

Pride of Place

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 14:1-11



Big Idea

In a culture that is always vying for the places of honor—to be seen and praised—Jesus calls us into faithful obscurity. He asks us to sit in the forgotten places with the assurance that He will remember. Lowering ourselves lifts a ladder to the heavens. Jesus is there. And He is enough.

Gospel Centrality must be coupled with Gospel Humility. A person must not only understand what Jesus did there for us on the cross, he/she must be personally crushed by it, broken by it, re-shaped by it. There is no swagger at the foot of the cross. Who cares if your doctrine is right, if your heart is all wrong. So you know how to talk about the cross, does your life actually look like the cross?! That is what a leader in particular must have. We do not lead from on high. We lead from down low.

(1) The Place of Honor

In ancient Israel at the time, a person's social status would actually play into where they would sit around the dinner table. And the more important you were the closer you would sit to the host. These are the "places of honor" that our text is talking about.

With this parable, Jesus is here speaking against pride and presumption, competition and comparison, self-exertion and self-promotion. I love how the ESV Study Bible sums it up: "It is better to be humble than humiliated." It is better to lower yourself and be asked to step up, than to put yourself on top and be told to step down. And, of course, we know ultimately, what Jesus is talking about here isn't just how to act at dinner parties or in the office or something. He's talking about how things will go in the end, before God—how those who think they're awesome will be exposed for what they really are, and how those who have been humbled by the cross, will be lifted up and glorified in the Son.

(2) The Heart of the Matter

(1) We Are Insecure and Think It Will Justify Us—We spend all this time and energy trying to prove to others, and prove to ourselves, and maybe even prove to God that we are okay, that we are alright, that we are justified. And we feel like if we can just secure that place of honor for ourselves, then we'll know that we are okay. But it never works. When you find your righteousness, your security in Jesus Christ, you don't need anyone else to see you or praise you. You don't need to prove yourself anymore. You're free to take the lower seat and give your life away in service of others.

(2) We Are Empty and Think It Will Satisfy Us—If you are not already satisfied in Jesus, you will never be satisfied in leadership or any other "place of honor".

(3) We Are Near-Sighted and Forget How the Story Ends—If this world is all there is, well then, okay, you better do all you can to get that seat. But if, at the end of the ages, God is going to right every wrong, and lower the proud, and raise up the humble, and vindicate those who truly loved him and trusted Him and served Him, then you can let someone else sit there for now, right?

Reflection Questions



- How do you feel when others are recognized for their accomplishments but not you? Are there certain tasks you feel are beneath you? Do you find yourself tossing and turning in bed at night, worrying about what people are thinking of you? Do you always have to be right? When's the last time you truly said: "I'm sorry"? What do your answer to these questions reveal about your struggle for the places of honor in this world? How can Jesus and the gospel meet you in that struggle and point the way forward?
- Get practical. What do you think it would actually look like to live this parable out this week? How would it change the way you approach your job, your family, etc.? Why is this particularly hard here in Silicon Valley? Where do you need Jesus' help most?