

What Jesus Sees At The Banquet

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[0 : 00] You could be turning to Luke chapter 14.! Luke 14.

As we come to our passage today, we find a third instance of Jesus healing on the Sabbath day.! Those situations have been interesting.

The first was at Simon Peter's house. After Jesus had taught in the synagogue and cast out a demon, he went to Simon's house and his mother-in-law was sick and he healed his mother-in-law. No one said much about that healing. I'm sure there were people who were a little up in arms. We kind of get that hint even as we come to the second Sabbath healing.

That one was in a synagogue on the Sabbath day. And at that time, the Pharisees were present and they were watching him. Already had that look in their eye, like they're wanting to catch him in what he was doing.

[1 : 08] They were not very happy when Jesus broke their laws to heal a man on the Sabbath day. And it was then that they began to decide, or they decided rather, that they're going to figure out what they can do with this man.

He's messing up our religion. The last time Jesus healed on the Sabbath was at the ruler of the Pharisee's house. Now that was a brave place to do that.

And he'd been invited by the Pharisee, the ruler Pharisee actually, to a banquet on the Sabbath. And here we not only see how the Pharisees, not just the chief Pharisee, but all the Pharisees there react.

But we also see an interesting thing in Jesus. We see Jesus who looks around and sees the hearts of people at that banquet. And teaches based on what he sees.

So I'm going to read Luke 14, verses 1 through 14. And then we'll try to see what Jesus sees as he looks around. One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully.

[2 : 22] And behold, there was a man before whom had dropsy. And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath? Or not.

But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. And he said to them, Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on the Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?

And they could not reply to these things. Now he told a parable to those who were invited. When he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him.

And 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.

But 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 honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

[3 : 35] For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. He said 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 neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for your word. I thank you for so many pictures of our Savior as he walked this earth.

Thank you for how it reveals him. Thank you, Father, for this passage and these situations. I pray that you would open our eyes to what Jesus sees as he appears at this banquet.

And I pray that you would draw us to yourself, help us to see the wonder of Jesus, help us to see the importance of what he's teaching. And I pray, Father, that you would help us to react in right ways as we see what Jesus sees.

[4 : 57] In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. So it was common in that day for leaders of the Pharisees to invite teachers to a banquet.

Once the teaching in the synagogue was done on the Sabbath day, they would often invite the teacher who taught that day back to their house for a meal. And so during that meal, the one invited would be given opportunity to do further instruction and also discuss his teaching and be asked questions.

Now, the invitation by the ruler of the Pharisees, by those from the synagogue, did not necessarily mean that they agreed with the person who spoke.

Sometimes they would bring this person back and they were hoping to tear his teaching apart and show him where he didn't know what he was talking about and seek and endeavor to write him on the right path.

And so don't think that just them having him back was them making nice with Jesus. It was not at all them making nice with Jesus.

[6 : 08] In fact, Scripture says here that the Pharisees were watching him carefully. Now, you look at the context and you think that's why I mentioned the other Sabbath healings, especially the second one that we mentioned.

It pointed to the beginning of them thinking, this man has to go. And so as they're watching him, Jesus, and this is the first thing that Jesus sees.

Jesus sees the intent of these people. He sees that they are watching him for a purpose. He sees that they want to do away with him. But Jesus takes advantage of this situation to address the hearts of those present.

And it's obvious as we look at the different aspects, the different parts of this passage that we look at today, that Jesus, he sees right into the heart.

He sees exactly what's going on there. And so they've asked him to be able to try to manipulate him. But he's come graciously desiring to minister to them.

[7 : 20] And the most blessed thing that Jesus can do for them at this point is to open their eyes to the truth of what they need. And even though it just seems like an argument or a tit-for-tat kind of thing, this is Jesus being merciful to these men.

He's laying their hearts right out in front of them. Sadly, they never see it, at least the majority of them. So he's been invited.

My understanding is that they've begun to gather together. I think there's a progression in these different parables and things that are mentioned here. I think at first we get this idea that Jesus walks in and he's beginning to stand around.

And I don't think that the banquet has officially started yet. I may be wrong. This is just my thinking. But I think that he's walked in and he's beginning to see people congregate.

Now, as he gets there, some point at the beginning, towards the beginning of the banquet, whether they were seated yet or reclined yet or not, we don't know.

[8 : 34] But there is a man that appears. Now, not magically appears, but he comes in. We know that because of the word behold. You can see the word behold in some of the translations.

But he appears. And we don't know if this man was invited. We, thinking we know the mentality of the Pharisees, have this suspicion that they invited this man on purpose because they were wanting to watch Jesus.

But we don't know because, as we mentioned in another situation where there was a banquet, these kinds of situations, the teacher was invited. He'd be able to talk.

There were certain official people who were invited and they would sit at a table. They would recline at a table, usually in the shape of a B or a U. And the doors would be left open and people could come and listen.

They would stand in the doorways. They'd stand behind people that were reclined at the table. They didn't take any part of the meal. It was not, the meal was not for them. But these people who had these banquets, they were willing to hear other people or have other people hear them, I think, so

that they could impress people with their teaching.

[9 : 52] They wanted to tear Jesus down in front of all these people. So this man appeared, whether invited or uninvited, I don't know. But the presence of this man was an opportunity for the Pharisees to get their accusation.

Remember, they're trying to find a way to do something with Jesus. They want him out of the way. And this man was an opportunity. He wasn't the only opportunity, but this was another opportunity. And they were going to take good advantage of this. Now, it mentions in Scripture that he has the dropsy. That doesn't mean he couldn't hold on to anything. The word dropsy is an interpretation of the word in Greek that means edema.

And that is a term we use in present medical situations, edema. That's where fluid begins to collect in usually the lower extremities, the legs and the feet.

And as you get older, it happens easier and more often. Sometimes you go, wow, that man has powerful-looking ankles. But really, the fluid is just collected in his lower feet.

[11 : 04] And I'm not diagnosing anyone. There are other reasons that edema can happen, so please don't go, oh, he's telling me I have this.

But it was often thought that, and it's still something to consider, that edema was connected with heart failure, kidney disease, or even liver failure.

And I only mention that because this man would have looked like someone that was in desperate need. He would have looked like someone who was not well at all.

But even more than that, in the culture of the day, a person who had dropsy would have been thought of, it would have been, they would have thought of that God was punishing them.

They thought of dropsy as being an indication that the person was greedy, covetous, or licentious. Either wanted money, things, or intimate pleasure.

[12 : 13] And that he had, he or she had this edema because they had been guilty of living this kind of debauched lifestyle. And so, he was kind of a perfect example.

Here's a man that looks pretty desperately sick. Here's a man who, in their thinking, by the way, edema doesn't have any association with those sins, technically.

I don't want you going away thinking that, we're teaching that. That's not what's going on. But they thought that. And so, this was that perfect situation. A man who was looking pretty sick and probably brought it on himself.

Would Jesus heal such a man? Would he risk healing on the Sabbath day and breaking their rules? And I think they thought that this was a good situation. If we're going to get something on this man, this was a good situation. And they were watching him.

[13 : 24] So, it was an opportunity for the Pharisees, but it was also an opportunity for Jesus. We've made much of this because I think Luke has been proving this all through the book of Luke.

And that is, this is another opportunity for Jesus to prove that he is indeed the Messiah that has been promised. Remember, we have often talked about Luke 4, verses 18 and 19, and how that reflects back to Isaiah 61, verses 1 and part of verse 2.

Those verses that Jesus read in the synagogue of Nazareth as he began his ministry. And he says, today, this is being fulfilled in your ears.

And he's saying, I'm doing the kind of things that the Messiah does because I am the Messiah. I am proving that. And so, this was another opportunity for Jesus to prove that he was indeed the Messiah.

He was now about, with this man being there, he was about to heal that man, and he was going to be carrying out those deeds that the Messiah would do. And so, it was a great opportunity for Jesus.

[14 : 31] Secondly, it was a great opportunity for Jesus to teach the proper use of the Sabbath to a new group of people. He taught it clear back in Galilee, and he gets now, as he's getting closer to Jerusalem, gets an opportunity to teach the correct thinking of the Sabbath.

Now, not all the details of the Sabbath, but to correct one of their false thinkings. He was going to teach that it was right to do what he was about to do on the Sabbath day, something that the Pharisees and even the commentary on the law, the Mishnah that they had made would forbid, oh, you can't heal anybody on the Sabbath.

And Jesus is saying, this is not true. It is right to show good and right to show mercy on the Sabbath day. So, it was another opportunity. It was also an opportunity to show grace for Jesus.

It was an opportunity for Jesus to show grace to a dying and maligned man. He would hear people whisper, see his legs?

He's one of those people. He's one of those ones who's lived a life, he deserves this. And Jesus is about to take away his shame.

[15 : 50] He's about to take away the disgrace that he would face. And even though the thing they interpreted was not true or probably not true, Jesus was about to show mercy to this maligned and possibly dying man.

And it was an opportunity for him. And this is where we get to see what Jesus sees here. As he sat in that room and looking around these people, he sees in these Pharisees hypocrisy.

And he's not standing there with a large hammer ready to beat him into the ground with it. He's pointing out their hypocrisy because they need the Savior he's come to be.

He's addressing their hypocrisy and it's a great opportunity for Jesus. And so before healing the man, Jesus asks, is it lawful to heal a man on the Sabbath?

He's asked that before. He asked that back in Luke chapter 6 when he healed a man on the Sabbath. Is it lawful to heal a man on the Sabbath? Now everyone at that banquet was probably wondering if he would indeed heal this man on the Sabbath.

[17 : 11] Would he do it? And there was no question that one reason Jesus was doing this was to address that incorrect teaching of the Pharisees but no one dared answer Jesus.

Why? Back in Luke 13 we find that someone had challenged him on this before and he not only healed but he brought scripture to bear the same kind of scripture that he's dealing with here a little different but he brought scripture to bear and in teaching and healing at that previous instance when the Pharisees were present they were humiliated there was nothing they could answer because Jesus had proved that he was the Messiah by doing what he did and he proved from scripture that it was right for him to do it on the Sabbath day and so they didn't dare say a thing at that point Jesus heals the man doesn't go into any of the details doesn't talk anything about it he simply healed the man and told him to go I think he was protecting the man because we find later when Jesus heals a man born blind the man stuck around not that he stuck around for the Pharisees but he stuck around and had to face a lot of opposition from religious leaders

Jesus heals this man sends him on his way he healed him to show him that he was the Messiah and show the religious leaders that he was the Messiah but the religious leaders still refused to believe why because Jesus wouldn't conform to their expectations I have my thinking of what should happen on the Sabbath and since you don't conform to my thinking of what should happen on the Sabbath I will not listen to you Jesus now it may not be the Sabbath but let me ask this is there something that keeps you from coming to Christ for salvation do you refuse to trust him because he doesn't do the things the way you expected oh you mean

I'm not going to be rich or my life is not going to be easy as long as you continue to believe that Jesus has to conform to some standard of yours instead of seeing that he is God and that you need to repent and trust him you will remain as lost as these Pharisees that was their big hitch I mean they were dead in their sin let's not skip over that they didn't want him because he didn't conform to their thinking and as long as they felt that way they would never come to him Jesus healed this man showed that he was Messiah showed love and grace to this man imagine how that man felt walking away that day my sickness is gone maybe maybe he felt better than he ever had but more than that the stigma was gone

Jesus came to save sinners sinners and he did that day the fourth reason he healed him was to show him that it was proper to heal on the Sabbath and we've mentioned this but deeds of mercy and necessity are proper on the Lord's day the law allowed it and Jesus affirmed it but as I mentioned the big thing that's going on here is that Jesus steps in this room and immediately he sees a hypocrisy in the heart of the Pharisees they couldn't deny the miracle but since Jesus did not conform to their expectations they wouldn't trust him and they wouldn't even acknowledge that he was right here he's asked this question is it right to heal on the Sabbath they don't answer he heals on the

[21 : 54] Sabbath and they're just tight-lipped they're not going to say anything I'm sure that as they looked around their lips were tight but their eyes were screaming who is this man how dare he do what he does and so Jesus endeavoring to get them to see their own heart he says which of you does not rescue his son or his ox when they fall into a pit they have these regulations you can't work on the Sabbath day and Jesus is not throwing those off but he's saying there are things you

can do and he's revealing to them that they indeed are hypocrites because not one of them would let their son remain in a pit on the Sabbath day just because it was the Sabbath day and they knew it they knew they wouldn't leave their son there they knew they wouldn't even leave their ox there they knew that their son could suffer and die and would feel forsaken they knew that an ox would probably put itself in a situation that it itself would either terribly injure itself or would die they would certainly have rescued an ox or their son they had no answer to Jesus question they knew the answer but they didn't like the answer they didn't want to admit that

Jesus was right do you hold an interpretation of the Lord's day or any of God's instruction that contains I'll use kind of a I don't know if it's his but a Shakespearean kind of phrase that contains rules for thee and not for me these people had rules that were for them and not for themselves there are all kinds of arguments or discussions about different things in the word of God and we make up all kinds of things and then sometimes we're just as hypocritical when we break our own thinking regarding something because it affects us well a second question in relation to this are you are your observances of the

Lord's day meant to glorify you rather than use the day as unto him are your observances of the Lord's day meant to glorify you rather than it being a day as unto him do you resist Christ's command to trust him only because you hate to admit that you're wrong and he's right so here we've seen that Jesus sees the hypocritical attitude of the Pharisees but as he's sitting there and we move down into verse 7 we see that as the banquet proceeds Jesus had another opportunity he sees something else he has an opportunity to address an issue of the heart as he's listening to the things that were going on and as he saw people around him he saw people with a self exalting mentality the issue of the heart was revealed as he watched people come into the room some of them he's addressing the people who had been invited and were going to sit at the table not the people who would stand around to the outside so he's addressing these people as he's thinking about this as they're walking into the room and he's addressing the situation that as they're walking into the room they're looking around and in that kind of banquet the master of the banquet sat at the head and those who were greatest in honor in his mind would sit either side or close to him those that he deemed less honorable by progression would sit farther and farther away from him now the picture is here that the people who have been invited are walking in and they're not asking the master of the banquet where do you want me to sit they're walking in thinking

I'm the secretary of the synagogue I should be on the master's left and the next person walking in thinks I've been in the synagogue 45 years I should sit here and they're just taking their places and Jesus is watching and he's watching how you know you ever watch kids you can see it real strong in in the musical chairs game but you ever watch kids or adults go into a room or let me put it this way the guy with the sneaky sneaky sneaky is a better word the sneaky little guy with a sports car who parks in your parking spot just as you're getting ready to pull in to to to get the best spot before anybody else gets it and Jesus is watching these people and he addressed the issue by apparently telling a parable about a wedding feast and I'm not sure that Luke includes the whole parable but rather summarizes it and gives us part of an example and the summary people chose their seats based on their own perception of where they felt they deserved to sit the more important they thought they were the closer they thought they deserved to sit near the head of the table near the master of the banquet while it is true that in that culture people were to be seated according to the honor that they had it was not their own evaluation of honor that determined where they sat but rather how the master of the banquet felt they should be honored so that was the problem people walked in thinking

I'm this I'm that and I'm going to sit here because I think I'm this or I'm that but the fact of the matter is it didn't matter what they thought the master of the banquet could have held in high esteem the guy who held the door at the synagogue and the people who read the person who read the scripture every week he could have thought he isn't such a nice guy and the master of the banquet could have put the door holder right next to him and the reader of the scripture way down the end because it didn't matter what people thought it mattered what the master of the feast thought but these people were walking in thinking it matters what I think and so they seat themselves people's people's prideful self exalting hearts were often revealed at these wedding feasts and what would happen is as the wedding feast would go along the master of the feast would walk in and go hmm this is not right and he'd have to walk up to someone and say this man sits here and the person that was sitting there who thought they deserved to sit there would then have to stand up and scripture

talks about him taking the least seat why would he have to take the least seat or the lowest seat because everybody had jockeyed for every seat except for the lowest seat that was the only one left and no matter how worthy he thought he was he'd be humiliated because he thought he believed he belonged in the second seat and now he's at the 14th seat and so

[30 : 14] Jesus seeing the hearts of these people advises people to take the heed of the wisdom of proverbs 25 6 and 7 do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great or it is better to be told come up here than to put lower to be put lower in the presence of a noble he's telling these people how they should act but what Jesus sees is the self-exalting mentality that's in man their seating practices revealed a wicked heart a wicked heart that needs a savior the kind of savior that Jesus was have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus who though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death even death on the cross therefore

God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name so the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father what does your life reveal about your opinion of yourself I go to it too often because it's a problem of mine but I go to it often because I see it everywhere I think it's a problem of a lot of us what is your driving reveal about your heart concerning yourself don't we all drive almost always wanting the light to change to our benefit don't we always drive with a mentality that everyone needs to stay out of my way because I'm going somewhere don't we all think we're the most important person in the world

Jesus bears out this principle because he sees their heart he sees our heart are we self-exalting are we people whose world is wrapped around ourself and any room we walk into we look for the best advantage for ourselves every situation we live in we live with the best advantage of ourselves shouldn't we rather have the kind of heart mentality the kind of mind mentality that Christ had who though being God was willing to humble humble humble humble humble form of a servant who died for anyone who would trust him Jesus sees the hearts of men the third issue raised the third issue Jesus raised was directed to the man who had invited him and that starts in verse 12 it addresses the issue of what reward you want and who you want it from

I'm sure the people who had been invited to this banquet had all been to each other's house probably took turns hosting such kinds of banquets they were glad to return the favor have it at my house this month or this week and the next guy have it at my house this day he was sharing the expense but they bolstered the worth of each other in each other's eyes he said oh I'm going to have my group over my group is a good group of people I mean look at them look what they do this is my group and we just we just share with one another we just minister to one another we just share these expenses now

Jesus is not speaking against a group of friends getting together regularly for mutual encouragement he is not acts 2 44 and 45 talks about the body of Christ getting together and sharing meeting one another's needs that's a great thing we find that kind of teaching throughout the New Testament where we're to be with one another we're to be gathered we're to be in each other's lives and he's not he's not decrying that kind of mentality that kind of biblical gathering and should seek to serve others in this kind of setting it can be very helpful to you in fact we're often encouraging people need to fellowship with one another people need to be with one another we need to know one another we need to be able to meet the needs of one another Jesus is not decrying that he is not saying you should never have another believer in your home he is absolutely not saying that you should have believers in your home all the time but you should not do it to be repaid see the thing

[35 : 56] Jesus saw was their heart seeing their repayment and reward coming present serving yourself by the means of a group who would you like to be known to be associated with oh I want to be associated with those who are in authority in Hazleton or I want to be associated with those who are great sports figures in Hazleton none of these are necessarily wrong but using that gathering for your own self exaltation for your own reward it's the kind of thing that Jesus saw in these people Kent Hughes commentator on this put something very well he says the penetrating point Jesus is leading to is that one's social ethics show whether one is a member of the kingdom of

God elitism indicates a selfish proud shriveled soul reciprocation as a primary goal is a product of an immense self focus if we do not reach out to others who cannot benefit us we must ask ourselves if we're true believers Jesus is not rebuking their fellowship he's rebuking their mentality that's us let's huddle together let's minister to each other just pat each other's ego Jesus is saying no you want to serve the people who are out and around who can't repay you you want to be inviting people to your house that could never have you to their house you know I'd be willing to go to theirs if they do want you but if they can't we should serve people without expectation of repayment we should want to give because Christ has given to us and we can never repay we can hold a service here 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year all of our lives a continual service that lasts from now until Christ comes back and we sing songs to the top of our lungs and we preach the word with glorious clarity and great conviction we've not earned one thing now we should be doing these kinds of things but we have people out in this world who need us to serve them even if it costs us even if we never get anything in return we want it to be that they come to Christ but even if they don't come to Christ Jesus served this world many of whom would never come to him!

He He serve others without expectation of repayment When you serve that way your repayment is in heaven!

[39 : 32] Jesus notices He keeps account if it costs you I'm not saying we should be extravagant or foolish but it costs you little bits of money that you can't afford to lose Jesus knows that if it costs you time that you kind of think I can't afford this Jesus says have this outward mentality of serving those who cannot repay you Christ will repay you in the resurrection so I'll leave you with a simple thing we've seen Jesus saw into the heart of the Pharisees he saw into the heart of those who sought seats he saw into the heart of the master of the banquet we're going to see next week that he sees into a different heart what does he see into your heart if you had a banquet would he mention any of these things to you if you had a banquet that he was at what would he see in your heart let's pray thank you father for your word

I thank you father that it meets us where we are not one of us can look at these things and think we haven't at one point or another had expectations of God that would want us to be cold towards him or even before we knew him would keep us from knowing him what one of us aren't self exalting even even knowing you as savior father we are guilty of sin so frequently what one of us doesn't at times serve other people probably way more many times than we would care to admit how often do we serve people hoping that some will notice our goodness hoping someone will notice our talents hoping someone will notice something and repay us with an attaboy in this life lord i pray that you would help us to be people that serve you because we love you and rest that you will repay us for whatever it costs i pray that you would be with us lord may we be people who are willing as we sit before you today to say look at my heart lord and speak to me in that area in which you see and i pray that you would help us to be willing to listen and to obey we pray
Thank you.