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Luke 14

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Luke 14.

Topics.

- Jesus heals a leper on the Sabbath Day.
- At a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind.
- The parable of those invited to the wedding feast.
- Whoever does not hate their family cannot be Christ's disciple.
- Whoever does not hate their own life cannot be Christ's disciple.
- Who, desiring to build a tower, does not first count the cost?
- Whoever does not renounce all that they have cannot be Christ's disciple.
- If salt has lost its taste, how will its saltiness be restored?

The previous chapter: in the previous chapter Jesus said, "Many will seek to enter the Kingdom, but will not," and Herod was seeking to kill him. He is on his way to Jerusalem and makes the statement, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!" Then says, many will come from all over the world and recline at table in the Kingdom of God, but the Jews will not see him again until they say, "Blessed is he who came in the name of God."

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

LUKE 14:1-6

Jesus Heals a Leper on the Sabbath Day.

- **Luke 14:1-6:** One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they (lawyers and Pharisees) (v3) were watching him carefully. ²And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. ³And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" ⁴But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. ⁵And he said to them "Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?" ⁶And they could not reply to these things.

Dropsy: means looking watery (it was some kind of disease).

Jesus has been ministering almost three years (Luke 13:22) and is now teaching and healing in various towns and villages as he travels toward Jerusalem. He enters a house that is owned by the head of the Pharisees. A man with dropsy is in standing in front of Jesus and it appears that the Pharisees and lawyers in the house are waiting to rebuke Jesus if he heals the man because it is a Sabbath Day, but Jesus knowing their intent pre-empted them by asking the question: -

- Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not? (v3).

They should have said a resounding, "Yes" because it was always right to do-good on a Sabbath Day, but they remained silent. They had added so many laws to Moses law that their hearts were bound up in legalism, so much so that it was far more important for them to keep their laws than

heal a man from a horrible disease. Even after Jesus had healed the sick man there is still no rejoicing that a man had been miraculously delivered from terrible suffering, in fact Jesus points out their hardness of heart and their enormous hypocrisy by saying:

- If their son or an animal they own is injured on a Sabbath Day they will do whatever they have to save the animal or their son (v5).

How sad and tragic it is that the religious leaders of Jesus generation considered keeping religious traditions, rules, and laws far more important than the well-being of human life. It is interesting to notice who was in the house (i.e., there was the ruler of the Pharisees, some other Pharisees and some lawyers). These are very well-educated men who would have had an excellent intellectual knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. This shows that just because a person has an amazing knowledge of the Bible it does not always mean that they know what is important to the heart of God.

Pharisees: means the separated ones. They were rulers of the Jews and the most-strict and by far the most influential sect of the three prominent societies of Judaism that were around at the time of Christ (the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essences). Pharisees loved to wear distinguishing garb so as to be easily recognised and were found everywhere in Palestine not only in Jerusalem. They made three contributions to Judaism so that ultimately Pharisaism and Judaism became almost synonymous. The changes the Pharisees made to the Jewish faith began in earnest after the Babylonian Captivity, the temple worship and the sacrifices had ceased so the Pharisees, scribes and Sadducees began to centre the activities of Judaism in Jewish law, tradition and in the religious rites of the Synagogues.

The three changes the Pharisees made to Judaism:

1. **Jewish legalism:** The Scribes who were considered experts in interpreting the Scriptures studied the traditional exegesis of the Law which resulted in it becoming a major part of Jewish thought and giving Jewish legalism a great impetus during the New Testament era. The Pharisees closely associated with the scribes organised the followers of the scribes teaching in the Synagogues thus legalism became widespread in the Jewish faith.
2. **Formalised religion:** the Pharisees formalised the religion of the scribes and their interpretation of the law they placed it into the mind of Jewish faith and the practice of it in the synagogues and religious ceremony. The reason the scribes and Pharisees are often mentioned together in the New Testament is because though the Pharisees were not practical politicians like the more liberal Sadducees, they were the religious leaders of the Jews and the highest qualification for membership into the Pharisees was strict adherence to the Law (Oral or written).
3. **Organisation of Jewish religion:** after the seventy-year Babylonian captivity and the Maccabean Revolt (165 BC) the scribes increased tradition and adapted it with the Mosaic Law, but it was the Pharisees who formulated, developed and organised the scribes' teachings into Jewish religion itself. This increased focus on law and tradition resulted in separatism and an almost new religion, because much of it was the opposite from what had been handed down in the Covenant by the prophets.

The Pharisees became a closely organised group: the Pharisees were very loyal to their own society and to each other, but separate from others and even their own Jewish people, they pledged themselves to obey all facets of the traditions to minutest detail and were sticklers to ceremonial purity. This developed into a feeling of superiority over other nations and people. From this superior feeling as well as religious emotion, pride found its most extreme expression. The Pharisees were haughty and arrogant

because they believed they were the only interpreters of God's word. They made life difficult for themselves and bitter for others, and despised those whom they did not consider their equals. The Pharisees cultivated a national and religious consciousness, which has hardly been equalled. Their teaching that salvation came by maintaining tradition and keeping the law had such a strong influence on the minds of their followers that God's grace was thought to come from self-effort rather than grace so it was only natural that such a religion would ultimately become a matter of externals and not a faith of the heart. For further information see title:

- Sanhedrin in, Bible Dictionary (ON WEBSITE MENU).

LUKE 14:7-11

Do not sit in a Place of Honour.

- **Luke 14:7-11:** Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honour, saying to them, ⁸"When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honour, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, ⁹and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. ¹¹For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

This is a principle that should be applied to all situations in life, never chose the place of honour (the best seat) unless you are given it. Jesus words:

- Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but whoever humbles himself will be exalted (v11).

Not only applies in this life, but also by extension to eternal life. Those who exalt themselves in this life and stand in pride refusing to accept the Good News of the Gospel of Christ and deny God's existence will be humbled at the judgment seat of Christ. It will not matter whether they are kings of countries or presidents of nations, enormously famous or extremely successful, rich and wealthy they will be humbled, contrasted to those who accept Christ acknowledge God and are faithful to his ways, being exalted to eternal glory and everlasting life when Christ returns no no-matter how poor or lowly they might be in this life. (Pride is the enemy of God contrasted to humbleness which is the friend and delight of God).

LUKE 14:12-14

At a feast, invite the Poor, the Crippled, the Lame and the Blind.

- **Luke 14:12-14:** He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. ¹³But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

The principal Jesus is teaching in this story not only applies to a feast, but any service that is done to benefit God's Kingdom or another person. When a person's motivation to do something is to receive human praise or a benefit of some kind they have received their reward, but if their motivation is solely to serve God or help others and there is no thought of a payment or getting a kick back of some kind then God will exalt and reward that person at the resurrection.

The Parable of those invited to the Wedding Feast.

- **Luke 14:15-24:** When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" ¹⁶But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. ¹⁷And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' ¹⁸But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' ¹⁹And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.' ²⁰And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' ²¹So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' ²²And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' ²³And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'

God is putting on a great banquet (i.e., the resurrection to eternal glory and everlasting life). All invitations God has sent out have written on them grace, mercy, love, forgiveness, kindness etc., and at the top of the invitation card inscribed in blood the name Jesus Christ, no-one can enter the banquet without one of these invitations. God firstly sent these invitations to the religious leaders of Israel, but they made excuses, so He then sent the invitations out to the Gentiles who accepted them, but still there are spare seats at the banquet table to be filled so the invitations were then sent to those who the world considered to lowly to even consider. Jesus is saying though many have been invited to receive eternal life (the banquet) not all of them are going to accept it.

1st Excuse: I must first attend to my possessions and properties.

2nd Excuse: I must first attend to my business investments.

3rd Excuse: I have a wife.

All of humanity is invited to God's banquet, but the riches, material possession and cares of this world stop most them accepting it.

Inviting people to the banquet: this parable is encouraging to those who share their testimony or witness to others in the sense that it clearly shows us that not everyone is going to accept the invitation to eternal glory and everlasting life. No-one should feel rejected or disheartened when they share their faith with a person who does not have, "Ears to Hear," because they do not have a right heart attitude for the Good News of the Gospel to take root. Many years ago, when I was a young Christian a wise and much older godly man encouraged me by saying:

- When witnessing you cannot say the wrong thing to a person who has a right heart attitude, and you cannot say the right thing to a person who has the wrong heart attitude.

NOTICE: in this parable of the Wedding Feast God does not expect his faithful servants to force or coerce people to attend the banquet. Witnessing is about inviting, if people do not accept the invitation God says move onto those who will.

Whoever does not hate their Family cannot be Christ's Disciple.

- **Luke 14:25-26:** Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

The word hate comes from the Greek word (miseo) and carries the idea of loving less (i.e., to love less). Jesus is not saying that a person is to have hatred in their heart toward their wives and family members we know this because the Bible teaches that children are to honour their mother and father (Exod. 20:12) (Ephes. 6:1-2) and husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Ephes. 5:25) (Col. 3:19). In these verses Jesus is saying if a wife or family member forces a believer in Christ to choose between them and Christ, they must choose the Lord, he has to be pre-eminent in the heart and the mind. Sadly, in some countries if a person accepts Christ their family rejects them and cast them out. Jesus is saying if we want to be his disciple, we may have to accept the rejection of those we love. Obviously if a family or a wife does not put a believer in Christ in this position there is no need to forsake their family. In fact, it is better that they remain connected because their faith and new life may influence their spouse or a family member to also accept the Lord.

Whoever does not hate their own life cannot be Christ's disciple: once again this is not about having a low self-esteem or an attitude of hatred toward oneself, but about loving self-less than Christ, it is about being prepared to lay aside or do whatever is needed to accept Christ and follow him. It is about being prepared to die for him if one is in that position and denying what self-desires for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. Jesus is saying he must be pre-eminent in the heart, the mind and the life of a disciple (v26). This is because whoever receives Christ receives eternal life and will be resurrected to eternal glory. This is an enormous honour, privilege and blessing, nothing in this life comes close to what those in Christ will inherit, thus the reason Christ has to be first in the heart of those who confess to believe in him. If out of the goodness of their heart and because they loved us a billionaire gave us ten million dollars, we would always defend the name of that person and forever be grateful in our hearts because they opened a door to us that we never could. Christ has done far more for us than any amount of money ever can simply because everything in this world is temporary, mortal, decaying and dying whereas all the treasures hidden in Christ are spiritual and eternal.

LUKE 14:27-30

Who, desiring to build a Tower, does not first Count the Cost?

- **Luke 14:27-30:** Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

These verses are continuing from the conversation of the previous verses therefore bearing your cross in this context applies to forsaking a spouse, a family or a family member and by extension forsaking anything that hinders a person's faith and robs from their devotion toward Christ or stops them from accepting him. Tragically many Muslims who accept Christ are rejected by their families, cast out of their society, sacked from their jobs and in extreme cases killed as infidels. This is the cross Jesus is talking about he knows that there is going to be a sacrifice paid for accepting him. This sacrifice may involve a career, a friend, ambition, fame, wealth; whatever has to be forsaken to follow Jesus is our cross. Jesus is saying before accepting him a person should consider what it is going to cost them. The cost will be different with each individual to some it maybe their family, for others it could be laying aside a harmful or hurtful sinful passion, to those in authority it maybe to stop oppressing their workers to achieve their own goals and increase their companies profit margins, to others it maybe their jobs or lifestyle or a sacrifice of leisure time to serve the Lord in ministry. The principal Jesus is teaching in these verses is a principal that applies to anything a person begins

whether it is secular or spiritual. If a person does not consider the cost of a thing before they begin and mentally decide to accept that their goal is worth the cost or sacrifices they need to make to achieve the end result of their goal then when the time comes that they need to make these sacrifices they will most likely forsake the goal rather than make the sacrifices (i.e., carry their cross) so they give up. Some people will then gloat and say "See I told you they would fail" while others will simply think it in the silent voice of their mind.

LUKE 14:31-32

Kings consider Defeating an Army of 20,000 with Only 10,000.

- **Luke 14:31-32:** Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

The practical principal Jesus is teaching in these verses is that if a person is going to do anything in life, they should count the cost before they begin, they should consider what they may have to give up and especially think through what they will have to do to that they may not want to do to achieve the final victory and then ask themselves, "Are they prepared to do those things and make the sacrifices needed to follow Christ?"

Whoever does not renounce all cannot be Christ's Disciple.

- **Luke 14:33-35:** So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. ³⁴"Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? ³⁵It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Jesus in these verses is saying that the cost of being his disciple is to give up one's entire life to him, it is surrendering our hearts, minds and goals to his will. Nothing can stand between the disciple and the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has to be the most precious, valued and loved thing in a person's heart and mind and their life.

If salt has lost its taste, how will its saltiness be restored? Salt adds flavour to food and acts as a preservative (i.e., stops it decaying). Salt that has lost its saltiness is not going to enhance the flavour of food or stop it decaying so in the context of these verses, "Salt that has lost its taste" refers to those disciples who forsake their faith because they are not prepared to carry their cross (pay the price) so they are of no-use to the Kingdom of God, not even for the lowliest position so it is better to cast them out rather than spend valuable resources, time and effort on those who are not prepared to carry their own cross and help those who though they are struggling to carry it as Christ was, are at least attempting to make the effort and desiring to carry it. It is not a shameful thing before God to be struggling with your faith, remember even Jesus in his darkest hours as he was walking bloody, bleeding and suffering toward his crucifixion needed someone to help him carry his cross. The shame is not in the struggle but in turning away from the struggle, giving up and denying Christ and thereby rejecting God's grace in him that saves us all in the struggle.

If it is no use for the soil or the manure pile throw it away: Jesus is saying that if a disciple is not willing to forsake whatever it is that hinders their faith or prevents them from accepting Christ then move onto others rather than spend valuable time, resources and effort on those who do not put Christ first in their lives. If a disciple does not put the Lord Jesus Christ first in all things they are of no benefit to the Kingdom of God because they have one foot toward God and one foot toward the world therefore they will not fully commit to either nor will they fully enjoy the pleasures of the world or experience the spiritual treasures that are hidden in Christ.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear: Jesus words, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Simply means those who have a right heart attitude will perceive and understand what he is saying but those whose heart is focused on self will not.

A final note: it is interesting that much of modern evangelism softens the Gospel to appeal to what people want to hear, but Jesus throughout this chapter is saying, that there will be some form of cost to self, and everybody should consider it before making the decision to follow him. Perhaps if the Gospel was proclaimed from this mindset even though there might be far less conversions it would most likely be compensated by the fact that there would also be far less turning away from what they thought was going to be a soft road full of ease.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

Bible House of Grace