

## Finding a place for all

 **Luke 14.1,7-14**

At a meal in the house of a Jewish leader, Jesus challenges the guests about the importance of humility, of thinking of others more than ourselves. He also teaches that our hospitality should not be just for those like us, and who can show hospitality back. But to invite the poor and needy.

Now read **14.1,7-14** see p.2 for text.

### A note on the passage

In Jesus' time hierarchy was very important, and places of honour were reserved for special guests. We may not have seats of importance, but how does our society decide who is most important? Who do we spend the most time listening to? Who do you value in society?

## Mirror Verses

Daily we spend time looking in a mirror. Do we feel pressure to look a particular way, and does this create any anxiety? Find Bible verses to remind you that God loves us, or about God valuing humility, gentleness. Zephaniah 3.17 tells us about God rejoicing over us with singing! Each morning write a verse on your mirror (gel pen or a pen that will wipe off), and when you see it, pray it aloud and give thanks. When wiping it off next morning, can you remember the verse?



How do you make a place for everyone in your life, including those on the fringes who go unnoticed?



How might your neighbourhood feel to someone who had arrived from a different culture than those represented in your community? Perhaps there are refugees from Ukraine, Syria or elsewhere who are starting to settle in with local households. What might their needs be? Could you make suggestions about how your church, school, workplace or community centre might offer a warm welcome?

Prayer   
WALK 

Walk around your neighbourhood with family or church, and stop at intervals to pray for people living there who feel they are not included in some way. As you look at buildings and people, try to think why people might feel that they don't fit in. Jesus always cared for the poor, the blind and unwell. He wants us to be kind and help people who are struggling. Do you notice any needs in your area that you might get involved in helping?

## WAY FORWARD

Find an old map or print one and cut it into the number of pieces to share with your household. Hold your piece and think about your goals and plans for the next year or so. Pray quietly to God about these plans and the directions you hope to go in. Then lay all your pieces together on the floor to make the full map. Think about how our plans fit alongside other's plans and should not damage theirs. Ask God to bless each of you, that all may find the right direction.

YOUNG AT  
HEART   
TEA PARTY



Can you plan to put on an afternoon tea party for the elderly in your neighbourhood, who perhaps are lonely and not often invited out? You could theme it for the 1950s music hits such as rock and roll, or big band music – play songs from that era. Can you invite elderly people that live near you, and perhaps place an invite in the local shop?

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

**O**nce, when Jesus was going to have dinner on the sabbath at the house of a Pharisee, the Pharisees were watching him closely to see what he was going to do next. At the dinner table, Jesus noticed how the guests chose the most important places to sit, so he told them this parable.

‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding celebration, do not sit down in the most important seats, because someone more important than you might have been invited. If you do, your host may come and say to you, “Give this person your place,” and then you would have the embarrassment of having to move down to a lower seat.’

Jesus continued, ‘No. When you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place at the table, so that when your host comes, they may say to you, “Friend, move up higher.” Then, Jesus said, ‘You will be honoured in front of everyone sitting at the table with you. For anyone who thinks they are more important than they are, will be



humbled, and brought down to size, and anyone who is humble and doesn't show off about their importance will be honoured.’

Jesus said to his host, ‘When you have a party, don't invite your friends or your brothers, your relatives or rich neighbours. They can invite you back in return and repay you. Instead, invite the poor and the disabled and those who could not possibly invite you back. Then you will be blessed, because you will be repaid by God in heaven.’

Luke 14.1,7-14

## Did you know?

- The sabbath is a weekly day of rest for Jewish people from Friday night to Saturday night.
- Pharisees kept the Jewish law very strictly. Many felt that Jesus didn't keep the laws properly.
- Jesus tells us that everyone should be invited and included.

## Luke 14.1,7-14 (NRSV)

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honour, he told them a parable. ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honour, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, “Give this person your place”, and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your

host comes, he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher”; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.’

He said also to the one who had invited him, ‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’