

**Home : Sermons : September 10, 2006****Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? – Luke 14:1-24**

**Introduction** – Jesus' ministry centers around meals, culminating in the Last Supper and the hope of the final Marriage Feast. Customs and manners around meals are always very important in any culture, and Jesus continues to break the rules. In doing so, He invites the outcasts who are becoming the seeds of the new Israel. Whenever we see Jesus at a meal we should be thinking "kingdom of God."

**Sabbath Meal** (vv 1-6) – Jesus comes to give Sabbath-rest and relief. In Luke 4:16-21, Jesus announced that He had come to bring the Sabbath rest, the year of Jubilee, during which slaves were released, debts forgiven, and land was restored. He heals on the Sabbath, breaking man's rules, and identifying Himself as the Expected One (Luke 7:20-23) come to restore Israel. With this "announcement" of freedom, however, the scribes and Pharisees are filled with rage and want to kill Him (6:6-11, 13:10-17). Because of this rejection, Jesus warns Israel that she is courting judgment and disaster (11:42-52, 12:49-59, 13:1-9), which of course only further enrages the Pharisees (11:53-54). Jesus does not back down, but continues to publicly shame and silence them (13:17, 14:6). Israel is not keeping the Sabbath if she continues to oppose the Lord of the Sabbath.

**Healing Again on Sabbath** – Jesus has been invited into the home of a Pharisee, but not out of genuine hospitality, for "they watched Him closely." Jesus, knowing this, takes them to task – "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" Their silence shames them. Christ's healing of the man with dropsy shames them. And his argument about helping animals shames them.

**Kingdom Feast Manners** (vv7-14) – Are those who are highly esteemed in the eyes of men necessarily those who are highly esteemed in the eyes of God? That is the central question running through this whole chapter (and really into chapter 15 as well). These parables, while containing some good social proverbs, are not there primarily for that reason. Jesus is still admonishing unbelieving, unfaithful, haughty Israel.

**Table Talk for Guests** (vv7-11) – Where you sat said something about how important you were in that culture. Jesus is teaching a lesson in humility. Humiliation is the pathway to exaltation; service is the way to authority. This is not just good social advice. The Pharisees continue to think too highly of themselves and are in danger of being humiliated. Disciples of Jesus must follow the way of Jesus (Phil 2:5-11).

**Table Talk for Hosts** (vv12-14) – Having a dinner was another way of making yourself important, of establishing social networks, and of getting in on the "in crowd." The Pharisees puffed themselves up with the company they kept, and Jesus warns that we should not think of hospitality in this kind of calculating way. As a side-note, we must not be wooden in our understanding of vv12-13 and never invite our friends or family (the way a pacifist interprets Matt 5:39 "turn the other cheek," or someone might interpret Matt 6:6 "pray...in secret").

**Dinner's Ready!** (vv15-24) – What happens in your home when Mom yells, "dinner's ready," and nobody responds? Jesus tells a parable likening the kingdom of heaven to a wedding feast. The prophets had been inviting Israel to this feast, telling them it is coming (v16) and now Jesus is calling them to the "table" for the feast is ready, the kingdom has come (v17). Those who should come refuse to do so – and for lame, hollow reasons. The master is angry and tells His servant to go out and invite "the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind." He is determined that His house will be filled. And condemnation will fall upon those who refused the invitation (v24).

**Guess Who's Coming?** – The kingdom of heaven turns a lot of assumptions made by the self-righteous on their heads. Not necessarily those who are highly esteemed by men (1 Cor 1:26-31).

**A Marriage Feast** – You must come. Life in the kingdom of heaven is a party, a celebration of grace, mercy, and peace. It is about liberation from slavery to sin. It is about rest from the wearying burden of your secret and public rebellions.

**Manners in the Kingdom** – You are an invited guest. You are not in charge of the guest list. You are expected to watch your manners.

**The Hallmark of the Kingdom: Humility** – There is nothing for us to boast in ourselves regarding our entrance into

the Kingdom. Even our decision to believe was a gift (Eph 2:8-9). Israel forgot that God had not chosen her because she was special. She was special because God chose her (Deut 9:4-6). Neither are we, in ourselves, special.

**The Hallmark of the Kingdom: Hospitality** – *(Can I jump up and down on this a bit?)* We should be known as the most hospitable, “love one-another” people. We should be known for our love in the trifles without expectation of receiving back or impressing others. Why? Because God has brought us into His house, opened His fridge, and told us to make ourselves at home. Look at who He brought home?

*Dave Hatcher – September 10, 2006*