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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Called to Service Luke 14:7-14

Lesson Background and Introduction

Today's text is part of the account of Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem; the account extends from Luke 9:51 to 19:28. Jesus was approaching Israel's sacred city, having warned his disciples before the trip began that there he would be handed over to his enemies. They would put him to death, but he would be raised again to life by God the Father (Luke 9:22). Although Jesus stressed, "Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you," they didn't (9:44). The immediate backdrop of our lesson is an occasion on which Jesus was invited to a Sabbath day meal at the home of a powerful religious leader. At this grand meal "was a man suffering from abnormal swelling of his body" (Luke 14:1, 2; the 1984 NIV has "dropsy," which is an older word for "edema"). Jesus confronted the other guests about their objections to his healing the afflicted man on the Sabbath. Receiving only silence as a response, Jesus proceeded to heal the man, pointing out their hypocrisy in the process (14:3-6). Our text is divided into two parts: advice given to guests at a banquet and advice given to the host.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

A prominent Pharisee invited Jesus to his home for dinner. The Jewish leaders constantly sought opportunities to trap Jesus, have Him arrested, and discredit His claims to be Messiah. Jesus taught several important lessons to those who would follow Him after observing the guests and the host.

Refuse to Exalt Yourself - One lesson was from a parable in which He described a wedding feast. One invited guest with high community status rushed to sit down at the head table. Customarily, the seating arrangement indicated importance. However, if someone of higher status joined the occasion, the host now had to ask the guest who seated himself in a place of honor to move to a lower spot. The former guest would feel disgraced in the eyes of all the attendees. Jesus advised His followers to take a lesser seat at the table. If they did that, the host could then invite them to move up. Those who humbled themselves, God could lift up.

Expand God's Kingdom - Once Jesus addressed the guests concerning humility, He gave the host a similar object lesson. When the host welcomes people into his home, he should not invite only relatives and friends who can repay him. When you entertain those who will then owe you a favor, you are looking out for yourself rather than others. Instead, the host should invite those who are impoverished, homeless, sick, disabled—unable to give back. His followers should look to others first, rather than their own interests, and consider that the "least of these" are not just as important in the Kingdom as anyone else—perhaps more so.

Show Humility - In both of these lessons, Jesus stands firmly against the pride and self-centeredness of the Jewish leaders. However, Jesus commanded His followers to imitate His ways by doing good works without public pats on the back. They accept God's appointments while faithfully serving in either the forefront or the background. They also see those whom society ignores as equal to themselves and willingly include them in the Kingdom "party."

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Instead of using money or anything else for selfish means, use it to serve others

POEM FOR THE WEEK:

When we are involved in serving
And meeting each other's needs,
We're imitating the Master
In thoughts and words and deeds—
Fitzhugh

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus

(Phil 2:5 NKJV)

from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 02, 2001)

Series: Discipleship & Mission

UNIT: Call To Discipleship

NEXT WEEK

Called to Sacrifice

(Mark 1:16-20; Luke 14:25.33)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Serve with Humility through Choice (Luke 14:7-11)

The folly in seeking honor (7-9)

- Seeking honor makes one have a haughty spirit and that leads to destruction (Prov 16:18)
- Seeking honor because of pride never makes sense (Isa 10:15-16)
- Seeking honor makes one think more highly of himself than he ought (Rom 12:3)
- Seeking honor keeps one from seeking God (Ps 10:4)
- Seeking honor makes one a fool (Prov 26:12)

The reward of seeking humility (10-11)

- The reward of seeking humility comes from submitting to God and others (Eph 5:21)
- The reward of seeking humility comes from walking humbly with God (Mic 6:8)
- Seeking humility rewards by knowing that in our weakness God's strength makes us strong (2 Cor 12:9-10)
- Seeking humility rewards by knowing that God uses the lowly people and things (1 Cor 1:26-31)
- Seeking humility rewards by knowing that everything is a loss compared to knowing Jesus (Phil 3:8-9)

Serve with Humility not Seeking Repayment (Luke 14:12-14)

Service that does not seek rewards on earth (12)

- Seeking rewards on earth is behaving like unbelievers (Luke 6:32-35)
- Seeking rewards on earth is seeking to be honored by men not God (Matt 6:1-4)
- Seek the kingdom of God versus seeking rewards on earth (Matt 6:31-34)
- Service not seeking rewards on earth result in praises and thanks to God (2 Cor 9:12-13)
- Service that does not seek rewards on earth seeks God's commendation versus man's (2 Cor 10:18)

Service that seeks rewards at the resurrection (13-14)

- Rewards at the resurrection through being seated with Jesus in heavenly places (Eph 2:5-7)
- Rewards at the resurrection through being raised with Christ because it is the goal of our faith (Col 2:12)
- Rewards at the resurrection proving that our faith was not futile (1 Cor 15:12-19)
- Rewards at the resurrection when we attain the resurrection from the dead (Phil 3:9-11)
- Rewards at the resurrection that fulfills the living hope about the future (1 Peter 1:3)