites exaltation**.

2) Rethink your guest list (Hospitality without payback)

- Kingdom hospitality centers those at the margins.
- Trade scorekeeping for resurrection reward.
- **God's guest list runs to the margins-so should ours**.

3) Let God be the Host (Trust His timing, honor, and reward)

- Our job: humility and generosity. **His** job: honor and reward.
- If I'm busy lifting **myself**, my hands aren't free to **lift others**.

IV. Application

A. Low Seat Challenge (Humility):

- Choose the low place in one environment you usually reach (credit, parking, last slot, listening first).
- Simple prayer: "Father, **place me where You want me** today."

B. Expand Your Table (Hospitality):

- Invite **one person who cannot repay**: newcomer, single parent, student, elderly neighbor.
- **"Plus-one for the Kingdom"**: add a chair and budget for someone outside your circle.

C. No-Payback Generosity:

- Give/serve this week where **no one knows** and **no return** is possible.

D. Students/Teens:

- Your banquet hall = cafeteria/bus/group chat. **Who's at the gate?** Sit with, invite, include.

V. Lesson for the Road of Discipleship

Walking with Jesus means taking the low seat and opening our table—trusting the Host to do the honoring and reserving our hearts for generous, no-payback love.

VI. Sticky Lines to Remember

- “In the Kingdom, the way **up** is **down**.”
- “A fake low seat is just a high seat in costume.”
- “Don’t let payback outrank love or status outrank service.”
- “God is the Host; **let Him do the honors**.”

VII. For Further Reading

- **Prov 25:6-7; Luke 4:18-19; 14:15-24; 18:9-14.**