

Sermon for June 14th, 2026
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

READINGS

Proverbs 9:1-10

- 1** Wisdom has built her house;
she has hewn her seven pillars.
- 2** She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
- 3** She has sent out her young women to call
from the highest places in the town,
- 4** “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”
To him who lacks sense she says,
- 5** “Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.
- 6** Leave your simple ways, and live,
and walk in the way of insight.”
- 7** Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,
and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.
- 8** Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.
- 9** Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;
teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.
- 10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

Psalm 34:12-22

- 12** What man is there who desires life
and loves many days, that he may see good?
- 13** Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.
- 14** Turn away from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.
- 15** The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous
and his ears toward their cry.
- 16** The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.
- 17** When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- 18** The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.
- 19** Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers him out of them all.
- 20** He keeps all his bones;
not one of them is broken.
- 21** Affliction will slay the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
- 22** The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Ephesians 2:11-22

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— **12** remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. **13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14** For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility **15** by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, **16** and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. **17** And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. **18** For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. **19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22** In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Luke 14:12-24

12 He said also 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. **13** But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, **14** and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

15 When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” **16** But he said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. **17** And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ **18** But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’ **19** And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.’ **20** And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ **21** So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ **22** And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ **23** And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. **24** For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’”

Our text for meditation this Second Sunday after Trinity is on our Gospel reading.

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Introduction

Ironically, our Lord Jesus has this conversation while at a banquet, a dinner hosted by a rich Pharisee.¹ Whether the particular rich man invited Him to this dinner out of curiosity, hostile investigation or true appreciation, we will never know in this life. He could have been like Nicodemus, a secret believer who wanted to learn at Christ's feet. He could have been like the Pharisees who hounded Jesus with trick questions and slanderous accusations. St. Luke does not give us a name to investigate or follow up, so the events and conversations are the main focus. One thing is for certain though, that the man who invited Christ to the banquet shall never forget it.

¹ Luke 14:1

Christ spent the entire evening causing a stir among these wealthy and pious Jews. The first thing He does is publicly heal a man, which they believed was prohibited on the Sabbath, and then He lectures them on why their belief is wrong.² Then He criticizes those who were sitting in honored seats, exhorting them to be more humble.³ Finally, when we arrive at today's reading, He looks the Pharisee who invited Him – right in the eye – and tells him he invited the wrong people. The man *should have* invited all the poor, the dejected, and the disabled, instead of all of his honorable associates, and from now on he should change the invitation list. Imagine the next day my friends, Jesus would be the only topic that anyone who went to that dinner would have talked about!

Jesus undoubtedly caused a big stir with His discussions. Some of the Pharisees would be enraged, saying that He was a bad house-guest: “He spent the whole night offending and criticizing us, after getting all this free food and drink! How ungrateful!” they might say. On the other hand there would be people who *loved* what Jesus did and said. After all, Jesus confronting these aristocratic know-it-all Pharisees with their greed, overbearing commandments and fake piety was one of the reasons large crowds were always following Him. *Someone* had to say what He said, and He was the only one brave enough to do it!

Whatever the social circumstances, the controversy was a result of Jesus being *right*. Everyone knew that healing on the Sabbath should be permitted. Everyone knows deep down that scrambling for the seats of honor is sinful and arrogant. And more importantly, everyone knew that caring for the poor – something the Pharisees were notoriously neglectful about – is a necessity for those with means.

Generosity and the Kingdom of God

One of the most telling moments in our Gospel reading is when a man says “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” Jesus had just finished telling the ruler who invited Him that his next banquets should be held for the poor, lame, and blind. But in response this man decides to comment on theology, on the blessedness of people who receive eternal life. While certainly he is correct to say that everyone who eats bread in the Kingdom will be blessed, we ought to ask, *why did he say it?* Here he was, sitting in his wealth and luxury, bringing up theology while Jesus is exhorting everyone to charity. It is as though he were to say, “God will feed them in Heaven, so I am not concerned.”

What a callous, heartless answer – and shame on the rich man for thinking he could get away with it! As if the poor should just idly wait for their meals and shelter until they receive them in Heaven, while he gets to go to fancy banquets. Thankfully, our Savior sees right through his fake piety and does not let him get away with it. He addresses the man *individually* with the Parable we read. It is directly aimed at him, and by extension all men like him.

The Parable begins with a banquet much like the one they were attending, only *bigger*. A “great banquet,” Christ calls it. Many are invited and they all accept the invitation, but every last one of them backs out of actually attending. Their excuses for renegeing? A field that can wait. Oxen that can wait. A wife that can go with to the banquet or wait at home. Every one of them excuses himself for something that does not have to happen, going back on their word over something trivial. The only conclusion we can reach about such men is that they are reaching for excuses because they didn't want to go in the first place.

The banquet in the Parable represents the Kingdom of God, and the men who excuse themselves represent those rich men and Pharisees. Oh they were invited to the Kingdom, they know that very well. After all, most rabbis at this time were Pharisees, and they comprised what we would call the “theologians” of their day. Add in the common understanding that the rich were blessed by God with their material wealth, and it is even clearer. These men have been *invited* to the Kingdom of God, they *know* about the Kingdom of God, and yet they refuse to *enter* the Kingdom because they prefer

2 Luke 14:1-6

3 Luke 14:7-11

their frivolous pursuits.

In the Parable, the men who back out of the invitation are not permitted to come back. Instead, the master of the house invites the poor, crippled, blind and lame. These are the very people that the Pharisee wanted to ignore. In this way, Christ indeed confirms that the people he is neglecting will be blessed in the Kingdom of Heaven just as he said, but they will enter the Kingdom *to replace him*. He will be shut out of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, forever rejected because he first rejected Christ and those for whom Christ cares.

God is the Defender of the widow and the orphan.⁴ These did not receive good things in their lives, having to deal with greater misery than others. It is no wonder that the Parable shows these getting the invitation first. After all, Christ says elsewhere that some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last.⁵ Whoever among the poor and disadvantaged receives the free offer of salvation in Christ will have infinitely more than enough to make up for their suffering here on this earth. If they lacked riches, God will make them wealthy. If they lacked strength or mobility or sight, our Lord will grant these to them in glorious fashion. If they should have been honored, they will be honored throughout eternity.

Now my friends, let us make something clear. Poor people are not automatically saved, and God does not shut the gates of Heaven for those who have wealth. For that matter, the poor are not the only ones who are rewarded in Heaven either. In fact, at the conclusion of the Parable the master of the house says to his servant, “Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.” This is to say, everyone is invited. After Christ went to the Cross and especially after Pentecost, all men are drawn by His witness, that they may be brought to the faith.⁶ This means that the only people who are damned are those who, like the guests who turned back on their invitations, decide that their personal pursuits are more important than what God wants for them.

If you enjoy great riches in this world, do not expect that you shall remain so at the Resurrection. Certainly there are men like Abraham who were very rich and are still rich in the next life, enjoying eternal honor and rewards from our Lord. If you want to be rewarded in the hereafter the same way, then be generous and charitable to those less fortunate than you. This is the message that Christ gives the Pharisee who invited Him to the dinner, and it rings true for everyone today. If you give, then God will give to you. He may choose to do this in this life, He may choose to do it in eternity, but either way He will make sure that your generosity to others is paid back to you with far more than you ever gave. For to show generosity and charity to the poor is to show them the character of our Lord, who generously and charitably offered salvation to us poor sinners in the first place.

Conclusion

At the end, one more caveat. Jesus tells that ruler of the Pharisees that he must invite the poor, blind and lame *instead* of his rich friends and family. This commandment applies to that man alone. If you want to have a banquet for just your friends and family, feel free to do so for it is not a sin in the slightest. But the larger commandment here, to be charitable, *is* a universal command that applies to us today. God has blessed whoever has wealth here in this world. If that is you, then good! But for your soul's sake, turn around and be a blessing to others as well. For the men reading this who do that, may God show you the fantastic rewards He has in store for you. For those who have not done so, my friend please consider joining those saints who will be honored for their charity upon the Last Day. You have nothing to fear my friend, for our Lord will not leave you destitute.

Now the Peace of our Lord, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

4 Psalm 68:5

5 Luke 13:30

6 John 12:32