

Our goal in studying the Bible is two-fold. One part of the goal as we read is to engage with our **mind**, to grow in our knowledge of who God is as he has revealed himself in his word. The other part of our goal is to engage with our **heart**, by responding to God as we read with our love, praise, gratitude, confession, needs, questions, and desires.

Engaging with our mind *and* heart as we seek the help of the Holy Spirit helps us grow in an intimate relationship with God through Jesus our Savior as we see him more clearly, know him better and love him more.

Day 1- Read Luke 14

- How is God revealed in this chapter? What is he like? Who is Jesus shown to be? What is he like?

Pray: Spend time in adoration and thanksgiving.

- What is human nature shown to be like in this chapter? Is this true of you in your life right now?

Pray: Spend time in confession and repentance.

- What does this passage of Scripture show that you need from God? How does your heart need to move to align with what you see in Scripture? Is there something you need to believe? Is there action you need to take?

Pray: Spend time asking God for what you need to live for him.

Meditation: Luke 14:11 *“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

Day 2- Luke 14:1-6

1. Once again, Jesus was invited to partake in a meal, on the Sabbath, at one of the Pharisee’s homes. Verse one tells us why the religious ruler invited Jesus. What was the reason?

Scholar's Note: "Dropsy, or edema, is a medical condition in which the body abnormally retains fluids, causing swelling. It is not a disease, but rather the symptom of a disease or condition related to the heart, lungs, kidneys, or liver. The rabbis viewed such a condition, however, as God's judgment for immorality, or as uncleanness due to the body's failure to eliminate (Lev. 15: 1- 3). Thus in their view this man was both immoral and ritually unclean."¹

2. Why do you suppose the Pharisees and lawyers would invite a man, who was an outcast by nature of his illness, to eat with them?

3. According to verses 1 and 2 the religious leaders hadn't said a word. How does verse 3 make it clear that Jesus knew exactly what they were up to?

4. Once again their trap backfired and they are trapped by their own hard hearts. How did Jesus call them out on their hypocrisy in verse 5?



Luke records that Jesus answered the Pharisees when they had not said a word. During this whole interaction Luke says they remained silent, they did not reply. But Jesus read their intentions, he heard their thoughts and he saw their hard hearts. Gulp!

How often do we congratulate ourselves for hiding our hypocrisy, for holding back that spiteful reply or selfish act, but neglect to go to Jesus with that inner ugly stuff. It is good to hold back those mean words and actions but so often we think that is good enough.

- ❖ Next time you hold back the retort you so wanted to give, keep going straight to Jesus for forgiveness and ask him to reveal and heal the root of your sin.

- ❖ Spend some time now thanking God that even though he is well acquainted with your sins, if you belong to him, he sees you covered with Jesus perfect righteousness!

Day 3- Luke 14:7-11

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses:

Isaiah 25:6-8 "6 In Jerusalem, the LORD of Heaven's Armies will spread a wonderful feast for all the people of the world.

It will be a delicious banquet with clear, well-aged wine and choice meat.

⁷ There he will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth.

⁸ He will swallow up death forever! The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears.

*He will remove forever all insults and mockery against his land and people.
The LORD has spoken!*

Revelation 19:6b-9 "Praise the LORD! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him.

For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself.

⁸ She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear."

For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God's holy people.

⁹ And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And he added, "These are true words that come from God."

-When is this feast that is talked about in Isaiah and Revelation taking place?

-Who is at this feast?

5. How would you describe the guests in Jesus' parable who were picking out places of honor to sit?

Picture and Ponder: "Their sin was intensely spiritual. Human honor gave them a sense of substance and reality. Human recognition told them they were superior to their fellows. And if that was true, they were also of greater value before God. The same illusion is rampant today. Salvation by recognition. Eternal life through temporal significance. Immortality through notoriety. ²

6. Jesus wasn't just giving people tips on how to not make a fool of yourself at a party or a tactic on how to get the best seat using reverse psychology. He was talking to people who thought so highly of themselves that they were sure they would be right next to God at the final heavenly feast. He was giving them a chance to see their deathly, spiritual pride and repent. What was the remedy in verse 11?



Once again in Luke we see the upside down kingdom of Jesus. Now we add from chapter 13, *the first will be last and the last will be first. And from our study this week, everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*

This principle is not a strategy on how to be honored. When we seek honor, significance and recognition through humility we reveal our hypocrisy. Mike McKinley points out, "The ultimate antidote to that kind of glory-hunger is finding your meaning and your honor in being the recipient of Jesus' sacrificial love. When your heart is captivated by the way that God has made much of you by sending his Son to save you, you will begin to be freed from living for the recognition of others."³

True humility comes from being in the presence of Jesus, seeing him as he truly is and consequently seeing ourselves as we truly are.

- ❖ Where do you look for worth and significance?
- ❖ In what ways do you seek honor and recognition from others?
- ❖ Let the words of this song sink into your heart:

*My worth is not in skill or name
In win or lose, in pride or shame
But in the blood of Christ that flowed at the cross⁴*

Picture and Ponder: "Standing before the cross we see simultaneously our worth and unworthiness, since we perceive both the greatness of his love in dying, and the greatness of our sin in causing him to die." ⁵

Day 4- Luke 14:12-24

7. Now Jesus turns from the guests who are jockeying for the best seat, to the host who would only invite people who could do something for him in return. What kind of outlook does Jesus want his followers to demonstrate in verse 13-14?



Jesus was not saying that his followers are never to invite friends and family to dinner. He was showing us the way his kingdom operates, which was to reach out to the outcast and forgotten. The way we live our life reveals whether or not our faith is genuine. Jesus' true followers do not live only for themselves.

- ❖ Do you include people in your social circle who cannot do anything for you, people who are not in the "in" crowd or who do not feed any of your needs?
- ❖ In what ways can social circles become idols?
- ❖ Give some thought to a way you can reach out to someone who is lonely, forgotten, new or on the outskirts, then do it!

Scholar's Note: "Using the symbol of a feast for Heaven is of immense spiritual significance because it suggests eternal satisfaction...The *great banquet* is a lavish, sumptuous image of the kingdom of Heaven that will be exceeded by its reality—joyous satisfaction! And of course the ultimate convener and host will be Christ himself."⁶

8. In verses 18-20 what is shocking about the response of the guests to the invitation to attend a **great** banquet?

-What adjectives would you use to describe these people?

9. How would you categorize the excuses they make in verses 18-20?

-What do their excuses show they really preferred over attending the grand banquet?

10. What unexpected thing does the man giving the lavish feast do in verses 21-23?

11. What happened to those who rejected the invitation in verse 24?

Day 5- Luke 14:25-35

Scholar's Note: "Hate in this context is a Semitic way of expressing preference."⁷

12. If the love we feel for our family actually looks like hate compared to how much we should love Jesus, describe what that kind of love for Jesus would look like practically.

-What does this say about Jesus, that he deserves this kind of love?

13. Verse 27 is the second time in his ministry that Jesus talks about carrying your cross. This would have been an utterly shocking statement. To the people of that day the cross meant torture, extreme suffering, humiliation and death. What level of commitment is Jesus saying you must have to be his disciple?

For Discussion: What risks do you take if you set out to do something but are not prepared for how hard it will be?

14. Jesus tells his would-be followers—the crowds that were following him— to count the cost before they dedicate their lives to him. How does he summarize the cost of following him in verse 33?

-According to this verse, what is there in the life of a true follower that Jesus does not have a claim on?



Spend some time in prayer asking God to cause your heart to love him above all else. Search your heart for anything that you have refused to renounce or that you have made off-limits to God. Plead with him to give you ears that hear what Jesus is saying and a heart that is soft toward his words.

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God impressed on you, convicted you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). *Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series)* (Kindle Locations 19491-19494). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

² Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word series*, p.543 (Crossway, Wheaton Ill. 2015)

³ McKinley, Mike (2017-05-01). *Luke 12-24 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You Book 14)* (p. 48). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁴ — WORDS AND MUSIC BY KEITH GETTY, KRISTYN GETTY AND GRAHAM KENDRICK ©2014 GETTY MUSIC PUBLISHING (BMI) / MAKEWAY MUSIC (ADMIN BY MUSICSERVIES.ORG)

⁵ Stott, John. *The Cross of Christ* (2006) P.285 InterVarsity Press

⁶ Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word series*, p.550 (Crossway, Wheaton Ill. 2015)

⁷ MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). *Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series)* (Kindle Location 19890). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

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