

“The Final Frontier”

(Luke 14:7-14)

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Worth Imitating...pt.3
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I. Introduction

A. State of the Union Speech

1. Budget cuts
2. Budget cuts in the Austrian Alps
 - a. Village in the Austrian Alps
 1. Sound of Music
 - b. Old man hired years ago
 1. Keep debris out of the source of spring
 2. Flowed into village
 - c. Tourist attraction
 1. Clear mountain stream high in the Alps
 2. Formed pools of clean water and swans
 - d. Budget meeting
 1. “Don’t need the old man”
 - e. After several weeks
 1. Yellowish brown tint
 2. Rank odors
 3. Swans left
 4. Tourists left

- 5. Sickness and disease
- 6. Millwheels stopped
- f. The problem was at the source
 - 1. Clogged
 - 2. The old man used to clear excess vegetation from the spring every day

B. Today a sin that can clog your channel of blessing

- 1. The root cause of all kinds of sins
 - a. The ugliest sin that can invade a local church
 - b. God says he hates it
- 2. You don't want your kids imitating this sin

II. Review

A. Jesus is headed for the cross

B. He shares life lessons "Worth Imitating"

- 1. Number one rule in parenting
 - a. Become someone worth imitating
 - b. I Corinthians 11:1

(1) Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ

- 2. Today...*Humility worth imitating*

III. Text...Luke 14:7-14

A. The Setting (v. 7)

(7) When he (Jesus) noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable:

1. Rotary... Trying to get to the “places of honor”
 - a. Fred Meijer sat there
 1. The multi-billionaire
 - b. People wanted to be seen with him
2. Seating at wedding receptions
 - a. The long table up front
 1. Guy hurries in and takes a seat
 2. Then the wedding party arrives
 3. As everyone is watching
 4. That’s for honored guests...bride, groom, etc.
 - b. Asked to leave
3. Jesus told a similar story
4. Jesus at a dinner on the Sabbath
 - a. Why Jesus was there
 1. Not to be honored
 2. Trying to entrap him
 - b. He healed a very sick man
 - c. The Pharisees had nothing to say
 1. They had been shamed
5. Jesus noticed something at the dinner
 - a. Everyone tried to get one of the honored places
6. So he told a parable

- a. A simple story about something with which people are familiar that opens their understanding to something with which they are not familiar.
- b. Used to drive home one key lesson

B. The Story (vs. 8-10)

(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 man your seat." Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place.

1. Wedding reception
 - a. The most formal of the dinners
2. The U-shaped tables
 - a. The host would sit in the middle of the head table
 - b. Honored guests to his right and left
 - c. Descended to the least important
3. Like our wedding receptions
 - a. Assigned seats
 1. Tables for the Bridal Party
 2. Tables for the parents and grandparents
 - b. Rushing in to take one of those seats
 - c. The embarrassment of being taken out
4. This is just common etiquette

(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 your fellow guests.

- a. Like getting moved up to 1st class on a long flight
5. The Pharisees were all into "appearance"

a. Matthew 23:5-6

(5) Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels of the garments long; (6) they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; (7) they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them “Rabbi.”

b. Going to national conventions

1. The “celebrities”

c. Religious pride drove many of you away from church

1. People trying to show their self-importance

d. Luke 20:45-47

(45) While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, (46) “Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the place of honor at banquets. (47) They devour widow’s houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely”

C. The Central Lesson (v. 11)

(11) For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

1. The destiny of the proud

a. Proverbs 16:18

(18) Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall

1. Examples of those who have fallen

2. Some of you think you’re untouchable

3. Beware

b. Proverbs 16:5

(5) The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.

1. It may not be in this life

c. God will oppose them

1. James 4:6

(6) God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble

2. Repeated in I Peter 5:5

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

3. Both are quoting from Proverbs 3:34

(34) God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

d. Grace (salvation) is given to those who humble themselves

e. Salvation has always been to the humble and the broken and the contrite and those who come and plead for mercy and grace and nothing more.

D. The Payback (v. 12)

(12) Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid.

1. They invited the elites

2. Why they invited them

a. Prestige

b. Payback

3. Didn't want to be seen with the losers

a. The Pharisees separated themselves from the riff raff

b. High school

1. Didn't want to be seen with losers

2. Eating with the really cool kids

4. Wanted to get something in return

- a. Reciprocity...payback
- b. Get invited to their dinners

E. The Resurrection of the Righteous (vs. 13-14)

(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 in the resurrection of the righteous."

- 1. The people can't repay you...but God will
- 2. *"Repaid in the resurrection of the righteous"*
 - a. As opposed to the resurrection of the unrighteous
- 3. The best rewards await us in heaven
 - a. Oh what a day that will be...when my Jesus I shall see...

IV. Summary

A. Definition of Pride

- 1. What it is not
 - a. Confidence is okay
 - b. So is boldness
- b. What is pride
 - a. Thinking that it's all about you
 - b. Thinking that you deserve the good things in life
 - c. Always seeking the applause of man
 - d. Self-righteous

B. The Problem with Pride

- 1. *Nobody likes a proud person*

- a. People hate arrogance
 - 1. Love to see them fall!
- b. People can sense your pride
- c. Dr. A.B. Simpson

Humility will save you from self-consciousness. It will take away from you the shadow of yourself and the constant sense of your own importance. It will save you from self-assertion and from thrusting your own personality upon the thoughts and attention of others. It will save you from the desire for display, from being prominent, from occupying the center of the stage, from being the object of observation and attention, and having the eyes of the world turned upon you.

2. God resists the proud

- a. Saving Grace can't flow into a life clogged with pride
- b. You can't save a man that refuses to believe he is lost
- c. "First you have to get him lost"

3. Pride restricts the flow of blessing

- a. Pride shuts off the flow
- b. God opposes the proud
 - 1. Pride clogs channel of grace
 - 2. Does your life feel like an empty shell?
 - 3. Pride is a root sin

C. Characteristics of a Humble Person

1. Humble people don't seek recognition or honor

- a. Working in the church...my mom
- b. Giving to the church
- c. Do good even if it seems unpleasant or inconvenient.

- d. They don't care if they are ever recognized
- e. Just trying to complete their mission in life

2. *Humble people don't attempt to steal the credit*

- a. Quick to give God glory for everything they accomplish
- b. Acknowledge the people around them
- c. Constantly thanking God...even when things are tough

3. *Humble people are quick to forgive*

- a. They know what it's like to be forgiven
- b. My friend Jim
 - 1. "I'm a thief on the cross sinner"
 - 2. Deserve nothing but punishment
 - 3. "Today you will be with me in Paradise"

4. *Humble people are difficult to offend*

- a. They remember the offense Christ bore for them
 - 1. The mockery of the cross
- b. They resolve to put hurts behind them
 - 1. They determine "to get over it"
- c. They grieve over the sin in the heart of the other
- d. They search their heart to discover a nugget of truth

5. *Humble people aren't jealous when God blesses their friends*

- a. Rejoice when another is blessed...and you're struggling

6. *Humble people don't secretly believe they deserve better*

- a. That it should have been them who was blessed

7. *Humble people are peace makers*

- a. A soft answer turns away wrath
- b. Willing to go the extra mile
- c. Don't need to have the last word
- d. Don't need to be "right" all the time

8. *Humble people don't take blessings for granted*

- a. They give thanks daily
- b. They never take God's goodness for granted
- c. Never take other people for granted

9. *Humble people accept suffering as an opportunity to grow*

- a. Instead of "Why me?"
 - 1. "Why not me?"
- b. James 1:2-4

(2) Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, (3) because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. (4) Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

10. *Humble people have a tender conscience*

- a. Quick to apologize if they have hurt someone

11. *Humble people admit their weaknesses*

- a. Don't try to cover up their weaknesses and mistakes.
 - 1. Odds are people already know what they are
- b. They realize they're only sinners saved by grace

12. *Humble people don't let compliments go to their head*

13. *Humble people will be blessed by God*

a. God gives grace to the humble

1. James 4:6-10

(6) But he gives us more grace. That is why the Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

2. Saving grace
3. Sustaining grace

b. God delights in using the humble

1. St. Francis of Assisi (Knight, p. 316)

Someone asked Saint Francis of Assisi how he could accomplish so much. “This may be why,” he said;

“The Lord looked down from heaven and said ‘Where can I find the weakest, littlest, meanest man on earth?’ Then He saw me, and said, ‘I’ve found him; he won’t be proud of it; he’ll see that I am using him because of his insignificance.’”

c. God never forgets the cry of the humble

1. Psalm 9:12

(12) God does not forget the cry of the humble (NKJV)

2. God hasn’t forgotten your prayers
3. God hasn’t lost sight of you....God knows

d. God will never leave you alone in times of struggle

1. I Peter 5:5-7

(5) ...All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

(6) Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

(7) Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you