

The Second Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 14:16-24
June 26th, 2022
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Still There Is Room

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty and Everlasting God, the Source of all life and joy, Who by the glad sound of the Gospel, hast called us to have part in Thy Kingdom and glory: shine into our hearts, we beseech Thee, by Thy Word and Spirit, and draw us with the cords of Thy constraining grace, that we may heartily choose that good part which shall not be taken away from us, and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

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

Our Lord + Jesus was invited to a supper on the Sabbath by one of the rulers of the Pharisees. He is immediately met with a man who has dropsy. They all watched Him to see if you would heal on the Sabbath. He then observed how they all fought over the best seats, and after a parable telling them that it was better to take the lowest seat and be raised, than the other way around, He said to the Pharisee who invited Him that it was more honorable to invite those who could not reward you for the invitation. Instead of your friends, relatives, and rich neighbors, invite the poor, the maim, the lame, and the blind. Then one of them replied, "Blessed is he who shall he bread in the Kingdom of God!" Today's parable by our Lord is the response to these things, most of which we will hear on the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday.

In the parable that our Lord + Jesus tells to those who have gathered with Him to eat bread, our Lord tells of a "certain man" who gave a "great supper" and "invited many." The invitations were similar to the invitations the ruler of the Pharisees had sent. The certain man had invited his friends and neighbors, those who he thought would surely attend; all those in the city surrounding the place of the great supper. But they all made excuses, one after another. One could not come because he had bought a piece of ground. Another could not come because he had to test out his new five yoke of oxen. Still another could not come because he had just been married.

This parable addresses two things that our Lord + Jesus observed among the Pharisees; two things that draw people away from the Lord God. Our Lord observed that they were concerned more with earthly things, rather than heavenly things. They disdained those who were "less than" the poor, the maim, the lame, and the blind. This is seen in their treatment of the man with dropsy. They were not concerned about his physical condition, rather they were only concerned whether the Lord + Jesus would break the Sabbath by healing him. They were indignant when He did. They also were more concerned about their place in society—their proper place at the table. They wanted the best seats and the best friends.

Moreover, because they desired these earthly things, they had no place in their hearts for the

things of the Lord God; they had no place for spiritual things. They had no place for love, as St. John talks about in the Epistle reading from his first Epistle. These men that our Lord + Jesus ate bread with loved the world. They loved the things of the world. Indeed, our Lord points out this folly in the parable. Three examples are given of people concerned with earthly things. The first man exchanged the Kingdom of God for his lands. The second for his work. And the third for his family. The Pharisees who our Lord ate with exchanged the Kingdom of God for the worship of themselves—their social status among their friends.

All of these, both the individuals in the parable and the Pharisees hearing the parable, had one thing in common, they loved the world more than they loved the Lord God. The world loves those who love it. The world praises those who bow to its lies and deceptions. The world wants all men to love it, and forsake all others. If one challenges the world, or speaks against its beliefs and practices, that person is ostracized. The world only loves those who love it. It cannot stand those who would not love it.

But we are not called to love the world. One who does not love the world can see plainly the corruptions and evils that are prevalent in this evil and corrupt world. It is shocking to think that anyone would want to love and imitate the world; that anyone would want to be a part of the world. A person needs only open his eyes and see the events happening in our world today to see how corrupt the world truly is. But sadly, even when we know how evil and corrupt this world is; how little this world can actually provide us, we are still drawn away by its siren songs. We let our earthly possessions, our jobs, and our families draw us away from the great supper of the certain man. The certain man is the Lord God, and the great supper is the Church.

We are prone to making excuses to not come to the great supper; to not be in this house of the Lord God to receive His banquet feast of Word and Sacrament. When we make excuses like the people in the parable, we show how much we love the world, and how much we spurn the Lord God. The certain man in the parable was insulted by the excuses that the servant brought back. And notice that the word “servant” is singular. The servant in the parable is the Lord + Jesus. He was sent by the heavenly Father into this world to call all men to Himself. He was first sent to the Jews—to His own people—and they refused Him. They hated that he cared for the “wrong people.” The Lord + Jesus cared for the poor, the maim, the lame, and the blind. He cared for a man with dropsy, so that He healed him on a Sabbath. A task none of the Pharisees would have thought odd if it was their ox or donkey fallen into a pit.

The men who sat with our Lord at table and ate bread with Him, also rejected Him as their Messiah, for He called them to forsake themselves. Their worship of themselves was too great to overcome. They lacked the inability to love. Some would say they loved themselves too much. But love is sacrificing one’s own will and desires for someone else. By very definition, there can be no such thing as loving one’s self; as self-love. Love is never directed inside; it is always directed outside. A person that seeks to love only himself is a murderer as St. John says in the Epistle reading. For to love one’s self neglects your neighbor and brother. It is no different than the Pharisees who sought the best seats at the feast table.

The objection us poor sinners raise, of course, is “what about me?” Who is going to take care of us and our problems if our love is always directed toward someone else? Our Lord + Jesus gives us the answer. We will be paid at the resurrection of the just.

The certain man from the parable sets the example. After those friends, relatives and rich neighbors refused to come—after the Jewish religious leaders refused the invitation of the Servant, our Lord + Jesus—He sent out His Servant, His Son + Jesus, to gather in all those who could not pay Him back for the invitation; they could not return the favor because they had nothing to give. He invited the

poor, the maim, the lame, and the blind to the great supper. He loved those who could not express that love with any merits of their own. He gave of Himself, He gave His Only-Begotten and Beloved Son, to atone for the sins of the whole world. The Servant gave His very own life, even though He was innocent of sin, for the atonement of the whole world. By the invitation of the Servant, all of us poor, miserable sinners have been invited to the great supper. We have been invited into the Church through the preaching of the Gospel, and the Administration of the Sacraments by the Holy Ghost to receive faith and rejoice that we get to be in this house and share in a great supper that gives to us forgiveness of all of our sins.

The Servant, our + Lord Jesus, was sent to invite the Jews, the religious leaders and others, but they refused Him as the Messiah. He then invited all the rest of the Jews, the poor sinners, who had no love of the world in them, who hated their lives in this world, and found that the Lord + Jesus loves them so much that He offered His life as a ransom for theirs. When the Servant returned to the Certain Man, He declared that even though everyone had been invited, there was still room in the banquet hall. He was then sent to invite everyone in the highways and hedges. He was sent to invite into the great supper all the Gentiles.

We all have been invited to the great supper of the Church. We have been called out of the world to come into the heavenly realms. Our Lord + Jesus has prepared a great supper for us in which He increases in us faith and love toward Him and one another. In this meal He forgives all our sins, and grants us eternal life and salvation. He does this even knowing that we will continue to make excuses to not be here as often as this meal is offered. The pull of the world is too great for us at times.

My dear friends, let us turn away from such excuses, let us turn away from the evil and corruption—the lies—of the world, and come to the great supper. For all things are now ready, we can come and receive forgiveness of all our sins through the means of grace. We can be strengthened in our love toward the Lord God and one another. We can learn to love others more than ourselves. For even though the whole world has been invited to the great supper, there is still even more room. The gates and walls of Heaven are still able to hold more saints. This is why we continue to invite all those who would join us in this great feast—all those who would join us in the Church—to come to the great supper, for there is still room to invite the poor, the maim, the lame, and the blind, all those in the highways and hedges, to join us in eating bread in the Kingdom of God. May the Lord God grant us grace to continue this task until Heaven is filled, and He calls us all out of this vale of tears to Himself in Heaven. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!