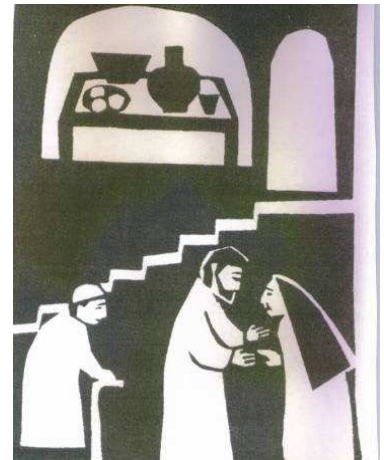


# LUKE

## CHAPTER 14

### THE KINGDOM BANQUET



**Begin each reflection day in prayer: (Suggested prayer)**

*Loving God, you sent us your only Son, Jesus*

*He came to fulfill your promises and start a New Kingdom for us.*

*Send us the Holy Spirit to embrace Jesus and Your Kingdom.*

*Teach us the values of the Kingdom. Amen.*

**DAY 1: (Read Luke 14: 1-6) Jesus, the dubious dinner guest.**

**14:1** Now <sup>1</sup> one Sabbath when Jesus went to dine <sup>2</sup> at the house of a leader <sup>3</sup> of the Pharisees, <sup>4</sup> they were watching <sup>5</sup> him closely. **14:2** There <sup>6</sup> right <sup>7</sup> in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. <sup>8</sup> **14:3** So <sup>9</sup> Jesus asked <sup>10</sup> the experts in religious law <sup>11</sup> and the Pharisees, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath <sup>12</sup> or not?” **14:4** But they remained silent. So <sup>13</sup> Jesus <sup>14</sup> took hold of the man, <sup>15</sup> healed him, and sent him away. <sup>16</sup> **14:5** Then <sup>17</sup> he said to them, “Which of you, if you have a son <sup>18</sup> or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?” **14:6** But <sup>19</sup> they could not reply <sup>20</sup> to this.

1. *Take a moment. Read the passage of the day. Breathe deeply.*

Why do you think that Jesus was invited to dinner with the prominent Pharisee?

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2. Why won't the Pharisees respond to Jesus' questions?

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3. What do you think Jesus was trying to teach the Pharisees?

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Chapter 14 is set at a festive meal on the Sabbath in the house of a prominent Pharisee. Jesus is an invited guest. He uses the setting to challenge and invite all to the Banquet of the Kingdom of God.

#### **SABBATH MEAL AND THE KINGDOM BANQUET:**

In Jewish tradition the Sabbath meal was a symbol of believer's friendship with God and one another. In the Old Testament the prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah. The Prophet Isaiah envisioned the presence of the Messiah as



an abundant banquet in which God would gather all His people in salvation and is at table with them. They would be God's invited and eternal guests.

The Sabbath meal was to be a foretaste of this joyful and eternal celebration. Jesus will contrast the Sabbath meal of the prominent Pharisee with the Kingdom Banquet of his Father.

### **Luke 14: 1-6. The cure of the man on the Sabbath.**

Jesus is a dubious invited guest of a leading Pharisee on the Sabbath. The meal at the Pharisee's home is infused with suspicion and mistrust. The other guests are closely watching Jesus to catch him in a misstep. This is not a setting of friendship and love. At this meal Jesus conducts a 'show and tell' on the true meaning of the Sabbath and participation in the Kingdom of God. He begins it with a man who suffered from dropsy.

**DROPSY Lk. 14: 2.** Dropsy is an affliction in which an abnormal accumulation of fluids builds up in the cavities of the body. It is accompanied by swelling and poor circulation. It is usually symptomatic of more serious problems.

Jesus challenges the lawyers and Pharisees, "Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath or not." Their silence demonstrates their hypocrisy and indifference to the sufferings of the man in their midst. Jesus presses the issue. "Suppose a son or an ox of anyone of you falls into a pit – would you not immediately pull it up, even on the Sabbath?" Again the Pharisees remain silent. Their silence incriminates them all the more. Definitely they were willing to set aside their rules about work on the Sabbath for the sake of their sons and animals. Yet they would disallow the healing of a suffering neighbor on the same Sabbath. Something is certainly out of balance in their priorities.

Jesus immediately heals the man. He demonstrates once again that he is "Lord of the Sabbath." Likewise he shows his compassion for human suffering and God's given power to heal.

### **Luke 14: 7-14. Banquet manners.**



**14:7** Then <sup>21</sup> when Jesus <sup>22</sup> noticed how the guests <sup>23</sup> chose the places of honor, <sup>24</sup> he told them a parable. He said to them, **14:8** "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, <sup>25</sup> do not take <sup>26</sup> the place of honor, because a

person more distinguished than you may have been invited by your host. <sup>27</sup> **14:9** So <sup>28</sup> the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this man your place.' Then, ashamed, <sup>29</sup> you will begin to move to the least important <sup>30</sup> place. **14:10** But when you are invited, go and take the least important place, so that when your host <sup>31</sup> approaches he will say to you, 'Friend, move up here to a better place.' <sup>32</sup> Then you will be honored in the presence of all who share the

meal with you. **14:11** For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but <sup>33</sup> the one who humbles <sup>34</sup> himself will be exalted.”**14:12** He <sup>35</sup> said also to the man <sup>36</sup> who had invited him, “When you host a dinner or a banquet, <sup>37</sup> don’t invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors so you can be invited by them in return and get repaid. **14:13** But when you host an elaborate meal, <sup>38</sup> invite the poor, the crippled, <sup>39</sup> the lame, and <sup>40</sup> the blind. <sup>41</sup> **14:14** Then <sup>42</sup> you will be blessed, <sup>43</sup> because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid <sup>44</sup> at the resurrection of the righteous.”

**DAY 2:** (Read Lk 14: 7-14)

<p>1. What does Jesus tell the Pharisees and their guests about true honor at the banquet?</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>2. Why would it be better to give hospitality to the poor and handicapped rather than to relatives and prominent friends?</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>3. What is Jesus trying to teach us about the Kingdom of God?</p> <hr/> <hr/>

The Pharisees at the Sabbath meal were scrutinizing Jesus. However, he turned the tables on them. It is Jesus who has been observing the other invited guests. He will not remain silent.

Jesus points out their selfishness. Like a game of musical chairs all the guests sought out the prominent places of honor at the table. He teaches that those who attend the Banquet in the Kingdom of God will have a spirit of humility. In the Kingdom it will be the humblest who occupy the highest places of honor.



Jesus points out their self-seeking ambition. All at the table would soon play host to show their importance. Jesus indicates that their guest list was the opposite to that of the kingdom banquet. These guests could & would all return the favor. Real love never reckons with recompense. At the kingdom banquet not a single person on that list could claim that he or she merited being there. Every one, the beggar, crippled, lame & blind, was there through the generosity of the host.

**Luke 14: 15-24. Parable of the Great Banquet.**

**14:15** When <sup>45</sup> one of those at the meal with Jesus <sup>46</sup> heard this, he said to him, “Blessed is everyone <sup>47</sup> who will feast <sup>48</sup> in the kingdom of God!” <sup>49</sup> **14:16** But Jesus <sup>50</sup> said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet <sup>51</sup> and invited <sup>52</sup> many

guests. <sup>53</sup> **14:17** At <sup>54</sup> the time for the banquet <sup>55</sup> he sent his slave <sup>56</sup> to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, because everything is now ready.’ **14:18** But one after another they all <sup>57</sup> began to make excuses. <sup>58</sup> The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, <sup>59</sup> and I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.’ <sup>60</sup> **14:19** Another <sup>61</sup> said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, <sup>62</sup> and I am going out <sup>63</sup> to examine them. Please excuse me.’ **14:20** Another <sup>64</sup> said, ‘I just got married, and I cannot come.’ <sup>65</sup> **14:21** So <sup>66</sup> the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the master of the household was furious <sup>67</sup> and said to his slave, ‘Go out quickly <sup>68</sup> to the streets and alleys of the city, <sup>69</sup> and bring in the poor, <sup>70</sup> the crippled, <sup>71</sup> the blind, and the lame.’ **14:22** Then <sup>72</sup> the slave said, ‘Sir, what you instructed has been done, and there is still room.’ <sup>73</sup> **14:23** So <sup>74</sup> the master said to his <sup>75</sup> slave, ‘Go out to the highways <sup>76</sup> and country roads <sup>77</sup> and urge <sup>78</sup> people <sup>79</sup> to come in, so that my house will be filled. <sup>80</sup> **14:24** For I tell you, not one of those individuals <sup>81</sup> who were invited <sup>82</sup> will taste my banquet!’”

**DAY 3: (Read Lk 14: 15-24) Parable of the great dinner.**

<p>1. Why do you think Jesus is telling this parable to the Pharisees?</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>2. Why is this parable bad news for the Pharisees and their followers?</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>3. Why is this parable good news for so many?</p> <hr/> <hr/>

A pious remark (14:15) gives Jesus the opportunity to tell a parable about those who will and won't be among the blessed at the feast in the kingdom. Jesus audience is a group of Pharisees. They are busy, prosperous, and respectable. Men just like those in the parable.

**Feast in the kingdom of God Lk 14:15**  
 The prophet Isaiah had described God's kingdom as an abundant feast. All God's people would be in attendance and at table with God, especially the poor, blind and lame. (Isaiah 25:6-9) The image was common in Jesus day (Lk 13:29)

**Send his servant Lk 14:17.**  
 In a world without clocks, it was customary to invite guest ahead of time and then send for them when the banquet was actually ready



This parable has good news and bad news. Jesus is holding up a mirror before the lawyers and Pharisees. They can see that they are regarding something else as more important than God's invitation offered through Jesus.

**The bad news:** Those who are excluded from the banquet have only themselves to thank.

**The good news:** All are equally invited to the kingdom banquet including the poor; the crippled, the blind, the lame and the strangers from the highways and by-ways. In the kingdom of God a New Israel will be reconstituted and they will be the refashioned people of God, regardless of religion, race and culture.

Jesus who began the dinner as a dubious guest in the Pharisee's house is clearly portrayed as the host in the kingdom of God. Jesus teaches the generosity of God in sharing his friendship with sinners.

### **Lk 14:25-27: Committed Discipleship**

**14:25** Now large crowds <sup>84</sup> were accompanying Jesus, <sup>85</sup> and turning to them he said, **14:26** "If anyone comes to me and does not hate <sup>86</sup> his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life, <sup>87</sup> he cannot be my disciple. **14:27** Whoever does not carry his own cross <sup>88</sup> and follow <sup>89</sup> me cannot be my disciple.

### **DAY 4: (Read Lk 14: 25-27) Conditions of Discipleship.**

1. What point is Jesus making about our relationship to him?

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2. Write down each cost of being a disciple that Jesus names in this section.

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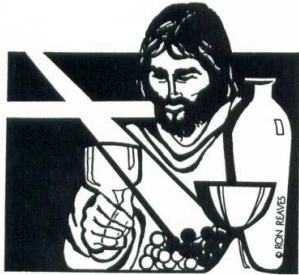
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3. How can you put one of these costs of discipleship into practice?

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Jesus emphasizes that true discipleship is a committed relationship to him. He uses an extreme exaggeration to bring home his point. “If anyone comes to me and does not hate (turn his back on) his father and mother, his wife & children, his brothers & sisters, yes, even his own life – he cannot be a disciple of mine.”



In Jesus day commitment to family was as intense as ones own life. Our relationship to Jesus demands an even intenser commitment based on love. Jesus will love us so intensely that he will literally give his life. Yet he calls us to follow him fully knowing the costs.

**Hyperbole:** Is and extreme exaggeration to make a point. It was a commonly used form of expression in the Jewish tradition. Jesus often employed it to make his point crystal clear. Examples: “Anyone who comes to me without hating is mother & father (Lk 14: 26) “It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye then for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaver. (Lk 18:25)

### **Lk 14:28-34 Parables of commitment to discipleship**

. **14:28** For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn’t sit down <sup>90</sup> first and compute the cost <sup>91</sup> to see if he has enough money to complete it? **14:29** Otherwise, <sup>92</sup> when he has laid <sup>93</sup> a foundation and is not able to finish the tower, <sup>94</sup> all who see it <sup>95</sup> will begin to make fun of <sup>96</sup> him. **14:30** They will say, <sup>97</sup> ‘This man <sup>98</sup> began to build and was not able to finish!’ <sup>99</sup> **14:31** Or what king, going out to confront another king in battle, will not sit down <sup>100</sup> first and determine whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose <sup>101</sup> the one coming against him with twenty thousand? **14:32** If he cannot succeed, <sup>102</sup> he will send a representative <sup>103</sup> while the other is still a long way off and ask for terms of peace. <sup>104</sup> **14:33** In the same way therefore not one of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his own possessions. <sup>105</sup> **14:34** “Salt <sup>106</sup> is good, but if salt loses its flavor, <sup>107</sup> how can its flavor be restored? **14:35** It is of no value <sup>108</sup> for the soil or for the manure pile; it is to be thrown out. <sup>109</sup> **14:35** The one who has ears to hear had better listen!” <sup>110</sup>

### **DAY 5: (Read Lk 14: 28-34)**

1. In these two parables what is Jesus telling the crowd that they must do to follow him?

a. First parable \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Second parable \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Why do you follow Jesus?

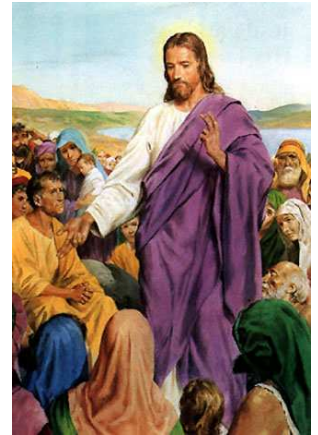
The seriousness demanded by conditions for discipleship is now presented in twin parables:

- Building a tower.
- Marching to battle.

Jesus counsels his followers not to decide on discipleship without advance, mature self-probing. It is a total commitment to Jesus and his way of life.

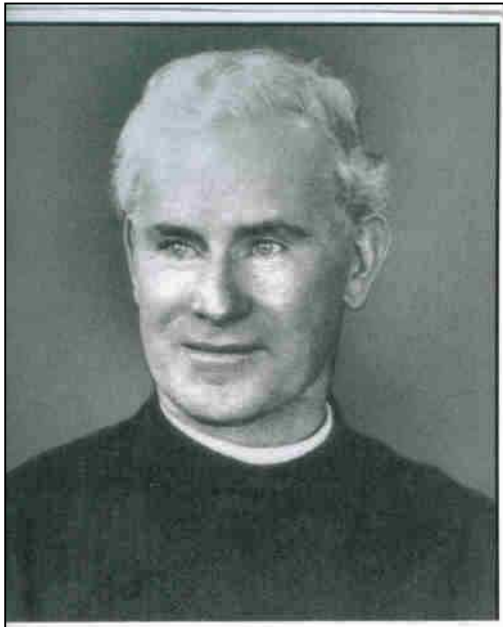
### **Lk 14: 34-35 Parable of salt**

<sup>105</sup> **14:34** “Salt <sup>106</sup> is good, but if salt loses its flavor, <sup>107</sup> how can its flavor be restored? **14:35** It is of no value <sup>108</sup> for the soil or for the manure pile; it is to be thrown out. <sup>109</sup> The one who has ears to hear had better listen!” <sup>110</sup>



Discipleship is like salt. If salt loses its flavor it is not fit for use. Jesus says the same applies to the disciple who loses enthusiasm & commitment for the reign of God.

**SALT Lk. 14:34** Salt was indispensable as a preservative, a flavoring and an ingredient for holy sacrifices. Pure sodium Chloride cannot lose its flavor, but the salt taken from the Dead Sea was mixed with another ingredient, carnalite. If the sodium chloride was dissolved away, the remainder was bitter and lost its salty flavor.



### **FR. JUDGE AND DISCIPLESHIP:**

*“There is so much love in all the Presentations of Jesus, our Savior, to us. His love and mercy are so great. He does so much for us as Redeemer, as Intercessor, as our Elder Brother... We should be so glad to be His disciples. What a joy to be in the school of Christ! What a privilege! How we should appreciate our Christian inheritance... Incomparable grace! We should be alert and earnest in acquainting ourselves with His teachings and precepts.*

(Letter conference to Missionary Servants. Date unknown.)

*“Our Savior’s birthday! He gave His all to us. O how much He had to give! What will you and I give? What is to be our birthday present?”*

*Jesus has followers; He needs friends. Jesus has believers; He needs workers. This is the hour to plan for His Christmas.”*

**(Article – the Holy Ghost magazine – Dec. 1928)**