

Luke 14 The Self-Absorbed Life

Self Absorbed = Motivated by one's personal interest or advantage, especially without regard for others

Jesus Had Dinner with one of the chief Pharisees

Luk 14:1 NIV One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. 2 There in front of him was a man suffering from abnormal swelling of his body. 3 Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" 4 But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him on his way. 5 Then he asked them, "If one of you has a child or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull it out?" 6 And they had nothing to say.

He observed how they chose the “places of honor”

Luke 14: 7 When ***he noticed*** how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: 8 "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. 9 If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this person your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. 10 But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. 11 For ***all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.***"

The lesson: Christ calls us to humility

- To be invited to a feast was a big deal - status, future favors, sense of importance
- To have the best seats was a bigger deal
 - Matthew 23:6 GNB They [teachers of the law and Pharisees] love the best places at feasts and the reserved seats in the synagogues;
 - Mother of James and John - let my two sons sit on your right and left hand
- The self-absorbed always seek positions that are to their best advantage
- Being humble or self exalting is a choice we make (*whoever exalts/humbles himself*)

Humility - Why Is It So Important?

Pride brings destruction - Humility comes before honor

- Proverbs 18:12 ESV Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor.

Pride or humility dictate God's posture toward us

- James 4:6 KJV But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth ***grace*** unto the humble.

- Isaiah 66:1-2 ESV Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? (2) All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one **to whom I will look**: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

He guides the humble

- Psalms 25:8-9 NIV Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. (9) He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

Humility enables us to deal correctly with sin in our lives

- Luke 18:9-14 ESV He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: (10) "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. (11) The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. (12) I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' (13) But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

The lesson: Christ calls us to give God's way

Luke 14:12 Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. 13 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

- Self-absorbed give when it benefits them
- Call those who cannot repay
- You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just
- Life is more than here and now - learn to lay up treasure in heaven

Luke 6:35 NIV But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

Proverbs 11:24-26 NIV One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. (25) A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. (26) People curse the one who hoards grain, but they pray God's blessing on the one who is willing to sell.

Excuses can be a cover up of sorts for the self absorbed

We use excuses to avoid doing what we don't want to do

Luke 14:15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God." 16 Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' 18 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' 19 "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' 20 "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.' 21 "The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' 22 "'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' 23 "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. 24 I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

- You can see from above that being invited to a dinner is very important in their culture
- People accept invitations to gain status and future favors
- For some reason, **they had no regard the invitation of Christ**
- These were self-absorbed - these are nonsense excuses
 - who buys a field then goes to see it
 - who buys oxen then goes to prove them
 - I have married a wife and can't come (the wedding has happened - bring her)

What about us? How do we view the invitation of Christ?

What does He invite us to?

An invitation to be a disciple -

True discipleship can erode self interest

Discipleship focuses the core of my heart upon Christ - everything else is loved less

Luke 14:25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters--yes, even their own life--such a person ***cannot be my disciple.***

Discipleship is a call to complete surrender - it is a yielding of self-interest (my will)

Luke 14:27 And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me ***cannot be my disciple.***

There is a cost of discipleship - will we pay it or make excuses

Luke 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? 29 For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, 30 saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' 31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.

Discipleship deals with everything in my life - it touches EVERYTHING that I have

Luke 14:33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have ***cannot be my disciples.***

Phip 2:19-21 NIV I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. 20 I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. 21 For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

The saltiness of my life is tied to my surrender to Christ

Luke 14:34 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

- Salt seasons meat ... is a preservative ... makes men thirsty ... melts cold ice

Prayer

May we learn to live a life concerned about the things of others.

May we overcome a self-absorbed life - to lay aside pride and gladly/joyfully choose humility.

May we learn to give with no strings attached.

May we be free of second guessing and trust that we will be repaid by the Lord in the resurrection.

May we live life now in light of eternity.

May we not just COUNT the cost, but PAY THE PRICE of being a true follower of Jesus.

May we be the salt of the earth.