

# Luke 14 Commentary

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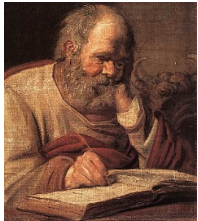
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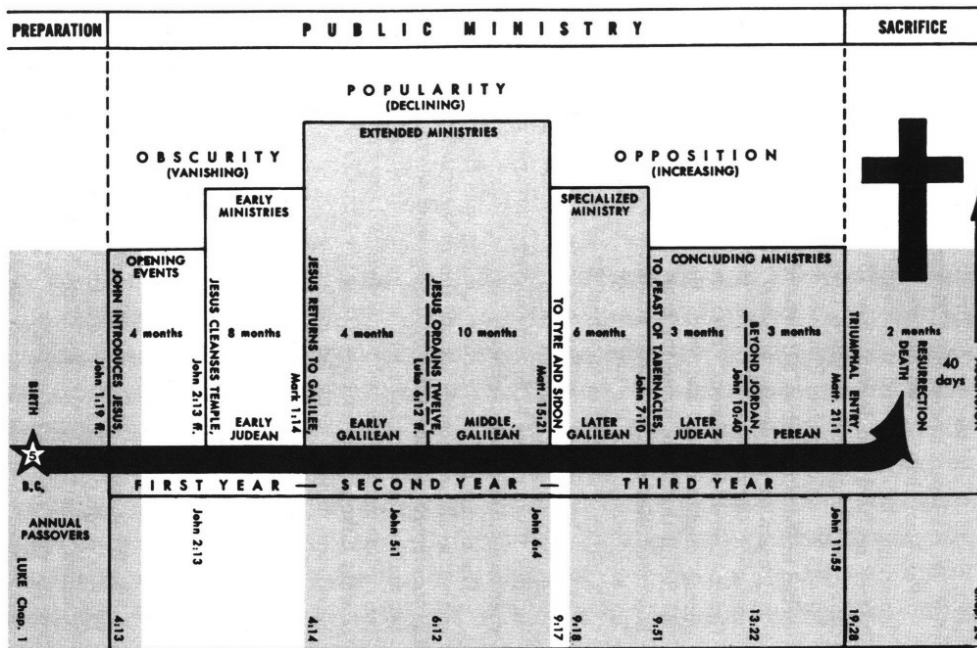


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| 1<br>ELIZABETH--MARY | MAINLY PECULIAR TO LUKE |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                   | ABOUT 60% PECULIAR TO LUKE                      |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |               |                             |  |  |                      |                   |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |
|                      | PREPARATION             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                   | INSTRUCTION                                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |               | SACRIFICE                   |  |  |                      |                   |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |
|                      | GALILEE                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                   | LATER JUDEAN AND PEREAN MINISTRIES TO JERUSALEM |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |               | AT JERUSALEM                |  |  |                      |                   |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |
|                      | MIRACLES AROUND HERE    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                   | PARABLES AROUND HERE                            |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |               | THE GREAT & GRAND SACRIFICE |  |  |                      | THE GRAND MIRACLE |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |
| "MIGHTY IN DEED" →   |                         |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | AND WORD" (24:19) |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | LAST MESSAGES |                             |  |  | MISSION ACCOMPLISHED |                   |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |
| 30 YEARS             |                         |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 1/2 YEARS       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 6 MONTHS      |                             |  |  |                      |                   |  |  |  |  | 8 DAYS |  |  |  | 50 DAYS |  |  |  |

KEY PHRASE: "SON OF MAN"

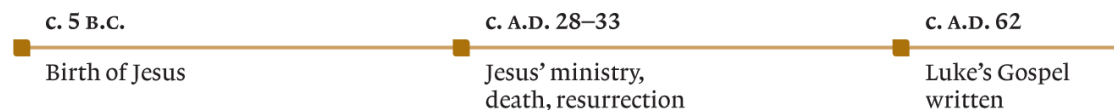
KEY VERSES: 19:10; 24:19

From [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) by permission  
[John MacArthur's Introduction to the Gospel of Luke](#)  
[Charles Swindoll's Introduction to Luke](#)  
[Luke Overview Chart](#) by Charles Swindoll



Click chart to enlarge LIFE OF CHRIST IN GOSPEL OF LUKE (See Shaded Areas)  
 Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

Ryrie Study Bible -Borrow



Source: [ESV Global Study Bible](#)

### John MacArthur's Outline

- Luke 14:1-6 [The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#)
- Luke 14:7-14 [Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#)
- Luke 14:15-24 [An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#)
- Luke 14:25-35 [The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship](#), Part 1

## J Ligon Duncan's Outline

Luke 14:1-6 Jesus Cared about the Lord's Day. A lot.

Luke 14:7-15 Why was I a Guest?

Luke 14:12-24 The Great Banquet

Luke 14:25-35 What Will Jesus Cost You?

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## Gene Brooks' Outline

Luke 14:1-24 - [The Great Banquet](#)

Luke 14:25-35 - [The Cost of Being a Disciple](#)

**Luke 14:1 It happened that when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath to eat bread, they were watching Him closely.**

KJV Luke 14:1 And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

- **It happened that when He went into the house**Lk 7:34-36; 11:37; 1 Cor 9:19-22
- **of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath**Jn 3:1; Acts 5:34
- **they were watching Him closely.** Lk 6:7; 11:53,54; 20:20; Ps 37:32; 41:6; 62:4; 64:5,6; Pr 23:7; Isa 29:20; Isa 29:21; Jer 20:10,11; Mark 3:2
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Way Our Lord Kept the Sabbath](#) - R A Torrey

## Related Passages:

Luke 7:36+ Now one of the **Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him**, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.

Luke 11:37+ Now when He had spoken, **a Pharisee asked Him to have lunch with him**, and He went in, and reclined at the table.

Luke 6:7+ The scribes and the Pharisees **were watching Him closely to see if He healed on the Sabbath so that they might find reason to accuse Him.**

Luke 20:20+ **So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor.**

Mark 3:2+ **They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.**

## A SABBATH DAY SETUP

**It happened that when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees**([pharisaiois](#)) **on the Sabbath** ([sabbaton](#) - our Saturday) **to eat bread** - Nothing just happens by chance, especially in the life of the Messiah! Of course it did not "just happen" for God had foreordained the steps of His Son's journey to the Cross even before heaven and earth were created. We must never forget that while [perfidious](#) men are plotting pernicious plans, God is supremely sovereign and totally in control, allowing His glorious drama of redemption to play out as He foreordained before the foundation of the world (cf Eph 1:4, Mt 25:34). Jesus had ventured into the "lion's den" before in Luke 7:36-50+; Lk 11:37-54+. He knew full well what was in store for Him, and His goal was to expose the Pharisees' hypocrisy and pride and their deceptive man centered religion. The table is spread and the trap is set! But as the story unfolds the trap snaps shut on the trappers! **One of the leaders of the Pharisees**([pharisaiois](#)) is literally a "ruler of the

Pharisees," most likely a [synagogue](#) official. He may have been a member of the [Sanhedrin](#) (but we can only speculate), the highest Jewish council in the first century that had 71 members presided over by the high priest with members from both of the main Jewish parties among its membership. **Eat bread** was an idiomatic way of saying they would eat a meal and since it was Sabbath and they could do no cooking, this bread would have been baked the prior day. This meal was most likely the Sabbath meal which took place after the morning meeting in the synagogue, much like we today go out for lunch after church on Sunday morning.

**Ironside** - Jesus accepted the invitation, and as usual He was soon the real Host rather than just a special guest. Wherever He went men had to recognize His superiority, although He was ever meek and lowly in heart. There was something so compelling about His words and His bearing that even His enemies had to acknowledge the authority with which He taught. (Commentary)

**Barclay** adds that "All food had to be cooked on the Friday; and, if it was necessary to keep it hot, it must be kept hot in such a way that it was not cooked any more! So it is laid down that food to be kept warm for the Sabbath must not be put into 'oil dregs, manure, salt, chalk or sand, whether moist or dry, nor into straw, grape-skins, flock or vegetables, if these are damp, though it may be if they are dry. It may be, however, put into clothes, amid fruits, pigeons' feathers and flax tow.' (Ed: See [writing from Sabbot 4:1-2 below](#)) It was the observance of regulations like this that the Pharisees and scribes regarded as religion. No wonder they could not understand Jesus! ([Daily Study Bible](#))

**Cleon Rogers** - Normally there were two main meals in the day, but on the Sabbath there were three. The Sabbath meal, which was prepared the day before and kept warm (M, Shab. 3:1-6; 4:1-2), was around noon (Jos., Life, 279), after the synagogue service, and it was common to invite guests to the Sabbath meal

**On the Sabbath** ([sabbaton](#)) - Luke records five of Jesus' [seven miracles](#) on the Sabbath and Luke depicts His Sabbath healings more than any other Gospel. While Jesus knew He was inciting confrontation, what better day than the Sabbath to show divine compassion. Sadly every Sabbath miracle only made the religious leaders more convinced that they must do whatever it took to get rid of this Man! Spiritual blindness is an amazing thing -- miracles right in front of their eyes and yet the eyes of their heart were absolutely blind! We all know some folks like that and it makes us very sad, because many are our close relatives or friends. Of course the religious legalists considered Jesus to be a law-breaker because He was doing miraculous work on the Sabbath. Legalism blinds one to grace. It even has that effect in believers, so make sure you cast off any and all legalistic tends that otherwise will blunt grace and grieve the Spirit.

This was the last Sabbath in the Lord's ministry (of which we have record) before His arrival at His destination of Jerusalem. Jesus was fully aware of how the religious leaders had added many burdensome rules not commanded by God and in a sense made an idol out of the Sabbath. What should have been a day of rest was a day of burden, which is exactly what legalism will do to one's soul. Legalism traps, while grace sets free.

**They were watching Him closely** ([paratereo](#)) - The [present tense](#) indicates they watched him continually "like a hawk" would watch its prey. He was continually being "monitored" by their evil eyes! The [middle voice](#) (reflexive) emphasizes that they themselves did this insidiously, with evil intent to catch Him! Jesus was under [scrutiny](#)." As we would say today "They were out to get Him!" The use of paratereo in Mark 3:2 explains the motive of these legalistic leaders "They **were watching** Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him." Of course Jesus was fully aware of their wicked intentions. Remember that Jesus had "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, (Lk 9:51KJV) and Sabbath confrontations were part of His journey. **John Trapp** adds that "They watched as intently as a dog doth for a bone!"

**Warren Wiersbe** - Jesus was fully aware of what was in men's hearts (John 2:24-25), so He was never caught off guard. In fact, instead of hosts or guests judging Jesus, it was Jesus who passed judgment on them when they least expected it. Indeed, in this respect, He was a dangerous person to sit with at a meal or to follow on the road! (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**David Guzik** makes a point of application, writing that we, like Jesus, are "letters" that others are watching ("reading") to see how we will live for "In 2 Corinthians 3:2-3+, Paul explained that we are letters from Jesus, that all men read; and that the letters are not written with ink, but with the Holy Spirit, and not on paper, but on our own hearts. *We* are the only kind of Bible many will ever read." ([Commentary](#))

**Norman Crawford** on **watching closely** - Under the closest scrutiny by clever men who sought opportunities to accuse Him, the Lord Jesus proved to be blameless. Luke records three times when they so watched Him (Lk 6:7; 14:1; 20:20). Mark also tells us that they watched Him to see if He would heal the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day (Mk 3:2), and uses the same word for "watch" (paratēreō) as an active verb. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**J C Ryle** applies the fact that the enemies of Jesus were **watching closely** - The circumstance here recorded, is only a type of what our Lord was constantly subjected to, all through His earthly ministry. The eyes of His enemies were continually observing Him. They watched for His halting, and waited eagerly for some word or deed on which they could lay hold and build an accusation. Yet they found none. Our blessed Lord was ever holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from evil (cf Heb 7:26+). Perfect indeed must that

life have been, in which the bitterest enemy could find no flaw, or blemish, or spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing! He that desires to serve Christ must make up his mind to be **"watched"** and observed, no less than His Master. He must never forget that the eyes of the world are upon him, and that the wicked are looking narrowly at all his ways. Specially ought he to remember this when he goes into the society of the unconverted. If he makes a slip there, in word or deed, and acts inconsistently, he may rest assured it will not be forgotten. Let us endeavor to live daily as in the sight of a holy God (cf Pr 15:3, John the Baptist in Lk 1:15-note). So living, it will matter little how much we are **"watched"** by an ill-natured and malicious world. Let us exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man, and to do nothing which can give occasion to the Lord's enemies to blaspheme. The thing is possible. By the grace of God it can be done. The haters of Daniel were obliged to confess, "we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." (Dan. 6:5+; See also notes on [Daniel a Man of Integrity](#); See also Study on Integrity) (**Ed:** I might add one point to Ryle's application of "watching" - The true test of our integrity comes when no one [humanly speaking] is *watching us*.)

**J C Ryle** - Let us mark in this passage, how our Lord Jesus Christ accepted the hospitality of those who were not His disciples....If we want to know how our Lord carried Himself at a Pharisee's table, we have only to read attentively the first twenty-four verses of this chapter. We shall find Him the same there that He was elsewhere, always about His Father's business. We shall see Him first defending the true observance of the Sabbath-day,—then expounding to those who were bidden together with Him the nature of true humility,—then urging on His host the character of true hospitality,—and finally delivering that most apposite and striking parable, the parable of the great supper. And all this is done in the most wise, and calm, and dignified manner. The words are all words in season. The speech is "always with grace, seasoned with salt. (Coloss. 4:6.) The perfection of our Lord's conduct appears on this, as on all other occasions. He always said the right thing, at the right time, and in the right way. He never forgot, for a moment, who He was and where He was. The example of Christ in this passage deserves the close attention of all Christians, and specially of ministers of the Gospel. It throws strong light on some most difficult points,—our intercourse with unconverted people,—the extent to which we should carry it,—the manner in which we should behave when we are with them. Our Lord has left us a pattern for our conduct in this chapter. It will be our wisdom to endeavor to walk in His steps. We ought not to withdraw entirely from all intercourse with unconverted people. It would be cowardice and indolence to do so, even if it were possible. It would shut us out from many opportunities of doing good. But we ought to go into their society moderately, watchfully, and prayerfully, and with a firm resolution to carry our Master and our Master's business with us. The house from which Christ is deliberately excluded is not the house at which Christians ought to receive hospitalities, and keep up intimacy.—The extent to which we should carry our intercourse with the unconverted, is a point which each believer must settle for himself. Some can go much further than others in this direction, with advantage to their company, and without injury to themselves. "Every man hath his proper gift." (1 Cor. 7:7.) There are two questions which we should often put to ourselves, in reference to this subject. "Do I, in company, spend all my time in light and worldly conversation? Or do I endeavor to follow, however feebly, the example of Christ?" The society in which we cannot answer these questions satisfactorily, is society from which we had better withdraw.—So long as we go into company as Christ went to the Pharisee's house, we shall take no harm.

Jesus' opponents were aware of the previous Sabbath healings

Luke 6:6-11+ On another Sabbath He entered the synagogue and was teaching; and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. 7 The scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him closely to see if He healed on the Sabbath, so that they might find reason to accuse Him. 8 But He knew what they were thinking, and He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And he got up and came forward. 9 And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to destroy it?" 10 After looking around at them all, He said to him, "Stretch out your hand!" And he did so; and his hand was restored. 11 But they themselves were filled with rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

Luke 13:10-17+ And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all. 12 When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness." 13 And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again and began glorifying God. 14 But the synagogue official, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, began saying to the crowd in response, "There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day." 15 But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to water him? 16 "And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?" 17 As He said this, all His opponents were being humiliated; and the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by Him.

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**Lowell Johnson** - Luke 14 has been dubbed, "Table Talks of our Lord" because our Lord teaches some great lessons around a table.

1. In Luke 14:1-6 the Table Talk deals with Hypocrisy.
2. The second Table Talk Concerns Humility in Luke 14:7-11.
3. The next Table Talk is in Luke 14:12-14 and deals with Hospitality.
4. This last Table Talk is found in Luke 14:15-24 and the lesson is on Hesitancy

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**Pharisees** (5330)(**pharisaios**) is transliterated from the Hebrew **parash** (06567 - to separate) from Aramaic word **peras** (06537) ("Peres" in Da 5:28+), signifying to separate, owing to a different manner of life from that of the general public. **Pharisees** were a strict, legalistic, religious party that arose after Jewish exiles returned from Babylon. They called for a separation from paganism and a return to a strict adherence to the Old Testament law. The Pharisees had no interest in politics (unlike the **Sadducees** and the **Zealots**), nor were they mystics (unlike the **Essenes**). In contrast to the Sadducees, who were mostly wealthy priests or Levites, the Pharisees were laymen, and generally came from the middle class. They were very popular and highly respected among the masses during the time of Christ. Jewish historian Josephus records that there were about 6,000 at the time of Herod the Great. Because of their popularity, the **Sadducees** usually had to submit to their decisions or else evoke the wrath of the people (Josephus Antiquities 18.1.4).

**MacArthur** adds that "While pretending to be devout, the Pharisees were actually hypocrites who failed to live up to even their own strict teaching regarding the law (Matt. 23:3). They abandoned the true religion of the heart for an external one, which they hoped would elicit the admiration and respect of the people, as well as God's approval (Matt. 6:1-5; 9:14; 12:2; 23:5-7, 23; Luke 11:38-39). The Pharisees' superficial, external righteousness, however, fell far short of what heaven demands (Matt. 5:20; 23:28; Luke 11:39-40). So despite their zeal for the law, they amounted only to "blind guides of the blind" (Matt. 15:14), who made their proselytes doubly worthy of the hell to which they themselves were headed. Closely associated with the Pharisees were their **scribes** (Lk 5:21, 30; 6:7; 11:53; 15:2; Matt. 5:20; 12:38; 15:1; 23:2, 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29; Mark 7:1, 5; John 8:3; Mark 2:16 refers to "the **scribes** of the Pharisees," and Acts 23:9 to "the **scribes** of the Pharisaic party"), the professional scholars who specialized in the interpretation and application of the Old Testament law. The **scribes** provided the theological foundation for the Pharisees' teaching. (See [Luke Commentary](#)) (See MacArthur's sermon for an excellent analysis of Pharisees - [The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#))

**Watching closely** (3906)(**parateroo** from **para** = beside + **tereo** = to watch) describes a direct perception of something through close observation. To stand by the side and watch. The Pharisees were on the lookout, here with the sense of lurking and spying, watching for an opportunity with malicious intent. The enemies of Paul watched the gates at Damascus so they could murder him (ultimately what these men wanted to do to Jesus.) There is a somewhat ironic use in Gal 4:10 describe legalists as those who "**observe** days and months and seasons and years." Barclay adds that "the word used for *watching* is the word used for 'interested and sinister espionage'.

**Parateroo - 6v - observe(1), watched(1), watching(2), watching...closely(2).** Mk. 3:2; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 14:1; Lk. 20:20; Acts 9:24; Gal. 4:10

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### **Croft Pentz - BEING HELPFUL Luke 14:1–15**

Man needs help! Without Christ man is not only helpless, but hopeless. God needs those who will help do His work. Before anyone can help with His work, they must be fitted for this service. Man must rely on Christ. His helpers must be humble, knowing that without the help of the Lord, they can do nothing. God works only through such people.

#### I. THE HEALING—vv. 1–6

1. Sceptics—vv. 1–2. The Jewish leaders and followers watch to see if Christ will heal the man with dropsy on the sabbath. They were always critical of Christ.
2. Silence—vv. 3–4. When the Jewish leaders do not respond to Christ's questions, He takes the sick man by the hand and leads him away.
3. Sabbath—v. 5. If an ox falls into the ditch on the sabbath, do you leave it there? Of course not! Then, why is it wrong to do good by healing the sick on the sabbath?
4. Speechless—v. 6. They cannot answer the Lord. Really, they had no just answer. By taking the ox out of the ditch on the sabbath, they were breaking their own man-made law. Why should they oppose Christ when He healed on the sabbath?

#### II. THE HUMILITY—vv. 7–11

1. Selfishness—vv. 7–8. Don't seek the best seats when asked to a party. Someone more important than you may be present and require your seat. Always think of others as better than yourself.

2. Shame—v. 9. An important person may come, and the host will give your seat to him. This would mean shame and embarrassment to you before the people.

3. Sincere—v. 10. Be yourself. Never seek to be above or better than others. Be humble and meek.

4. Spiritual—v. 11. Note the spiritual law here. If you exalt yourself, you will be humbled. If you humble yourself, you will be exalted.

### III. THE HELPFULNESS—vv. 12–15

1. Plan—v. 12. When you have a dinner, don't invite your relatives and friends since they will invite you to their home for a meal later.

2. People—v. 13. Invite the poor, crippled, blind, and lame. Do it to help the people, expecting nothing in return.

3. Pleasure—vv. 14–15. Pleasure will be one result, but also at the judgment the Lord will reward you for your kindness.

We should never help people with the object that some day we may need help and they will owe us a favor. We should help people expecting nothing in return—not even a word of thanks. The good feeling that results from helping people should be ample pay and reward. However, God, who keeps good records, will reward us. ([Expository Outlines from Luke](#))

### JESUS' SEVEN SABBATH MIRACLES

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Jesus sends a demon out of a man  | Lk 4:31-37+<br>Mk 1:21-28               |
| 2 | Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law   | Lk 4:38-39+<br>Mt 8:14-15<br>Mk 1:29-31 |
| 3 | Jesus heals a lame man by the pool of Bethesda  | Jn 5:1-18                               |
| 4 | Jesus heals a man with a "withered" hand<br>(cf Lk 6:1-5+ - allowing disciples to pluck grain on Sabbath) | Lk 6:6-11+<br>Mt 12:9-14<br>Mk 3:1-6    |
| 5 | Jesus restores a crippled woman   | Lk 13:10-17+                            |
| 6 | Jesus heals a man with dropsy (edema)   | Lk 14:1-6+                              |
| 7 | Jesus heals a man born blind  | Jn 9:1-16                               |

### Sabbot 4:1-2

A With what do they cover [up food to keep it hot], and with what do they not cover up [food to keep it hot]?

B They do not cover with (1) peat, (2) compost, (3) salt, (4) lime, or (5) sand,

C whether wet or dry.

D or with (6) straw, (7) grape skins, (8) flocking [rags], or (9) grass,

E when wet.

F But they do cover up [food to keep it hot] with them when they are dry.

G They cover up [food to keep it hot] with (1) cloth, (2) produce, (3) the wings of a dove, (4) carpenters' sawdust,

H and (5) soft hackled flax.

I R. Judah prohibits in the case of soft [hackled flax] and permits in the case of coarse [hackled flax].

4:2 A They cover up [food to keep it hot] with fresh hides, and they carry [handle] them;

B with wool shearings, but they do not carry them.

C What does one do?

D He [simply] takes off the cover, and [the wool shearings] fall off [on their own].

E R. Eleazar b. Azariah says, "A basket [holding a pot and shearings] does he turn onto its side, and he removes (the food),

F "lest he should take it and not be able to put it back."

- G And sages say, "He takes [out the food] and puts it back."
- H [If] he did not cover up [the food] while it is still day, he should not cover it up after dark.
- I [But if] he covered it up and it became uncovered, it is permitted to cover it up again.
- J One fills a jug [on the Sabbath with cold food or liquid] and puts it under a pillow or a blanket [to keep it cool].

**Luke 14:2 And there in front of Him was a man suffering from dropsy.**

- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#) - John MacArthur

## **A MAN WITH DROPSY JUST HAPPENS TO DROP IN FOR DINNER!**

**And there** - ("And **behold**" = ESV, KJV) The NAS unfortunately fails to translate the interjection **idou** ("**behold**" a command in aorist imperative to "**Look!**") and as noted elsewhere is clearly used to prompt attention or arouse interest. And this is certainly an attention grabbing moment for this is the only mention of a man with **dropsy** in the entire Bible!

The trap was sprung! **And there in front of Him was a man suffering from dropsy** ([hudropikós](#)) - Note the phrase **there in front of Him!** A man with dropsy (which could cause him to be shunned by the religious leaders) does not just "drop in" (pun intended)! The Pharisees were not even subtle in setting this trap! An unhealed man in front of the Healer par excellence on a Sabbath day on which no healing was allowed (per their man made rules)! Now remember that we are in the Pharisees house, and these religious bigots made a practice of associating only with the elite and not the social outcasts, so it is surprising to find this man at the lunch. The Pharisees were well aware that Jesus had performed healings on the Sabbath. And so here we are on the Sabbath with a man who is obviously in great need of healing. It sounds like a classic setup! Now think about their twisted logic -- Jesus performance of a miracle would point to His divinity, but these hard-hearted, spiritually blind legalists could not see that sign, and to the contrary earlier they interpreted similar miracles as a sign that He was not from God! Their spirituality was so "upside down" that they reasoned that surely a man from God would not break their Sabbath regulations! God's law said nothing that prohibited healing a person on the Sabbath.

**Adam Clarke** - Probably the insidious Pharisee had brought this dropsical man to the place, not doubting that our Lord's eye would affect his heart, and that he would instantly cure him; and then he could most plausibly accuse him for a breach of the Sabbath. If this were the case, and it is likely, how deep must have been the perfidy and malice of the Pharisee! ([Luke 14](#))

Luke does not quantify the degree of dropsy or edema, but given that it was clearly visible it was likely generalized edema (because a robe would have covered his legs which are usually the most swollen in dropsy. Of course markedly swollen feet bulging out of sandals would arouse attention!). ([Picture of 4/4 pitting edema of the legs](#)) Some of the most severe cases of generalized edema which I have seen as a physician were related to kidney diseases, specific those resulting in [nephrotic syndrome](#). In any case it was obvious for the man was **there in front of Him**.

**MacArthur** discussing the man's dropsy explains that "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. Since no Pharisee would have tolerated such a defiled person at the meal, they obviously planned to use him for a sinister purpose. And they were fairly sure that based on His pattern Jesus, seeing his dropsy, would do what they wanted." (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Bock** has a note related to what the Jews thought about **dropsy** - Lev. Rab. 15.2 on 13:2 comments on Job 28:25: "Man is evenly balanced, half of him is water, and the other half is blood. When he is deserving, the water does not exceed the blood, nor does the blood exceed the water; but when he sins, it sometimes happens that the water gains over the blood and then he becomes a sufferer from dropsy; at other times the blood gains over the water and he then becomes leprous"; Van Der Loos 1965: 505. (**Ed:** As a medical doctor I can attest they were wrong on both accounts!) Some rabbis argued that dropsy resulted from sexual offenses (b. Šab. 33a) or from intentionally failing to have bowel movements (b. Ber. 25a) (for Greek examples, see Van Der Loos 1965: 506). The tradition is late, but it does show that dropsy was often viewed as God's judgment, either for sin or uncleanness. (See [Another Sabbath Healing Controversy Luke 14:1-6](#))

Not every writer assumes the worse about the Pharisees for **Lenski** questions whether they brought the man in to test Jesus, explaining that "Trench draws attention to the fact that feasts such as the present one were semi-public. Outsiders could enter, stand, or sit, and watch what was going on. So the woman mentioned in Lk 7:37+ came in after the dinner was in progress, and this



man apparently before it started, for Jesus presently found him right before him." (See [The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel](#)).

I suppose we will have to wait until heaven to find out for certain whether the man with **dropsy** was merely a **drop-in** or a "**decoy**", but the fact that the context says they were **watching** Jesus **closely** suggests there was some element of pre-planning (and [pre-meditation](#)). Recall also that after the last meal in Luke 11, "When (Jesus) left there (cf Lk 11:37-38+), the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to question Him closely on many subjects, plotting ([enedreuo](#) = lying in wait - [present tense](#) = continually) against Him to catch Him in something He might say." (Lk 11:53-54+)

Recall in John the response Jesus received when he healed the blind man

John 9:16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "**This man is not from God**, (WHY? LOOK AT THEIR TWISTED LOGIC!) because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" (NOT EVERYONE WAS TOTALLY TWISTED IN THEIR THINKING!) And there was a division among them.

And in Matthew and Luke they went to far as to attribute Jesus' power to Satan!

Matthew 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons."

Luke 11:15+ (THE SPEAKER IS NOT CLEARLY IDENTIFIED IN THIS PASSAGE) "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons."

On other occasions Jesus shocked the religious leaders by eating with riff-raff (disreputable or undesirable people)

Matthew 9:10-11 Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?"

Luke 15:1-2 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. 2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

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**Suffering from dropsy** (cf "[hydrops](#)") ([5303](#)) (**hudropikós** from **hudor** = water + **ops** = face, countenance) is an adjective which describes an edematous condition in which there is an excessive accumulation of serous fluid in the body. **Dropsy** per se is not a disease but the sign of an underlying disease (often renal dysfunction such as in [membranous nephropathy](#) - the [glomeruli](#) [[nice diagram](#)] have a striking pattern on histology as I morph back to my days as a pathologist). Notice that this word derives from "water" and "face" because the disease often made a person look bloated in their face. Luke the physician has the only NT use of this medical term.

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#### Related Resources:

- [Why did Jesus heal on the Sabbath? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Did Jesus break the Sabbath law? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How is Jesus our Sabbath Rest? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Luke 14:3 And Jesus answered and spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"**

KJV Luke 14:3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

- **Jesus answered and spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees** Lk 14:11:44,45
- **Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not** Lk 6:9; 13:14-16; Mt 12:10; Mark 3:4; Jn 7:23
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#) - John MacArthur

**THE LUNCH TABLES  
WERE TURNED!**

**And Jesus answered ([apokrinomai](#)) and spoke to the lawyers ([nomikos](#)) and the Pharisees** - Luke begins with an arresting word [answered](#) which normally describes a reply to a question, but in this case there is no evidence that a question was asked. The verb **apokrinomai** means to answer or reply and in this context seems to be used Hebraistically or as a formula to control the flow of discourse (cf Mt 11.25). In classic Greek this verb also conveyed the sense of to separate or condemn which is certainly interesting given the context of Jesus' confrontation with the religious leaders. Crawford adds "No one had spoken to the Lord, so He was answering an action or hidden thought." Jesus knew that these hypocrites would help an animal but not a man on the Sabbath and so launches with an open ended question!

**Is it lawful ([exesti](#)) to heal ([therapeuo](#)) on the Sabbath, or not** - Of course it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath! The best defense is a good offense so Jesus preempts the question that was surely about to come from the religious legalists as it did in Luke 6:2 when "some of the Pharisees said, "Why do you do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" What the Lord described as healing they defined as working.

**Steven Cole** - This put them in a bind. If they said that healing is permitted, they conceded His point and they raised problems about their traditions, which had added to the Law of Moses. If they said that healing is not permitted, they came across as uncaring. Besides, if they had invited this man to be there, it cast questions on their motives for them to say, "No, healing is not permitted." So they kept silent. ([Jesus the Confronter](#))

**John Phillips** - These people, particularly the Pharisees and the lawyers, insisted on the most rigid observance of the Sabbath laws, but they practiced the opposite. They turned the closing hours of the Sabbath into an occasion for feasting. (Exploring the Gospel of Luke: An Expository Commentary)

**NET Note** asks "Will the Pharisees and experts in religious law defend tradition and speak out against doing good on the Sabbath? Has anything at all been learned since Luke 13:10–17? Has repentance come (Lk 13:6–9)?" As we shall see, they were resolute in their resistance to repentance! Legalism will do that to a person. They think that since they are "keeping all the laws" they have no need for repentance. When distilled down, is this not arrogant self-righteousness under the guise of feigned obedience?

**MacArthur** - Ministering to a sick person was by no means a violation of any Old Testament regulation concerning the Sabbath (cf. Matt. 12:7). Rabbinic attachments, however, prohibited anyone from treating a sick person on the Sabbath unless that person was in imminent danger of death if left untreated until the next day. To do so, the rabbis taught, would constitute work and hence be a violation of the required Sabbath rest. Even matters of life and death were subject to their cruel, inflexible, and ridiculous man-made restrictions. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Guzik** - Jesus never broke the commandments of God, but He often offended man's traditions that surrounded and extended the commandments of God. The commandments of God are enough, and we should never make the traditions of man – even good traditions – equal to the commandments of God (Mark 7:8-9). ([Commentary](#))

**J C Ryle** - Let us notice in this passage, how our Lord asserts the lawfulness of doing deeds of mercy on the Sabbath day. The qualification which our Lord here puts on the requirements of the fourth commandment is evidently based on Scripture, reason, and common sense. The Sabbath was made for man, for his benefit, not for his harm – for his advantage, not for his disadvantage. Interpreting God's law about the Sabbath was never meant to impinge on charity, kindness and the real needs of human nature. Our Lord shows that deeds of necessity and mercy do not break the observance of the Sabbath. (Expository Thoughts on the Gospels)

Recall that in another Sabbath healing confrontation Jesus had deflected the Pharisees' legalistic rebuke with a gracious reply - And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to destroy it?" (Lk 6:9). Do you recall their answer? They had none, just as in this vignette. Grace and law do not mix. Recall their reaction in Lk 6:11 "they themselves were filled with rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus."

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### **Life Application Bible Commentary – SORTING RIGHT FROM WRONG**

Sometimes matters of right and wrong can get very complicated, as they had here concerning "lawful" Sabbath activities. Jesus cut through all the complications with a simple appeal to love.

Is your faith in gridlock (like the Pharisees) because of overlapping and conflicting regulations that hardly seem to make sense? With each action ask yourself—what does love require?

Love will always respect God's rules (the Ten Commandments, for example) and will always serve people's best interests. Often a simple appeal to love will cut through the fog and clarify a plan of action.

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**Gilbrant on apokrinomai** - The translators of the Septuagint used apokrinō to render the Hebrew phrase "to answer and say" or "to

begin to speak." **This phrase was a very somber introduction to an important exhortation** It is thought by some to introduce words that were divinely inspired. (Compare this principle of Biblical interpretation from the Second Century A.D.: "Whenever it says [in the OT]: He answered and said this, lo, the one concerned spoke in the Holy Ghost" [Büchsel, "krinō," *Kittel*, 3:945].) Thus, while it is appropriate to translate apokrinō as "answer," it must be remembered that the answer was not always to a question. The word could be used of any situation, whether word or deed, which demanded a response. Moreover, the word was not taken from everyday language. Its use reminded readers of the solemn and formal tone the verb evoked in their Old Testament Bible. The Gospel writers seem to have relied heavily on the meaning found in the Septuagint. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Lawyers** (3544)(**nomikos** from **nomos** - law) means related to the law and generally refers to a legal scholar, an expert in the Mosaic law, in interpreting Jewish law (**Ed**: but certainly not "experts" in practicing it as God intended!). **Vincent** adds that these men were "not *legal practioners*, but interpreters and doctors of the Mosaic law."

**Lawful** (permitted)(1832)(**exesti** from from **ek** = out + **eimi** = to be) is an impersonal verb, signifying "it is permitted, it is allowed, it is lawful" (or interrogatively, "is it lawful?"). **Exesti** occurs most frequently in the synoptic Gospels and the Acts, especially in Jesus' conflicts with the Pharisees over His actions (and those of His disciples) on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:2; 12:4; 12:10; 12:12, etc).

**Exesti** - 32x in 30v - Matt. 12:2; Matt. 12:4; Matt. 12:10; Matt. 12:12; Matt. 14:4; Matt. 19:3; Matt. 20:15; Matt. 22:17; Matt. 27:6; Mk. 2:24; Mk. 2:26; Mk. 3:4; Mk. 6:18; Mk. 10:2; Mk. 12:14; Lk. 6:2; Lk. 6:4; Lk. 6:9; Lk. 14:3; Lk. 20:22; Jn. 5:10; Jn. 18:31; Acts 2:29; Acts 8:37; Acts 16:21; Acts 21:37; Acts 22:25; 1 Co. 6:12; 1 Co. 10:23; 2 Co. 12:4

**Heal** (cure)(2323)(**therapeuo** from **therapon** = an attendant, servant) has an interesting evolution in meaning - **therapeuō** ordinarily originally meant "I serve" in secular Greek. Gradually the term suggested "to care" for someone, and finally it acquired the definition of "to heal" or "to render medical treatment. It has two main senses in the NT, one speaking of rendering service (Acts 17:25) and the more common use as in the present passage describing medical aspects such as to take care of the sick, to heal, to cure (Mt. 4:24; 12:10; Mk 1:34; Lk 6:7; 10:9), to recover health, to restore. **Therapeuō** means to heal miraculously in Mt. 4:23, 24; 10:1, 8; Acts 4:14.

**Luke's** uses of **therapeuo** - Lk. 4:23; Lk. 4:40; Lk. 5:15; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 8:43; Lk. 9:1; Lk. 9:6; Lk. 10:9; Lk. 13:14; Lk. 14:3; Acts 4:14; Acts 5:16; Acts 8:7; Acts 17:25; Acts 28:9

**Luke 14:4 But they kept silent. And He took hold of him and healed him, and sent him away.**

**KJV Luke 14:4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;**

- Mt 21:25-27; 22:46
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#) - John MacArthur

## SILENT SNAKES

**But they kept silent** ([hesuchazo](#)) - Better translated "they became silent." They weren't even whispering in one another's ears or grumbling, which was something new for them! Why did they not speak? As we commonly say, they were "[on the horns of a dilemma](#) (or [this interesting note](#))", "[between a rock and a hard place](#)!" If they answered that it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath, that would give approval to Jesus performing the healing. They would then be seen as agreeing with Jesus and could not hold Him in "contempt" of their Sabbath regulations. On the other hand ("horn") if they responded that it was unlawful, then Jesus might not perform the healing and they would lose the opportunity of trapping Him in breaking their Sabbatical laws.

**Pate** - If they said no, they would reveal themselves for what they really were – inhumane religious leaders. If they said yes, they would be breaking their own laws governing the Sabbath.

**Wiersbe** - When Jesus asked what their convictions were about the Sabbath Day, He used on them the weapon they had forged for Him. To begin with, they couldn't heal anybody on any day, and everybody knew it. But even more, if the Pharisees said that nobody should be healed on the Sabbath, the people would consider them heartless; if they gave permission for healing, their associates would consider them lawless. The dilemma was now theirs, not the Lord's, and they needed a way to escape. As they did on more than one occasion, the scribes and Pharisees evaded the issue by saying nothing. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**And He took hold of him** ([epilambano](#)) - The man did not take hold of Jesus, but Jesus in His great compassion **took hold** of the

miserably ill man. And doubtless, the man was "unclean" but this did not prevent the compassion of our Lord to touch him!

THOUGHT - Has Jesus taken hold of you dear reader? You are more ill than you realize if you are unsaved, and you will be forever miserable if you never come to saving faith! Let Jesus take hold of you today! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be "healed" (saved)!

Jesus could have said, "Come back after sundown (end of Sabbath). It's only a few hours from now. And then I'll heal you." This would have avoided a confrontation with the Pharisees. But He didn't do that. He cured the man and confronted His critics.

**And healed (iaomai) him, and sent him away (apoluo)** - This was a dramatic scene for a man who was markedly swollen from edema in an instant returned to a completely normal appearance. There is no reaction recorded and the miracle was dispatched as Jesus now focused on the spiritually sick Pharisees, who had an illness far worse than dropsy. As **Steven Cole** says "Jesus was very confrontational! If you hang out with Him for very long, you'll find that He confronts your sin. He does it out of love for a good reason: Jesus confronts our sin so that we will inherit rewards for all eternity." ([Jesus the Confronter](#)) **Wiersbe** adds that "Instead of providing evidence against Jesus, the man provided evidence against the Pharisees, for he was "exhibit A" of the healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ." (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**J C Ryle**- Let us mark, lastly, in this passage, how our Lord asserts the **lawfulness of doing works of mercy on the Sabbath day**....The qualification which our Lord here puts on the requirements of the fourth commandment, is evidently founded on Scripture, reason, and common sense. The Sabbath was made for man,—for his benefit, not for his injury,—for his advantage, not for his hurt (Mk 2:27-28). The interpretation of God's law respecting the Sabbath was never intended to be strained so far as to interfere with charity, kindness, and the real wants of human nature. All such interpretations only defeat their own end. They require that which fallen man cannot perform, and thus bring the whole commandment into disrepute. Our Lord saw this clearly, and labored throughout His ministry to restore this precious part of God's law to its just position.

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**Kept silent (2270)(hesuchazo** from **hesuchos** = quiet, still) means to be still or to be silent. In classical Greek hēsuchazō generally denotes a termination of speech, conflict, or work; an imposition of silence; or a self-induced calming. It is interesting that Luke uses this same verb in Lk 23:56 after Jesus' was crucified "and on the Sabbath they **rested** according to the commandment." Luke used it of himself when Paul would not be persuaded from going to Jerusalem (where danger lurked) writing "**we fell silent** remarking "The will of the Lord be done."

**Hesuchazo** - 6x/5v - fell silent(1), kept silent(1), lead a quiet life(1), quiet life(1), quieted down(1), rested(1).  
Lk. 14:4; Lk. 23:56; Acts 11:18; Acts 21:14; 1 Thess. 4:11

**Took hold (seized) (1949)(epilambano** from **epi** = upon + **lambano** = take hold of) means to lay hold of, get a good grip on, take possession of. The meaning of epilambano is determined by the context as to whether the action of laying hold of someone is favorable or unfavorable. In this case it is clearly favorable. In a clearly unfavorable metaphorical use in Luke 20:20 Jesus enemies "watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they **might catch** (epilambano) Him in some statement, but Luke records they "were unable **to catch** Him in a saying" against Caesar (Lk 20:26, context - Lk 20:20-25).

**Norman Crawford** - This is the only time in the NT that **epilambanō** ("he took him") is used in a case of healing. Luke uses this word about the child that the Lord "took ... and set him by him" (Lk 9:47), but its other uses give its usual meaning "that they might take hold of his words" (Lk 20:20, 26), and "they laid hold upon one Simon" (Lk 23:26). In Acts 16:19, "they caught Paul and Silas" suggests a sudden, violent arrest. Perhaps the meaning in connection with this victim of dropsy relates to his far advance in the disease and utter helplessness to come to the Lord of his own volition, so the Lord "took him" and then "healed him". ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Luke's** uses of **epilambano** - Lk. 9:47 = "**took** a child"; Lk. 14:4; Lk. 20:20; Lk. 20:26; Lk. 23:26; Acts 9:27; Acts 16:19; Acts 17:19; Acts 18:17; Acts 21:30; Acts 21:33; Acts 23:19

Luke 20:20 So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they **might catch** Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor.

Luke 20:26 And they were unable **to catch** Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being amazed at His answer, they became silent.

Luke 23:26 When they led Him away, they **seized** a man, Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus.

**Healed** (cured) (2390)(**iaomai**) means to cure, to heal, to restore. **iaomai** is used literally of deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions and so to make whole, restore to bodily health and refers primarily to physical healing in the NT (although clearly there is overlap with spiritual healing because some of the instances involved demonic oppression - Lk 9:42-note). Less commonly iaomai

referred to spiritual healing or healing (saving) from "moral illnesses" and the consequences of sin. When used in this sense *iaomai* has much the same meaning as [sozo](#), to save, make whole, restore to spiritual health. Here are the uses of *iaomai* used with a spiritual meaning = Mt 13:15, John 12:40, Acts 28:27 - preceding quotes from Isa 6:10, 1Pe 2:24 = quote from Isa 53:5. Most of the NT uses in the Gospels refer to physical healing by Jesus, however in the OT (Lxx) *iaomai* refers primarily to spiritual healing by the Messiah (Isa 53:5, Isa 61:1, et al).

**iaomai - 26v - curing(1), heal(4), healed(16), healing(2), heals(1), perform healing(2).** Matt. 8:8; Matt. 8:13; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 15:28; Mk. 5:29; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 6:19; Lk. 7:7; Lk. 8:47; Lk. 9:2; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:42; Lk. 14:4; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 22:51; Jn. 4:47; Jn. 5:13; Jn. 12:40; Acts 9:34; Acts 10:38; Acts 28:8; Acts 28:27; Heb. 12:13; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:24

**Sent away** ([630](#)) ([apoluo](#) from **apó** = marker of dissociation, implying a rupture from a former association, separation + **luo** = loose) is used often of sending a person or a group away from someone (Mt 14:15, 22, 23, 32, etc). **Apoluo** frequently has the sense of to let loose from or to release, to let go free or set at liberty. **Apoluo** is used in all four Gospels describing the **release** of Barabbas instead of Jesus (Jn 18:39, Mt 27:15, 17, 21, etc, cf Acts 16:35) **Apoluo** was used in secular Greco-Roman writings of discharge from the military, of release from jail or of setting a debtor free. In the legal context it means to dismiss (as innocent), to grant acquittal, set free, release, pardon. The text does not tell us whether this man's external healing was also accompanied by an internal saving of his soul. We'll have to wait to heaven, but if so, can you imagine this man's testimony! Every believer will in fact have a glorious testimony to having experienced a miracle from the "touch" of Jesus and His fully atoning, substitutionary work! **Crawford on sent away** - The man was healed and dismissed, indicating that he was present for healing and as a test for the Lord, not as a guest at the supper. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Apoluo in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 2:29; Lk. 6:37; Lk. 8:38; Lk. 9:12; Lk. 13:12; Lk. 14:4; Lk. 16:18; Lk. 23:16; Lk. 23:17; Lk. 23:18; Lk. 23:20; Lk. 23:22; Lk. 23:25; Acts 3:13; Acts 4:21; Acts 4:23; Acts 5:40; Acts 13:3; Acts 15:30; Acts 15:33; Acts 16:35; Acts 16:36; Acts 17:9; Acts 19:41; Acts 23:22; Acts 26:32; Acts 28:18; Acts 28:25

**Luke 14:5 And He said to them, "Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?"**

KJV Luke 14:5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?

- **Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?** k 13:15; Exodus 23:4,5; Da 4:24; Mt 12:11,12
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#) - John MacArthur

**GOTCHA!...NOT!**

At that instant of healing, the religious leaders were thinking "We've got Him now!" But not so fast, for Jesus has a probing question. And this before they could even open their mouth and utter an accusation!

**Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately**([eutheos](#)) **pull him out** ([anaspaō](#)) **on a Sabbath day?"** - Notice that the phrase **which one of you** directly draws Jesus' listeners into the illustration. Jesus followed up the miracle by asking them a rhetorical question to underscore His point. Of course the logic of His question is indisputable. Motivated by either love of son or love of money one would effect this rescue operation without any loss of time, lest there be loss of life. All of them would pull out their son or their ox, even on the Sabbath. They would not want to lose a son they loved or an ox they knew would incur financial cost to replace. They were "pious pragmatists!" As we saw in Lk 13:15+ each of them "on the Sabbath (would) untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to water him." Open wells were quite common in Israel, and were frequently the cause of accidents. (Ex 21:33) What happened when one fell into a well of water? If not rescued, of course they would drown, for even if they could swim, they would eventually become too weak to continue paddling. And so here was a man with **dropsy** who was in a sense "drowning" in his own fluids (edema), and they were unwilling to see him "rescued!" Jesus is showing that they cared about their animals more than about this man suffering in a swollen, miserable state! Jesus was exposing their lack of love and their religious hypocrisy.

**Technical note** - Some manuscripts read "donkey" instead of "son," but the evidence is clearly in favor of



“son” as the original reading.

**Cornerstone Biblical Commentary** – In the interest of keeping the Sabbath holy, as a day of rest, the Jews had expanded on the OT Sabbath laws, developing 39 rules concerning activities forbidden on the Sabbath (cf. Exod 34:21). (See [Luke, Acts](#))

**William Barclay** - Open wells were quite common in Palestine, and were not infrequently the cause of accidents (cf. Ex 21:33 = "If a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it [and dies]."). It was perfectly allowable to rescue an animal which had fallen in. Jesus, with searing contempt, demands how, if it is right to help an animal on the Sabbath, it can be wrong to help a human being.

**Rod Mattoon** - The Lord again uses the illustration of an ox or ass to make His point. In chapter 13, he spoke about feeding these animals on the Sabbath, which everyone did. Here He talks about pulling them out of a pit on the Sabbath which was done by the owners of those animals. The Lord is trying to expose their inconsistent teachings about working on the Sabbath day. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Norman Crawford** on **will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day** - This was not so much out of pity for the hapless beast, but out of an unwillingness to suffer material loss. The point, pressed home, must have pierced deeply. They had a care for their material gain, but no real feeling for a man suffering from dropsy. Stephen's words not long after cut the Jewish leaders to the heart, but their response was to gnash on him with their teeth and condemn him to be stoned. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**G Campbell Morgan** is kind in his comment - Thus, while our Lord rebuked the wrong attitude and temper of these men, He did so by appealing to the best within them and calling them to be true to it. His purpose is not that of shaming men, but that of saving them.

Notice that while there was a Mosaic command not to work, there is not a stipulation not to show mercy and perform an emergency rescue if needed. In other words, a day of rest never precluded that it could also be a day of rescue!

Deuteronomy 5:12-14 'Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. 13'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 14but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; **in it you shall not do any work**, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.

**Life Application Bible Commentary** – Jesus did no more than touch the man. The Pharisees' rules and regulations did not ban touching another person. In fact, Jesus explained that when it served their purposes, they *did* work on the Sabbath. They could go pull a son or a cow out of a pit if need be, but they were ready to condemn Jesus for touching a man and healing him from a disease. Jesus pointed this out to them, but *they had no answer*.

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**Immediately** (2112)([eutheos](#) from [euthus](#) = straight, immediate) is an adverb which generally means at once, right away, forthwith, straightaway, without an interval of time or a point of time subsequent to a previous point of time. Note that the actual interval of time depends on the nature of the events and the manner in which the sequence is interpreted by the writer. **Eutheos** is a "time sensitive" word (see [expression of time](#)) and should prompt questions like "To what time does it refer?" or "What happens in this time?"

**Pull out** (385)([anaspaō](#) from [aná](#) = up or back again + [spáō](#) = to draw) means to draw up or back again. In classical literature, as in the New Testament, it means "to haul or pull up. Only other NT use is in Acts 11:10 "This happened three times, and everything was **drawn back up** into the sky." **Crawford** adds that "The word for "he will pull him out" () is only used elsewhere in the NT in Peter's description of the vision of the great sheet let down from heaven; "all *were drawn up* again into heaven" (Acts 11:10). The Lord Jesus chose a word that graphically pictures the labour involved, even on a Sabbath day, in drawing up out of a pit a large animal. In the case of the woman "whom Satan had bound" (13:16), the Lord used an illustration suitable to her need: an ox or ass bound in a stall that was unable to go to drink. In this case He used the figure of an animal in a pit because He was speaking of a man who was literally drowning in his own fluids. He was a master in the use of apt illustrations. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Anaspao** - 3x in the Septuagint - Da 6:16; Amos 9:2 ("My hand will [drag them] take them"); Hab. 1:15 ("bring all [anaspao - brought up] of them up with a hook")

**Luke 14:6 And they could make no reply to this.**

KJV Luke 14:6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

- Lk 13:17; 20:26,40; 21:15; Acts 6:10
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:1-6 The Healing Savior vs the Hypocritical System](#) - John MacArthur

## THEIR NEFARIOUS PLAN BACKFIRED: SILENCED A SECOND TIME

**And they could make no reply ([antapokrinomai](#)) to this** - They could not answer back. The Greek particle for "no" is *ouk* signifying that their mouths were ABSOLUTELY shut by the words and deeds of the Lord Jesus. A dilemma also silences a group of Jewish leaders in Lk 20:3-7. They will have the same response at the Great White Throne judgment (Rev 20:11-15-[note](#)) when they are condemned for their words and deeds and sent to the place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12; Matt. 13:42; Matt. 13:50; Matt. 22:13; Matt. 24:51; Matt. 25:30; Lk. 13:28-note).

Notice in Lk 14:4 they did not want to answer and here in Lk 14:6 they were not able to answer. They did not want to admit they were wrong. Has God ever allowed you to be enclosed a "corner" and yet because of your pride, you steadfastly refused to admit that you were wrong? If so, you were a lot like the Pharisees!

**Wiersbe** - Jesus exposed the false piety of the Pharisees and the scribes. They claimed to be defending God's Sabbath laws, when in reality they were denying God by the way they abused people and accused the Saviour. There is a big difference between protecting God's truth and promoting man's traditions. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Cornerstone Biblical Commentary** emphasizes that they simply could not dispute or refute the logic of our Lord – The reasoning pattern used by Jesus is a familiar one for Him, arguing from the lesser to the greater (cf. Mt 7:11 with Lk 11:13+; Mt 6:30 with Luke 12:28+): if a Jew could quite properly rescue a cow falling into a pit on the Sabbath, how much more should Jesus be able to heal a sick person on the Sabbath (cf. Lk 13:15+)! The heartless application by Jesus' opponents of legalistic regulations in the face of human need was thereby exposed. (See [Luke, Acts](#))

If they had said that saving a son or an ox on the Sabbath was not permissible, they would have condemned themselves. If they had said that it was, they could not have criticized Jesus.

Jesus had this effect of humiliating His enemies and shutting their mouths...

Luke 13:17+ As He said this, all His opponents were being humiliated (disgraced, put to shame); and the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by Him.

Luke 20:26+ And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being amazed at His answer, they became silent.

**MacArthur** points out that "Things were about to get worse for them, however, as the Lord took the offensive, inventing a story as He often did, to condemn their pride and call for humility." (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Cornerstone Biblical Commentary** – The incident here in Lk 14:1-6 is found only in this Gospel, and serves as "a literary device to provide a setting for the sayings" (Creed 1930:188) that follow in Jesus' comments at the dinner table (Lk 14:7-24). Jesus' intervention in this case to heal a man, and his defense of his actions for healing on the Sabbath "cast him once again in the role of a heaven-sent messenger or a teacher acting with authority. Again the episode reminds the reader of the way the evangelist has presented Jesus in Lk 6:5-note as the 'Lord of the Sabbath.' Implicitly, Jesus also criticizes his contemporaries for their lack of concern for a fellow human being....As Jesus said on another occasion, "The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27; cf. Mt 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5-note). (See [Luke, Acts](#))

**Reply** (470) ([antapokrinomai](#) from **anti** = against, back + **apokrinomai** = to answer) means to answer back or reply against. In the only other NT use it means to contradict or dispute - "On the contrary, who are you, O man, who **answers back** to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?" (Ro 9:20)

**Steven Cole** uses the hypocrisy of the religious fakes to do a short excursus on **hypocrisy**.

There are far more characteristics of hypocrites than those listed here, but note these five from our text:

**(1) Hypocrites study the Word for ammunition against others, but they don't apply it to themselves.**

These men knew their Bibles. They knew the Law of Moses frontward and backward. They were the guardians of the faith, waiting

to catch someone else in an error. Their aim in knowing the Word was not to confront themselves, but to have the ammo to use against others. They were watching Jesus closely, but they weren't watching themselves closely. They were waiting for Him to violate their rules, so that they could pounce on Him. But they weren't applying the Law to themselves.

I've seen husbands who use the Word like a club against their wives. "She doesn't submit to me as the head of the home." I say to them, "Did you know that the Bible never commands you to be the head of your wife?" They sputter, "What do you mean? Of course it does!" But it does not. The Bible instructs wives that their husbands are their head, but when it comes to the husband, the command is, "Love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Eph. 5:25). I'll ask these husbands, "How are you sacrificing your time and selfish interests to serve your wife and children?" These hypocritical husbands want to lord it over their wives and children, abusing the authority that the Lord gives to husbands to bless and protect their families. But they don't want to lay down their selfish ways in service of their wives and children, as Scripture confronts them. They are using the Word for ammo against others, not to confront their own sinful selfishness.

## **(2) Hypocrites target and try to bring down anyone who confronts their sin with the Word.**

Why did this Pharisee invite Jesus to dinner? What was his motive? From the evidence we have, I suggest that it was not to learn from Jesus. It was not to find out if possibly he was wrong and Jesus was right. He invited Jesus to dinner to try to set Him up and bring Him down. He and his cronies were watching Jesus to try to trip Him up.

I have had people in the church who are constantly critical of minor doctrinal differences that they hear in my sermons. They're always ready to pounce when I don't exactly agree with them. One matter that seems to be increasingly common is that they use the King James Bible and pounce on anyone who doesn't, accusing him of being liberal. Invariably, these people have no idea of the scholarly issues involved. They just sit in judgment on any preacher who doesn't use the original King James Bible. But if you were to ask his wife and children, "Is he a loving and gentle man at home?" you would see some sad expressions on their faces. The man is ignoring the second great commandment, but he's out to get the preacher on his pet doctrinal issues!

## **(3) Hypocrites care more about their manmade rules than about people being right before God in their hearts.**

These Pharisees couldn't care less about this hurting man. So what if he was suffering? Jesus was breaking their rules! Hypocrites usually care more about external conformity than about inward righteousness. They aren't concerned about whether they please God in their thought-lives; they just want everyone to follow the rules about how you look and what you do. If Jesus had just observed their Sabbath rules, they would have been content to leave Him alone. But Jesus always dealt with heart issues, like having a pure thought life, being free from anger, and being forgiving from the heart toward those who have wronged you.

## **(4) Hypocrites bend the rules for their own purposes, but they apply them rigidly to others.**

These men would do what they had to do, Sabbath or no Sabbath. There were ways to get around the rules when you needed to. A Sabbath-day's journey could be extended if you knew how to do it, so that you could travel where you wanted to go. They would get their own son or ox out of a pit on the Sabbath. But, no healing allowed on the Sabbath! I wonder what Jesus' host would have done if Jesus had healed the host's wife or son on the Sabbath? Probably, that would have been allowed!

## **(5) Hypocrites often ignore overwhelming evidence in order to persist in their sin.**

Jesus powerfully and miraculously heals this man, but the Pharisees ignored that evidence. And, this wasn't the first time this sort of thing had happened! Jesus had cast a demon out of a man in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and the report of that had spread widely (Lk 4:31-37). He healed Simon's mother-in-law on the Sabbath (Lk 4:38-39). He healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath, but the Pharisees responded with rage (6:6-11). On the Sabbath He healed the woman bent over for 18 years, but the synagogue official was indignant (Lk 13:10-17). How much more evidence did they need to wake up and say, "Maybe we're wrong and Jesus is right?" **This shows us how deeply entrenched this sin of religious hypocrisy is and how diligent we must be to root it out of ourselves when Jesus confronts it! If you're not careful, you can build a case to defend your point-of-view and ignore overwhelming biblical evidence that convicts you of your sin.**

God's Word applies to all of us, especially to those of us who teach and preach.

**John Calvin** said, "It would be better for the preacher to break his neck going into the pulpit than for him not to be the first to follow God" (cited by J. I. Packer in a message given at the Congress on Biblical Exposition).

**Richard Baxter** exhorted his fellow pastors, to "preach to yourselves the sermons which you study, before you preach them to others" (The Reformed Pastor [Banner of Truth], p. 61).

**John Owen** put it, "a man preaches that sermon only well to others, which preaches itself in his own soul.... If the word does not dwell with power in us, it will not pass with power from us" (Works, XVI:76, cited by J. I. Packer, A Quest for Godliness [Crossway

Books], p. 286; I modernized Owen's English).

**The point is, to avoid hypocrisy, we all must allow the Word to confront our sins and respond with repentance and obedience, not with hardness of heart.** ([Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#))

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**Integrity Will be Tested** - A pastor preached a sermon on honesty one Sunday. On Monday morning he took the bus to get to his office. He paid the fare, and the bus driver gave him back too much change. During the rest of the journey, the pastor was rationalizing how God had provided him with some extra money he needed for the week. But he just could not live with himself, and before he got off the bus he said to the driver, "You have made a mistake. You've given me too much change." And he proceeded to give him back the extra money. The driver smiled and said, "There was no mistake. I was at your church yesterday and heard you preach on honesty. So I decided to put you to a test this morning." Integrity - one's deeds match one's words!

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[Dr W H Houghton](#), pastored the Calvary Baptist Church in NYC and later served as president of Moody Bible Institute. When Dr. Houghton became pastor of the Baptist Tabernacle in Atlanta, a man in that city hired a private detective to follow Dr. Houghton and report on his conduct. After a few weeks, the detective was able to report to the man that Dr. Houghton's **life** matched his **preaching**. As a result of Houghton's faithful life, a life of integrity, that man became a Christian.

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**A Sunday Morning Hypocrite** - A young man was being interviewed for a position in a small business firm. The applicant had a neat appearance and made a good impression on the owner. He had also prepared an excellent resume in which he listed, as references, his pastor, his Sunday school teacher, and a church deacon. The owner of the business studied the resume for several minutes, then said, "I appreciate these recommendations from your church friends. But what I would really like is word from someone who knows you on weekdays." Sorry to say, in too many instances there is a striking contrast between the behavior of Christians in church and out in the world. The principles we hear preached on Sunday should be practiced all week. A good Sunday Christian will also be a good weekday Christian. —R. W. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

A HYPOCRITE IS A PERSON WHO IS NOT HIMSELF ON SUNDAY!

(Woe!)

**Luke 14:7 And He began speaking a parable to the invited guests when He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table, saying to them,**

KJV Luke 14:7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

- **He began speaking a parable to the invited guests**Judges 14:12; Pr 8:1; Ezekiel 17:2; Mt 13:34
- **He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table**Lk 11:43; 20:46; Mt 23:6; Mark 12:38,39; Acts 8:18,19; Phil 2:3; 3 Jn 1:9
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur
- [The Parables of the NT Spiritually Unfolded](#) - Edward C Mitchell (Lk 14:7-11 - Taking the Lowest Seats)

[Click picture to enlarge](#)  
[Click here for further explanation](#)

## SEEKING HONOR FROM MEN NOT FROM GOD

**He began speaking a parable to the invited guests**([kaleo](#)) - NET = "Then when". **Speaking** is in the [imperfect tense](#) which views it as in progress and can imply that this went on for some time. Notice what incited this parable. The word "**when**" explains what motivated Jesus to speak this parable. The **guests** literally means "those invited" and refers to the "lawyers and Pharisees" (Lk 14:3+). They are Jesus' target of His parable. The guests would be the scribes and Pharisees who had been watching Him (Lk 14:1), not realizing that He had been watching them (see **He noticed**)! As an aside there is no mention of the disciples up to this point so one wonders if all 12 were also guests at the meal?

**Technical Note** - The **NAS** does not translate the coordinating conjunction (Greek = de) which most commonly denotes continuation and further thought development, taking its specific sense from the context and in this case is best translated as "now" (ESV, NLT) or "then" to "indicate the implied sequence of events within the narrative." ([NET Note](#))

**He noticed** ([epecho](#)) **how they had been picking out** ([eklego](#)) **the places of honor** ([protoklisia](#)) **at the table** - **He noticed** ([epecho](#)) indicates Jesus was continually ([present tense](#)) directing His attention to the jostling between the guests trying to get to the places of honor. They weren't pulling up chairs at the dining table, but flopping down on their sides because ancient meals were taken in a reclining position. What a scene this must have been! Nothing escaped His eye. The "**places of honor**"([protoklisia](#)) at the meal generally would be those closest to the host, much like today we see the places of honor at "the speaker's table." One might say that Jesus was turning the tables (pun intended) - they had their eye on Him, but all the while He had His eye on them! "But His motives were totally different than theirs. He wasn't watching them in order to trip them up, but to confront them with their sin and hypocrisy so that they could repent and be right before God." (Cole)

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, we all do well to continually remember that **Jesus notices everything** we do and that He even notices the motives of our heart which are motivate us to do what we do (cf 1 Cor 4:5, cf 1 Cor 3:13, Eccl 12:14)!

**Wiersbe** - Experts in management tell us that most people wear an invisible sign that reads, "Please make me feel important"; if we heed that sign, we can succeed in human relations. On the other hand, if we say or do things that make others feel insignificant, we will fail. Then people will respond by becoming angry and resentful, because everybody wants to be noticed and made to feel important. In Jesus' day, as today, there were "status symbols" that helped people enhance and protect their high standing in society. If you were invited to the "right homes" and if you were seated in the "right places," then people would know how important you really were. The emphasis was on reputation, not character. It was more important to sit in the right places than to live the right kind of life. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

The typical dinner table of Jesus' day was usually not a classic rectangular table as in most modern kitchens and dining rooms. Instead the ancient tables were often 3 tables (each table a couch for 3 or so-called [triclinium](#) ([see picture](#))) in somewhat of a U-shape (which may have resembled the Roman counterpart below) with guests reclining on their left elbows. One can almost picture these hypocrites jostling one another as they race to the "hottest spots" of honor! Do we ever seek man's approval more than God's like these men?

The scribes and Pharisees sought acclaim from men, not from God, an example of their [inveterate](#) arrogance, which Jesus repeatedly [chastised](#) as exemplified by the following quotes. Notice the repetition of the verb **'love'**

Matthew 23:6-7 "They **love** ([phileo](#) in [present tense](#) = their lifestyle) **the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues**, and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men

Luke 20:46-47 "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and **love** ([phileo](#) in [present tense](#) = their lifestyle) **respectful greetings** in the market places, and **chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets**, who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

Luke 11:43+ "Woe ([ouai](#)) to you Pharisees! For **you love** ([agapao](#) in [present tense](#) = their lifestyle) **the chief seats** in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places.

In addition, these religious hypocrites "**scratched each others' backs**" ([see description of this idiom](#)) so to speak, as Jesus alluded to in John

"How can you believe, when **you receive glory from one another** and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? (John 5:44)

These men were masters of [self-promotion](#)!

**Edersheim's note on dining** - In regard to the position of the guests, we know that the uppermost seats were occupied by the Rabbis. The Talmud formulates it in this manner: That the worthiest lies down first, on his left side, with his feet stretching back. If there are two 'cushions' (divans), the next worthiest reclines above him, at his left hand; if there are three cushions, the third worthiest lies below him who had lain down first (at his right), so that the chief person is in the middle (between the worthiest guest at his left and the less worthy one at his right hand). The water before eating is first handed to the worthiest, and so in regard to the washing after meat. But if a very large number are present, you begin after dinner with the least worthy, till you come to the last five, when the worthiest in the company washes his hands, and the other four after him. The guests being thus arranged, the head of the



house, or the chief person at table, speaks the blessing, and then cuts the bread. By some it was not deemed etiquette to begin eating till after he who had said the prayer had done so, but this does not seem to have been the rule among the Palestinian Jews. Then, generally, the bread was dipped into salt, or something salted, etiquette demanding that where there were two they should wait one for the other, but not where there were three or more.

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**Parable** (symbol) (3850) (**parabole** from **para** = beside, near + **ballo** = throw, cast; English "parable") is literally a throwing beside or placing of one thing by the side of another (juxtaposition as of ships in battle in classic Greek). The metaphorical meaning is to place or lay something besides something else for the purpose of comparison. "A parable is not an allegory in which everything has a hidden, mystical, spiritual meaning, but an illustration, analogy, or metaphor used to make or clarify a point. In the sense that Jesus used them, parables are earthly stories that illustrate heavenly realities." (MacArthur)

**Luke's** uses of **parable** - Lk. 4:23; Lk. 5:36; Lk. 6:39; Lk. 8:4; Lk. 8:9; Lk. 8:10; Lk. 8:11; Lk. 12:16; Lk. 12:41; Lk. 13:6; Lk. 14:7; Lk. 15:3; Lk. 18:1; Lk. 18:9; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 20:9; Lk. 20:19; Lk. 21:29

**Stein** notes that "The term **parabole** has a large semantic range and can include proverbs (4:23), metaphorical or figurative sayings (Mark 7:14–17), similitudes (Luke 13:18–19), story parables (Lk 14:16–24), example parables (Lk 12:16–21), and **allegory** (Lk 20:9–19) (Ed: Note MacArthur does not consider that a parable is an allegory). Here it describes a metaphorical or figurative saying. (As an aside see [What is wrong with the allegorical interpretation method?](#))

**Bock** - Jesus uses a παραβολή (parabolē), the significance of which is debated. Is this a teaching on humility (Fitzmyer 1985: 1046), on relating to God (Creed 1930: 190), or on both (Marshall 1978: 581)? Some even question Luke's description that a parable is present (so A. Jülicher, cited in Creed). However, a broad point about humility before people and God is certain, since one's attitude to God is often seen in how one treats others (1 John 2:3–11 is the clearest example of this linkage). If one takes παραβολή seriously, then the passage pictures how one approaches God, as well as the call to humility. The result is that Jesus calls on his hearers to relate to all types of people, which in turn pictures a basic approach to God. This relationship of humility to divine response comes in the conclusion of Luke 14:11 (BECNT)

**The places of honor** ("first seats") (4411) (**protoklisia** from **protos** = first, preeminent + **klisia** = place for reclining from **klino** = to cause to bend) means the first place, the chief seats, the first position or space of preeminent honor for reclining at a dining table or banquet (usually the places besides the host). . In a group of three cushions or couches used for reclining, the one in the center was the place of honor (see "lectus medius" below) Precedence in seating was usually based on rank, reputation, or age. In a group of three cushions or couches used for reclining, the one in the center was the place of honor.

**Protoklisia** is used 5x in the NT - Matt. 23:6; Mk. 12:39; Lk. 14:7; Lk. 14:8; Lk. 20:46 with no uses in the Septuagint

**Invited** (2564) (**kaleo** from root **kal-**, whence English "call" and "clamour") literally means to speak to another in order to attract their attention or to them bring nearer, either physically or in a personal relationship. Kaleo is especially common in Matthew and Luke in the Gospels (Mark and John jointly use kaleō only six times) and in Acts and its specific meaning depends on the the **context** in which it is used. Here of course it means they were requested to participate, be present, or take part in the meal. Kaleo conveys the sense of an invitation in Mt 22:3, 4, 8, 9, Lk 7:39, 14:7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 14:24 Jn 2:2, 1Co 10:27.

**Luke's** uses of **kaleo** - Lk. 1:13; Lk. 1:32; Lk. 1:35; Lk. 1:36; Lk. 1:59; Lk. 1:60; Lk. 1:61; Lk. 1:62; Lk. 1:76; Lk. 2:4; Lk. 2:21; Lk. 2:23; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 6:15; Lk. 6:46; Lk. 7:11; Lk. 7:39; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 9:10; Lk. 10:39; Lk. 14:7; Lk. 14:8; Lk. 14:9; Lk. 14:10; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 14:13; Lk. 14:16; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:24; Lk. 15:19; Lk. 15:21; Lk. 19:2; Lk. 19:13; Lk. 19:29; Lk. 20:44; Lk. 21:37; Lk. 22:3; Lk. 22:25; Lk. 23:33; Acts 1:12; Acts 1:19; Acts 1:23; Acts 3:11; Acts 4:18; Acts 7:58; Acts 8:10; Acts 9:11; Acts 10:1; Acts 13:1; Acts 14:12; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:37; Acts 24:2; Acts 27:8; Acts 27:14; Acts 27:16; Acts 28:1;

**Noticed** (1907) (**epecho** from **epi** + **echo** = to hold or have) means to literally to hold upon. When used of the mind it mean to fix the mind upon, give heed to, keep close watch on, pay attention (cf 1Ti 4:16, Acts 3:5). The basic idea of epechō (from epi [1894] plus echō [2174]) is "to hold or have." The epi prefix adds various nuances depending on the context. In classical Greek the following are common: (1) "to hold towards—aim at, launch out against," (2) "to hold out or forth—present, offer," (3) "to hold back oneself or another—wait, desist, hinder," and (4) "to hold power over—command, prevail."

**Epecho** - 5v - give...attention(1), holding fast(1), noticed(1), pay close attention(1), stayed(1). Lk. 14:7; Acts 3:5; Acts 19:22; Phil. 2:16; 1 Tim. 4:16

**Picking out** (choosing) (1586) (**eklego** from **ek** = out, out of, out from + **légo** = select, choose; see also **eklektos**) means literally to select out, single out or choose out of. The idea in **eklego** speaks of the sizable number from which the selection is made. It implies the taking of a smaller number out of a larger. For example, in secular use, Virgil's *Eclogues* (from eklego) are short, selected

excerpts taken from a more larger collection of poems. In this case there were only a small number of **places of honor** and that is the places they chose. The [middle voice](#) (reflexive) means they were choosing out for themselves in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating there was a continual jostling for a place to recline. Morris suggests there must have been "an undignified scramble." Their selfish conduct provided the Lord a perfect object lesson.

**Eklego - 20v - choose(4), chose(7), chosen(8), made a choice(1), picking(1), select(1).** Mk. 13:20; Lk. 6:13; Lk. 9:35; Lk. 10:42; Lk. 14:7; Jn. 6:70; Jn. 13:18; Jn. 15:16; Jn. 15:19; Acts 1:2; Acts 1:24; Acts 6:5; Acts 13:17; Acts 15:7; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:25; 1 Co. 1:27; 1 Co. 1:28; Eph. 1:4; Jas. 2:5

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### Mattoon - When We Exalt Ourselves....

1. A Problem with Pride is Demonstrated

2. A Passion for Prestige is Displayed

3. We are Pre-occupied and Neglect the Needs of Others

We are focused on selfish needs.

4. We Puff Up the Estimation of Ourselves

By comparing ourselves with others, we conclude we are better or more important.

5. We get Pigheaded and Principles of Wisdom are Rejected

6. We Put Off or Turn Off other People

Our arrogance repulses people and makes them sick. If you are not careful, you make yourself a target to be destroyed.

7. We Produce Hindrances to Being Used of God

God resisteth the proud, but gives grace to the humble.68

8. We Position Ourselves for Demotion or Embarrassment

Our arrogance leads to a fall and shame. Solomon warned about this.

Proverbs 25:6-7... Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: [7] For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

9. Our Peace is Rare as we Struggle or Compete with Others

We are in constant "struggle or competition" mode with other people, always trying to get our own way.

10. Proper Actions are Neglected

In our quest to exalt ourselves, we tend to be rude, unreasonable, rebellious, and resistant toward the counsel of others. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Luke 14:8 "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him,**

KJV Luke 14:8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him

- **When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast** Pr 25:6,7
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

## JESUS CONTINUES TO CONFRONT SELFISH PRIDE

Luke 14:8-9 is an illustration of what not to do and Luke 14:10-11 an illustration about what to do.

**When you are invited ([kaleo](#)) by someone to a wedding feast ([gamos](#))** - Jesus is going to point to a "danger" in making a mad dash for the places of honor.

**Guzik** - A wedding party was the most important social occasion in Jewish life at that time. The seating arrangement at the table indicated one's standing in the community. ([Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - As an aside, every believer does well to frequently recall that he or she has a standing invitation from their divine Host for a very special celebration in the future, John writing "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev 19:9+) And all God's children shouted "Hallelujah! Thank you Jesus! Amen"

**Mattoon** - Jesus begins to teach and deal with a spiritual problem in the lives of these people. He is not trying to hurt them. He is trying to help them by pointing out improper behavior and how to avoid "[losing face](#)," as the Japanese or Chinese would say. (**Ed**: And I would add how to avoid losing their soul eternally!) ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Do not take ([katakino](#)) the place of honor ([protoklisia](#))** - **Vincent** remarks that "The Greek writers refer to the absurd contentions which sometimes arose for the chief seats at table. Theophrastus designates one who thrusts him-self into the place next the host as mikrophilotimos, one who seeks petty distinctions." (petty ambitions) By way of application the one who chooses to take the **place of honor** is the self-righteous person, the one who things they deserve or in some way have earned the **place of honor**. They seek to be righteous before men, but not before God.

First the negative instruction - what NOT to do. Good teachers will include the negative as well as focusing on the positive, and this contrast adds to the effect of the teaching. Do you tend to avoid the "negative" passages in Scripture? If you do so, it is to your shame and the detriment of your sheep!

**Mattoon** says that in essence what Jesus is telling them is that "They are to give preference to other people. Put others first!" To fail to do so would be to their disgrace and embarrassment (and "[loss of face](#)!"). ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Keener** - Social status was important in antiquity and was made obvious by the seating of dinner guests at banquets. This status was especially a problem in well-to-do Greco-Roman circles (see comment on 1 Cor 11:21), but seating by rank is well attested in Palestinian Jewish society, including in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

**For** (because) **someone more distinguished ([entimos](#)) than you may have been invited ([kaleo](#)) by him** - **For** ([term of explanation](#)) explains why one should not seek the place of honor for himself, the explanation continuing to the next verse.

**Brian Bell** - Every toddler knows how to play this, "daddy look at me, watch me daddy"; but what's normal for a toddler is pretty embarrassing when adults are still playing it. The point in this game is to make sure that everyone sees and admires you. Jesus saw men competing for better seats at a banquet.. Seating in those days was ordered. How empty when we act from motives of "what will others think?" . The seats closest to the host were the best seats, and the guests looking for recognition tried to secure them. Nowadays, the gracious host uses place cards for seating guests rather than embarrass someone needlessly by moving them publicly to a more appropriate seat. If where we sit makes us important, then we are not very important! It is what we are, not where we sit that really counts. It is only the little man who is self-important! Jesus probably had Pr 25:6,7 in mind "Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great; For it is better that he say to you, "Come up here," Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen."

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**Wedding feast** (cf Luke's only other mention = Lk 12:36-note)([1062](#))([gamos](#)) primarily describes the public ceremony in which a man and a woman entered into a marital relationship and thus speaks of a wedding (Jn 2:1), which often involves feasting. Eschatologically (prophetic, future) **gamos** refers to the wedding ceremony of the Bridegroom, Christ, with His Bride, the Church, at the outset of the Messianic ([Millennial](#)) Kingdom. (Rev 19:7-note, Rev 19:9-note). By **metonymy** **gamos** is used for wedding hall, the place where the wedding takes place (Mt 22:10)

**Do not take** (recline)([2625](#))([katakino](#) from **kata** = down or functioning to intensify main verb root + **klino** = to incline, bend, bow) means literally to incline down, to lie sloping forward and descriptive of the oriental posture at meal (recline). It is interesting that this word occurs in medical contexts of ancient literature contemporary with the NT, used for example, to describe a patient "lying down" for treatment (Moulton-Milligan). It is not surprising that the physician Luke is the only author who used kataklinō.

**Distinguished** (highly regarded)([1784](#))([entimos](#) from **en** = in + **timé**=honor, esteem, price) means honored or esteemed. **Entimos** describes honored or respected men or "valued" objects. It denotes "men of high rank or office". According to papyri one common application of **entimos** is to military veterans who were discharged "with honor" (see Moulton-Milligan). Luke used this same adjective in Lk 7:2-note describing the "centurion's slave who was highly valued."

**Luke 14:9 and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this man,' and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place.**

KJV Luke 14:9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

NET Luke 14:9 So the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this man your place.' Then, ashamed, you will begin to move to the least important place.

CSB Luke 14:9 The one who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give your place to this man,' and then in humiliation, you will proceed to take the lowest place.

ESV Luke 14:9 and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place.

NIV Luke 14:9 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.

NLT Luke 14:9 The host will come and say, 'Give this person your seat.' Then you will be embarrassed, and you will have to take whatever seat is left at the foot of the table!

- **and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place** Esther 6:6-12; Pr 3:35; 11:2; 16:18; Ezekiel 28:2-10; Da 4:30-34
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

### **THE NEGATIVE PRINCIPLE FOR DEMOTION**

**And he who invited ([kaleo](#)) you both will come and say to you "Give ([aorist imperative](#)) your place ([topos](#)) to this man"** - You see the host coming toward you and you immediately have an uneasy feeling. Clearly their scramble for the seats of honor would "backfire" if one of the attendees was **more distinguished**. The point Jesus is making is that the more distinguished man would confer more honor on the host by being seated in the place of honor (cf Jn 5:44, "[they would "scratch each other's back" so to speak](#)").

**Mattoon** - Albert Einstein was right on target when he said, "Try not to become a man of success, but try to become a man of value." Beloved, love, kindness, godly wisdom, gentleness, helpfulness, holiness, unselfishness, and Christlikeness make an individual a person of value. On the other hand, when we exalt ourselves, like these guests, we damage our testimony for Christ and hurt other people. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**And then in disgrace ([aischune](#) - ashamed, humiliated) you proceed ([archo](#)) to occupy ([katecho](#)) the last ([eschatos](#)) place** - When ask by the host to vacate the place of honor, he will find all the other "good" place already occupied and will be forced to go to the lowest place in front of the entire gathering! **Vincent** notes that the idea of **proceed** emphasizes "the shame of the reluctant movement toward the lower place." All of us have been ashamed before others at some time in our life and can envision this person "sulking" down to the seat of least honor. The way of pride will ultimately lead to shame and disgrace. As the next two passages show the striking contrast that the way of humility ultimately leads to reward and honor (Lk 14:10-11).

**Background Cultural Context Note:** The western culture of America and much of Europe is based upon an innocence and guilt mindset. Yet the majority of the people in the world today understand the world through the concept of honor & shame; an understanding which has been passed down for thousands of years. The Mediterranean culture of Yeshua's day as well of the culture of ancient Israel was based upon honor & shame. For them, it was more important to live and die with honor than anything else. (cf "The wise inherit honor, but fools are put to shame!" = Pr 3:35NLT - see [note by Charles Bridges](#))

Jesus alluded to this same spiritual principle ("up" will go down) in Luke 10

"And you, Capernaum, will not be **exalted** to heaven, will you? You will be **brought down** to Hades! (Lk 10:15+)

Jesus frequently uses this "reversal imagery" which must have been shocking to those who heard His words....

"Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh." (Lk 6:21+)

Pr 11:2 says "When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom." [Bridges' note](#))

**Mattoon** - It would be terribly humiliating and sobering as these folks got a wake up call of reality that they were not as great as they thought. The people they were trying to impress would not be impressed at all. The individuals that they felt were beneath them would all of the sudden be above them in status at the feast. Once they vacated their place to another person, the only seats that would be left would be the lowest seats at the table. The demoted person would not want to risk taking any other seats other than the lower places in fear of being asked to get out of a higher one again for another, more honored person. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Bock** - In effect, Jesus tells them that it is better not to overestimate one's importance, which can put one at risk of public disgrace.

**MacArthur** - Jesus was not merely advising the Pharisees on the proper etiquette for being a successful hypocrite. In reality, His words were designed to picture those who, in a display of spiritual pride and self-righteous arrogance, clamor for the chief places in the kingdom of God (cf. Mark 10:35–40), only to be sent by God, the host of heaven's banquet, to the remotest place in His domain. One such status seeker was the Pharisee in a "parable [Jesus told] to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt" (Luke 18:9). He considered himself superior to the despised tax collector, haughtily declaring, "God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get" (Lk 18:11–12). But in just such a reversal of positions as Jesus spoke of, the humble, repentant tax collector, not the proud Pharisee, entered the kingdom of salvation (Lk 18:14). (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Guzik** - The Bible reminds us that we should not play the self-promotion game. We should do our work hard and unto the Lord, and let God raise us up. For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south, but God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another. (Psalm 75:6–7) ([Commentary](#))

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**Disgrace** (humiliated)(152)([aischune](#) from [aíschos](#) = shame) means disgrace (loss of reputation as the result of a dishonorable action) or ignominy (a deep personal humiliation). **Aischune** describes **shame** resulting from exposure of one's weaknesses or sins. It is not a feeling one has but an experience which comes to someone. As Jesus will go on to show, clearly [humiliation](#) is not synonymous with [humility](#). The first is the rotten fruit that pride reaps, whereas the latter is the anti-thesis of pride. Humiliation is the result of external circumstances, whereas the humility is a reflection of the internal condition of one's heart.

Stated another way humiliation is often a reflection of the absence of humility as alluded to in Proverbs 16:18

**Pride** goes before destruction, And a **haughty spirit** before stumbling.

**Charles Bridges** writes - What more vivid exposition of these Proverbs is needed, than **our own ruined condition**? Our father's pride—desiring to "be as God"—hurried his whole race to destruction. (Ge 3:5) 'O Adam'—was the exclamation of a man of God,—'what hast thou done?'<sup>5</sup> The most awful strength of Divine eloquence seems to be concentrated to delineate the character and ruin of pride. (Isa. 14:4–19, Ez. 28, 29. Comp. Job 40:11, 12) Example abounds throughout the Scripture (Pharaoh, Ex 9:16, 17; Amaziah, 2 Chr 25:15–20; Haman, Est 5:11+, Est 7:10+; Nebuchadnezzar. Da 4:29–33+; Herod, Acts 12:21–23; In the Church, David, 2 Sa 24:1; Uzziah, 2 Chr 26:4, 16; Hezekiah, 2 Chr 32:25; Peter, Mt 26:33, 69–74.)—each sounding this solemn admonition—"Be not high-minded, but fear" (Ro 11:20. Cp. 1 Cor 10:12, 1 Ti 3:6.) **Fearful indeed is our danger, if the caution be not welcomed, if the need for it be not deeply felt!**

The **haughty spirit** carries the head high. The man looks upward, instead of to his steps. What wonder therefore, if, not seeing what is before him, he falls? He loves to climb. The enemy is always at hand to assist him (Mt 4:5, 6.); and the greater the height, the more dreadful the fall. Yet is the state of heart, that prepared him for the fall, the worst part of his condition. Have we been preserved from open disgrace? Examine secret faults. Trace them to their source—a subtle confidence in gifts, attainments, or privileges. And then praise thy God for his painful discipline—the preserving mercy from ruinous self-exaltation. (2 Co 12:7–9) Truly the way down to the **valley of humiliation** is deep and rugged. **Humility** therefore is the grand preserving grace. The contrite publican was safe when the boasting Pharisee was confounded. (Luke 18:14) Better then—more happy, more honorable, more acceptable to God and man—is a humble spirit companying with the lowly, than the spoil of the haughty conqueror, ministering only to his destruction (Jas 1:9+). May my Lord's example keep me low! (Mk 10:45, Jn 13:1-5) 'When majesty'—said pious Bernard—"humbled himself, shall the worm swell with pride?"



This same noun **aischune** is used in the Septuagint translation of Da 12:2+ which says " Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and **disgrace** (Lxx = **aischune**). (Da 12:2 NAB). The temporal **disgrace** to which Jesus ascribes to those who are prideful and seek honor before men is but a faint picture of the eternal disgrace that awaits them in hell where they are "disgraced" forever!

**Proceed** (begin)(757)(**archo**) literally is be first and means to take the first step or steps in carrying out or initiating an action. Active = to rule over or be leader (Mk 10:42). Middle - start predominately as an auxiliary verb with a present infinitive used to draw attention to some element in the story = begin (Mt 26:37).

**Gilbrant** - The use of **archō** is so common in both connotative and denotative settings that it is impossible to show all of its nuances. Suffice to say that in classical sources it means "be first," "to rule." The middle voice was used with the infinitive in phrases such as "He began to rule." Papyri and other Koine sources translate **archō** as "begin/began to rule from that time." One papyrus uses it to say "hold office." This is not surprising in that the noun form derived from **archō** is **archōn** (752), a standard word for "ruler, governor," etc. The **Septuagint** uses **archein**, an infinitive form, in Isaiah 11:10. When Paul wrote to the Romans in 15:12 he quoted the Septuagint precisely (the KJV translates it "to reign"). Genesis 1:26 and 28 both use **archō** to say "have dominion." This early use of the verb in the Septuagint bears out what was said above concerning its commonness. "To rule, to be superior" is the ordinary Septuagint use. Another example of how **archō** is used occurs at 2 Chronicles 31:10 where the text says "the people began to bring ..." and at Job 36:24, "His works are great beyond those which men have attempted." **Archō** also means "to initiate an attempt." In **New Testament use** we have already indicated how Isaiah 11:10 corresponds to the words in Romans 15:12. "They which are accounted to rule" is the manner in which Mark 10:42 uses the word. Acts 1:1 ("All that Jesus began"), 2:4 ("began to speak"), and John 13:5 ("began to wash") all support the same use, namely, to start an action. A slight change from this is found in Luke 3:23, "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Archo - 85v - began(62), begin(7), beginning(8), begins(2), begun(1), proceed(1), rule(1), rulers(1), starting(2).** Matt. 4:17; Matt. 11:7; Matt. 11:20; Matt. 12:1; Matt. 14:30; Matt. 16:21; Matt. 16:22; Matt. 18:24; Matt. 20:8; Matt. 24:49; Matt. 26:22; Matt. 26:37; Matt. 26:74; Mk. 1:45; Mk. 2:23; Mk. 4:1; Mk. 5:17; Mk. 5:20; Mk. 6:2; Mk. 6:7; Mk. 6:34; Mk. 6:55; Mk. 8:11; Mk. 8:31; Mk. 8:32; Mk. 10:28; Mk. 10:32; Mk. 10:41; Mk. 10:42; Mk. 10:47; Mk. 11:15; Mk. 12:1; Mk. 13:5; Mk. 14:19; Mk. 14:33; Mk. 14:65; Mk. 14:69; Mk. 14:71; Mk. 15:8; Mk. 15:18; Lk. 3:8; Lk. 3:23; Lk. 4:21; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 7:15; Lk. 7:24; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:49; Lk. 11:29; Lk. 11:53; Lk. 12:1; Lk. 12:45; Lk. 13:25; Lk. 13:26; Lk. 14:9; Lk. 14:18; Lk. 14:29; Lk. 14:30; Lk. 15:14; Lk. 15:24; Lk. 19:37; Lk. 19:45; Lk. 20:9; Lk. 21:28; Lk. 22:23; Lk. 23:2; Lk. 23:5; Lk. 23:30; Lk. 24:27; Lk. 24:47; Jn. 8:9; Jn. 13:5; Acts 1:1; Acts 1:22; Acts 2:4; Acts 8:35; Acts 10:37; Acts 11:4; Acts 11:15; Acts 18:26; Acts 24:2; Acts 27:35; Rom. 15:12; 2 Co. 3:1; 1 Pet. 4:17

**Archo - Septuagint** - Gen. 1:18; Gen. 1:26; Gen. 1:28; Gen. 2:3; Gen. 4:7; Gen. 6:1; Gen. 9:20; Gen. 10:8; Gen. 11:6; Gen. 18:27; Gen. 41:54; Gen. 44:12; Gen. 45:26; Exod. 4:10; Num. 16:46; Deut. 1:5; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:24; Deut. 15:6; Deut. 16:9; Deut. 28:12; Jos. 3:7; Jos. 11:10; Jos. 12:5; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:35; Jdg. 5:29; Jdg. 8:22; Jdg. 8:23; Jdg. 9:22; Jdg. 10:18; Jdg. 13:5; Jdg. 13:25; Jdg. 16:19; Jdg. 16:22; Jdg. 17:11; Jdg. 20:31; Jdg. 20:39; 1 Sam. 3:2; 1 Sam. 3:12; 1 Sam. 9:17; 1 Sam. 10:1; 1 Sam. 14:35; 1 Sam. 22:15; 2 Sam. 7:29; 2 Sam. 18:14; 2 Sam. 24:15; 1 Ki. 4:20; 1 Ki. 11:1; 2 Ki. 10:32; 2 Ki. 15:37; 1 Chr. 1:10; 1 Chr. 17:27; 1 Chr. 27:24; 1 Chr. 29:12; 2 Chr. 3:1; 2 Chr. 3:2; 2 Chr. 3:3; 2 Chr. 20:22; 2 Chr. 29:17; 2 Chr. 29:27; 2 Chr. 31:7; 2 Chr. 31:10; 2 Chr. 31:21; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 35:25; 2 Chr. 36:4; Ezr. 3:6; Ezr. 3:8; Ezr. 5:2; Neh. 4:7; Est. 4:17; Est. 6:13; Job 6:4; Job 6:9; Job 13:15; Job 36:24; Job 42:17; Ps. 77:10; Prov. 19:10; Prov. 22:7; Isa. 3:17; Isa. 11:10; Isa. 14:9; Isa. 22:22; Isa. 32:1; Isa. 32:5; Isa. 40:23; Isa. 47:7; Isa. 49:23; Isa. 63:19; Jer. 25:29; Lam. 1:1; Ezek. 9:6; Ezek. 13:6; Hos. 5:11; Hos. 6:11; Hos. 7:5; Hos. 8:4; Jon. 3:4; Mic. 1:12; Mic. 6:13;

**Occupy** (hold down)(2722)(**katecho** from **katá** = intensifies meaning + **écho** = have, hold) means to hold down and was used literally of holding one to keep them from going (as in Luke 4:42-note). Luke uses it to describe the seed (the Word) in good soil as "the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and **hold it fast** (katecho), and bear fruit with perseverance." (Lk 8:15-note) In the present context it means to take (a seat).

**Katecho - 18v - afflicted(1), bound(1), heading(1), hold...fast(1), hold fast(5), hold firmly(1), keep(2), occupy(1), possess(1), possessing(1), restrains(2), suppress(1).**Lk. 4:42; Lk. 8:15; Lk. 14:9; Jn. 5:4; Acts 27:40; Rom. 1:18; Rom. 7:6; 1 Co. 7:30; 1 Co. 11:2; 1 Co. 15:2; 2 Co. 6:10; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Thess. 2:6; 2 Thess. 2:7; Phlm. 1:13; Heb. 3:6; Heb. 3:14; Heb. 10:23

**Last** (2078)(**eschatos** from **ek** = from, primarily as it relates to place) an adjective which means last in time or space/place. **Eschatos** in this passage is used figuratively to refer to the lowest status, least honorable seat or "last place" - "But many who are first will be **last**; and the **last**, first." (Mt 19:30)

**Luke 14:10 "But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you.**

KJV Luke 14:10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

NET Luke 14:10 But when you are invited, go and take the least important place, so that when your host approaches he will say to you, 'Friend, move up here to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who share the meal with you.

CSB Luke 14:10 "But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' You will then be honored in the presence of all the other guests.

ESV Luke 14:10 But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

NIV Luke 14:10 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.

NLT Luke 14:10 "Instead, take the lowest place at the foot of the table. Then when your host sees you, he will come and say, 'Friend, we have a better place for you!' Then you will be honored in front of all the other guests.

NRS Luke 14:10 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 honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you.

YLT Luke 14:10 'But, when thou mayest be called, having gone on, recline in the last place, that when he who called thee may come, he may say to thee, Friend, come up higher; then thou shalt have glory before those reclining with thee;

- **when you are invited, go and recline at the last place**<sup>1</sup> Sa 15:17; Pr 15:33; 25:6,7
- **then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you**sa 60:14; Rev 3:9
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

## THE POSITIVE PRINCIPLE FOR PROMOTION

**But when you are invited ([kaleo](#)), go and recline at the last ([eschatos](#)) place** - KJV = "lowest room" Now to a scheming mind this might sound like Jesus is telling the guests to seek out the lowest seats with a hidden agenda. In other words, Jesus is not promoting a selfish [conniving](#) scheme as to how one could end up in the first seat by first choosing the worst seat. For a man to do that, he would still be operating out of pride, which is the very thing Jesus is confronting! Rather, the point is, "**Every one before God ought to feel that the lowest place is the proper place for him**" ([Alfred Plummer, The Gospel According to St. Luke](#)).

Note that **Invited ([kaleo](#))** is a keyword in this chapter and serves to tie these sections together - (Lk. 14:7; Lk. 14:8; Lk. 14:9; Lk. 14:10; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 14:13; Lk. 14:16; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:24)

Jesus' paradox is that the "best" seat in the house is the "worst" seat in the house!

**Wiersbe** - When Jesus advised the guests to take the lowest places, He was not giving them a "gimmick" that guaranteed promotion. The false humility that takes the lowest place is just as hateful to God as the pride that takes the highest place. God is not impressed by our status in society or in the church. He is not influenced by what people say or think about us, because He sees the thoughts and motives of the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). God still humbles the proud and exalts the humble (James 4:6). British essayist

Francis Bacon compared fame to a river that easily carried “things light and swollen” but that drowned “things weighty and solid.” It is interesting to scan old editions of encyclopedias and see how many “famous people” are “forgotten people” today. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**R Kent Hughes** - Hundreds of years later this was still standardized Hebrew common sense. The fifth-century Leviticus Rabbah I recommends: “Stay two or three seats below your place and sit until they say to you, ‘Go (farther) up.’ Do not begin by going up because (then) they may say to you, ‘Go down.’ It is better that they should say to you ‘Go up, go up,’ than that they should say to you, ‘Go down, go down.’ ” This was good practical advice...(Jesus) was imparting an eternal spiritual principle that will be evident in the end when everything is made right. (See [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#))

**So that** (purpose clause) **when the one who has invited** ([kaleo](#)) **you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend** ([philos](#)), **move up higher** ([prosanabaino](#)) - Move up to a more important, more esteemed place. The one who invited the guests sees the humble attitude manifest by the place chosen and as a result chooses to reward the attitude of that guest.

**Bock** - The main point is that it is better for others to recognize who you are than to suggest to them your “proper” (or improper!) place. Humility is the best course in all affairs. Station should be suggested by others, not seized by oneself

**Then** (time phrase) **you will have honor** ([doxa](#)) **in the sight of all who are at the table with you** - When is “then?” It is when the host grants you to move to the place of **honor**. They did not merit their move to a higher place of **honor**. The host granted it by his grace.

**THOUGHT**- There is clearly application to the Gospel invitation to **“Come”** for all who come and are saved have in essence taken the low seat, acknowledging their sin and unworthiness as guilty sinners before their “holy Host.” And as a result they are granted honor by grace through faith and told to **move up higher**, not just in this temporal life, but one day soon in the life to come (and literally in the Rapture!)

**Will have honor** ([doxa](#)) is better rendered **“will be honored”** (ESV, NET) which brings out the passive sense. In other words, the honor/glory will be bestowed from an external Source, specifically God (the so-called “Divine Passive”).

We see the willingness of Paul to “accept the lowest seat,” so to speak, to manifest a humble mindset that progressively increased over the years of His growth in grace and Christ-likeness (cf a similar “spiritual dynamic” in John 3:30+):

(55AD) 1Co 15:9 For I am **the least** of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

(61AD) Ep 3:8 To me, **the very least** of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

(63-66AD) 1 Ti 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom **I am foremost** (protos) of all.

**Guzik** - Especially in Christian service, there is something wonderful about knowing that God has raised you up, instead of you raising yourself up to prominence of some sort....(In contrast) When we get our own position, either through outward or subtle pride, we can even say, “It was the Lord, it was the Lord”—but in our heart of hearts we know it was us, our own calculation, our own schemes, our own grasping. We should remember the words of George MacDonald: **In whatever man does without God, he must fail miserably—or succeed more miserably.** ([Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - Note that our Saviour was not just then talking to his disciples, or else he would have given more spiritual reasons for his advice; but, speaking to the people who were gathered as guests at the Pharisee’s house, he appealed to them with an argument suitable to themselves. We may, however, extract the marrow from this bone. Let us not covet the highest place; let us not desire honour among men. In the Church of God the way upward is downward. He that will do the lowest work shall have the highest honour. Our Master washed his disciples’ feet, and we are never more honoured than when we are permitted to imitate his example.

**Jesus'** states a principle directly from Proverbs, something to which these Pharisees clearly were not paying much attention! Solomon wrote:

Do not claim honor in the presence of the king, and do not stand in the place of great men; for it is better that it be said to you, “Come up here,” than for you to be placed lower in the presence of the prince, whom your eyes have seen. (Pr 25:6-7)

In his classic commentary on Proverbs **Charles Bridges** writes - “Our Lord applies this proverb more generally. (Lk 14:8-11) Who needs not this caution against ambition? Even godly Baruch seems to have

"sought great things for himself,"(Jer 45:5. Comp. Ro 12:16) Not even the fellowship of the Saviour, his heavenly instruction, his Divine pattern of holiness (Mt 11:29) could restrain the "strife among the disciples—Who should be the greatest;" (Mt 18:1-4, Lk 9:46-48-note) repeated even after the most wondrous exhibition of humility (Jn 13:1-5)—nay—after they had just partaken with him of the holy feast. (Lk 22:19-27-note) "Loving to have the pre-eminence," is the bane of godliness in the Church (3 Jn 1:9-10)."

Wolsey's fall is an instructive beacon to ambitious men, not to put forth themselves, or to set out their glory in the presence of the king. The usurpation also of the place of great men usually subjects a man to be put lower, to his own mortification. "Before honor is humility;" (Pr 18:12) shown in a backwardness to obtrude either our presence or our opinion upon those in higher stations; shrinking from external respect, rather than courting the "vain show." Gideon (Jdg 6:15-17-note)—Saul in his early and better days—David—were thus advanced to honor. (1 Sa 18:18–20. Comp. Ps. 131:1)

Let each of us lay himself to the work of casting down our high tower of conceit; cultivating a deep sense of our utter worthlessness, and carefully pondering that example, which is at once our pattern and our principle. Oh! think of him, who was "fairer than man," being the most humble of men—nay—of him, who was infinitely more than man, making himself "a worm and no man." (Ps. 45:2, with Ps 22:6-see study of this incredible truth) 'What!' cries Bernard, 'shall the Majesty of Heaven become a worm, and man—the proud worm—exalt himself!' **Think of that day, which will set us all on our own true base; when each of us shall stand before the Great Prince (Rev 1:5-note), just that—and that only—which he counts us to be! What will it be to be put lower—to be utterly cast out in His presence, Whom our eyes shall then see to our eternal confusion (Rev 1:7-note)!** (see [An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

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**Friend** (5384) **philos** means loved (loved one), dear, befriended, friendly, kind. **Philos** can mean kindly disposed or devoted ([Acts 19:31](#)). **Philos** describes one having special interest in someone else. One who is on intimate terms or in close association with someone else. **Philos** can describe a love which is emotional and conditional. **Philos** refers to one who has a liking for, is fond of something or someone.

**Philos** - 29x/27v - **friend(12), friends(17)**. Matt. 11:19; Lk. 7:6; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 11:5; Lk. 11:6; Lk. 11:8; Lk. 12:4; Lk. 14:10; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 15:6; Lk. 15:9; Lk. 15:29; Lk. 16:9; Lk. 21:16; Lk. 23:12; Jn. 3:29; Jn. 11:11; Jn. 15:13; Jn. 15:14; Jn. 15:15; Jn. 19:12; Acts 10:24; Acts 19:31; Acts 27:3; Jas. 2:23; Jas. 4:4; 3 Jn. 1:15

**Move up** (**aurist imperative**)(4320)(**prosanabaino** from **pros** = to, toward + **anabaino** = to ascend, go up, from **ana** = up + **baino** = to go) means to go up further, moving from one level to another. Used only here in the NT of being (God's choice and power doing this) put into a place of honor.

**Prosanabaino** - 7x in 7v in the Septuagint - Ex. 19:23 = "The people cannot **come up** to Mount Sinai" Jos. 11:17; Jos. 15:3; Jos. 15:6; Jos. 15:7; Jos. 18:12; Jos. 19:12. Interesting that in Ex 19:23 "under Law" they could not "go up," but now "under grace" God tells us to "move up."

**Will have honor** (glory)(1391)(**doxa** from **dokeo** = to think) in simple terms means a proper opinion or estimate of something. Glory is something that is a source of honor, fame, or admiration. It describes renown, a thing that is beautiful, impressive, or worthy of praise. This is the glorious reward (pun intended) for sincere humility before God.

**Luke's** uses of **doxa** - Lk. 2:9; Lk. 2:14; Lk. 2:32; Lk. 4:6; Lk. 9:26; Lk. 9:31; Lk. 9:32; Lk. 12:27; Lk. 14:10; Lk. 17:18; Lk. 19:38; Lk. 21:27; Lk. 24:26; Acts 7:2; Acts 7:55; Acts 12:23; Acts 22:11;

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**Spurgeon** - "**Friend, go up higher.**" - Luke 14:10

When first the life of grace begins in the soul, we do indeed draw near to God, but it is with great fear and trembling. The soul conscious of guilt, and humbled thereby, is overawed with the solemnity of its position; it is cast to the earth by a sense of the grandeur of Jehovah, in whose presence it stands. With unfeigned bashfulness it takes the lowest room. But, in after life, as the Christian grows in grace, although he will never forget the solemnity of his position, and will never lose that holy awe which must encompass a gracious man when he is in the presence of the God who can create or can destroy; yet his fear has all its terror taken out of it; it becomes a holy reverence, and no more an overshadowing dread. He is called up higher, to greater access to God in Christ Jesus. Then the man of God, walking amid the splendours of Deity, and veiling his face like the glorious cherubim, with those twin wings, the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, will, reverent and bowed in spirit, approach the throne; and seeing there a God of love, of goodness, and of mercy, he will realize rather the covenant character of God than his absolute Deity. He will see in God rather his goodness than his greatness, and more of his love than of his majesty. Then will the soul, bowing still as humbly as aforetime, enjoy a more sacred liberty of intercession; for while prostrate before the glory of the Infinite God, it will be sustained by

the refreshing consciousness of being in the presence of boundless mercy and infinite love, and by the realization of acceptance "in the Beloved. " Thus the believer is bidden to come up higher, and is enabled to exercise the privilege of rejoicing in God, and drawing near to him in holy confidence, saying, "Abba, Father. "

"So may we go from strength to strength,  
And daily grow in grace,  
Till in thine image raised at length,  
We see thee face to face."

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

KJV Luke 14:11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

- **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled** Lk 1:51; 18:14; 1 Sa 15:17; Job 22:29; 40:10-12; Ps 18:27; 138:6; Pr 15:33; 18:12; 29:23; Isa 2:11,17; 57:15; Mt 23:12; James 4:6; 1 Pe 5:5
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 11:23 "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.

Matthew 18:4 "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 23:12 "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

Luke 18:14+ "I tell you, this man went to his house **justified** ([dikaioo](#) in [perfect tense](#) = "having been permanently justified = declared forever righteous before God) rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be **exalted**."

**Comment:** Notice how the Spirit "links" justified with humility and exaltation.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

Ezekiel 17:24 "All the trees of the field will know that I am the LORD; I bring down the high tree, exalt the low tree, dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it."

Ezekiel 21:26 thus says the Lord GOD, 'Remove the turban and take off the crown; this will no longer be the same. Exalt that which is low and abase that which is high.

### **A SPIRITUAL AXIOM: PRIDE ABASED, HUMILITY EXALTED**

**For everyone who exalts** ([hupsoo](#)) **himself will be humbled** ([tapeinoo](#)) - **For** is a [term of explanation](#) indicating Jesus is explaining why those in Lk 14:10 will be honored. Here is one of those promises of God you probably won't find in books of "God's Promises!" (like the promise in 2Ti 3:12+) Those high in their own estimate will be brought low in God's estimate. James explains the reason for this principle - "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." (James 4:6+)

Earlier Luke wrote of this paradoxical spiritual dynamic (up is down, down is up)...

"He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has **scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart**. "He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. "HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; And sent away the rich empty-handed. (Luke 1:51-3+)

One might argue, "I know a host of men who have exalted themselves and yet as far as I can discern they have never been humbled." That may seem to be the case in this short life, but if the prideful person does "escape" humbling during life, he (or she) is



in for a "[rude awakening](#)!" One who has a rude awakening, is suddenly made aware of an unpleasant fact. One thinks of the Lk 16 in one moment "joyously living in splendor every day" (not seemingly humbled) (Lk 16:19+) and in an instant "In Hades...in torment." (Lk 16:23+), a condition tantamount to being humbled, and in that state forever!

**Mattoon** - Humbling yourself does not mean you view yourself as a piece of trash. Truly humble people compare themselves only with Christ, realize their sinfulness, and understand their limitations. They also recognize their gifts and strengths, and are willing to use them as Christ directs. Humility is a realistic assessment and commitment to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and others. Humility is also a fundamental grace in the Christian life, and yet it is elusive. If you know you have it, you have lost it! It has well been said that humility is not thinking meanly of ourselves. It is simply not thinking of ourselves at all. Jesus is the greatest example of humility, and we would do well to ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to imitate His example. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

The **NT** emphasis on the importance of humbling oneself that one might be exalted is a complete antithesis of what the fallen world believes. Human pride scoffs at and resists this basic Biblical principle.

In secular Greek, a **tapeinos** person was one who was base, ignoble or of low birth, servile, held in low esteem, the anti-thesis of the meaning of *tapeinos* in God's sight. And obviously the supreme example of this God pleasing humility is the Lord Jesus Christ, Who "Being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** (himself = *heautou* = a reflexive pronoun which refers the action of the verb [humbling] back to the subject [Jesus]) by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." (Php 2:8-[note](#))

**Will be humbled...will be exalted** ([hupsou](#)) (both verbs are in the [passive voice](#)) - Two results based on two choices. Both of these results (verbs) are "divine passives" indicating it is God Who will [mete out](#) either ruin or reward! "These divine passives mean God will humble (or exalt) you at the final judgment." (Stein)

**Short Excursus on "Divine Passive"** - One of the most interesting uses of the [passive voice](#) in the New Testament is the **Divine passive**, where the unexpressed agent of the passive verb is God. The **Divine passive** is common throughout the New Testament. Stated another way the **Divine passive** is when a verb is used in the [passive voice](#) for the express purpose of not naming God as the subject. For example, in the Beatitudes Jesus says "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will BE COMFORTED ([parakaleo](#) in the [passive voice](#))" (Mt 5:4-note) which means that it is God Who will comfort the mourners. And so it is clearly implied that it is God Who carries out the comforting, even though His Name is not mentioned.

These two very different results remind us of the two diametrically different roads and foundations in Matthew 7:

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Mt 7:13-14+)

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall." (Mt 7:24-27+)

[Brian Bell](#) - Humility – Or, Rising Downward! It not only draws others to us, but draws God to us. "Imagine a world where everyone competed to outserve the other."

**Bock** - The theme of eschatological reversal is common in Luke (Lk 1:52–53; 6:21, 25; 10:15; 18:14; also Matt. 18:4; 23:12; Rom. 12:16; Phil. 2:5–11; 1 Tim. 6:17; James 4:6, 10; 1 Pet. 5:5)

**Norman Crawford** - From this simple example the Lord now teaches lessons which He exemplified as no man on earth has ever done. It has been said, "**Go as low as e'er you will, the Highest has been lower still**". The *lofty One* became the *lowly One*, and to believers He is the altogether lovely One. How perfectly He "knew what was in man" (John 2:25)! **The desire for prominence, greatness, eminence, renown, prestige, honour, place, or whatever we may call it, is one of the most pronounced features of fallen humanity.** It is a chief cause of assembly (church) problems. This desire to put forward self can assume many disguises and take many forms, but human pride is hateful to God in whatever form it takes (Pr 16:5). **None is immune from this fearful disease of selfish pride, but let us ever judge it as sin, and never adopt the spirit of this age that glorifies it.** A lack of self-esteem may be crippling to some people, but it is possible to be over-occupied with self even if that occupation is pity for our own inadequacy. The person who is always saying that he is of little worth may be taken up with self, for he is talking about self. There is a perfect balance in Scripture, "For I say ... to every man ... not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro12:3). We should never think of ourselves as worthless.



The ultimate pattern is the lowly mind of the Lord Jesus: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5). ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**He who humbles** ([tapeinoo](#)) **himself will be exalted** ([hupsoo](#)) - **Humbles** ([tapeinoo](#)) is in the [present tense](#) signifying that pursuit of a humble attitude to be our continual practice (as alluded to in Paul's example above). The [active voice](#) signifies that humbling ourselves is a choice of our will. We willingly accept humility. The paradox that seems foolish to the unregenerate mind is that the way "up" in God's Kingdom is first "down!" It is only the humble man or woman who will acknowledge their inability to earn God's favor, and seeing that they fall short, they reach out by grace through faith to lay hold of Christ's perfect righteousness. **Himself** is the reflexive pronoun *heautou* which refers the action of the verb [**humbles**] back to the subject (the one who humbles himself). **Will be exalted** when? Jesus does not specify, the promise is a certainty in the future. It clearly has spiritual and eschatological overtones.

I like the way **Phillip Brooks** puts it declaring that "The true way to be humble, is not to stoop until you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature." And to follow up on that thought, what better way to "humble ourselves" than to stand in comparison to the Lord Jesus Christ, the supreme example of humility (See the [illustration](#) below). Indeed, John the Baptist describes this same spiritual dynamic declaring that

"He (Jesus) must ([dei](#) in [present tense](#)) increase ([present tense](#)), but I must ([dei](#) in [present tense](#)) decrease ([present tense](#))." (John 3:30+)

Notice three things about this short but packed passage: (1) Jesus is mentioned first for when we see Him we are driven to our faces on the ground. In other words, we don't decrease to make Jesus increase. The more He is glorified in our heart and mind by the Spirit, the greater will be our decrease. (2) Secondly, both uses of "**must**" ([dei](#)) are [present tense](#) which signifies that this is a continuous obligation. (3) And lastly, the [present tense](#) for decreasing indicates that this will be a lifelong pursuit. We see this spiritual dynamic in Paul's life with him progressively decreasing over time. As Jesus continually increased, Paul continually decreased! And that is our pattern to imitate (1 Cor 11:1-note) ([see the chronological progression above](#))

**MacArthur** says the idea is "to make oneself low, NOT in the self-put-downs that many people use in order to induce others to build them up, but in a genuine realization of complete unworthiness and lostness because of sin." To humble oneself includes having a modest opinion of one's self, and behaving in an unassuming manner. While the Greeks saw humility as a shameful state, the NT teaches that humility is an attitude which is vital for a man to come into right relation to God!

Humble we must be, if to heaven we go;  
High is the roof there, but the gate is low.  
- George Herbert

As **C. H. Spurgeon** says "Let us be (be willing to be) humble that we may not need to be humbled, but may be exalted by the grace of God."

**Dwight L. Moody** declared that "Unless you humble yourself before (God) in the dust (**Note:** *tapeinos* = not rising far from the ground), and confess before Him your iniquities and sins, the gate of heaven, which is open only for sinners saved by grace, must be shut against you forever."

**Ralph Martin** writes that "**humility** before God is the only way to true joy. **Humility**—that state of total dependence on God—is foreign to "the world." To seek to be exalted by the world is dangerous, as well as futile (Jas 1:9, 10, 11-[note](#)). But to humble oneself before God is to await his eschatological reversal and to look to Him for His intervention (Luke 14:11)."

Puritan **William Secker** wrote that "Pride is a sinner's torment, but humility is a saint's ornament."

**Pastor Steven Cole** writes that "The key to developing biblical humility is in the phrase, **in the presence of the Lord** (Jas 4:10). Only those with hardened hearts could be proud in the presence of the Lord! The holy angels in His presence cover their faces (Isa 6:2). When Isaiah had his vision of the Lord, he was undone—personally shattered—and immediately aware of his own sinfulness (Isa. 6:5). When God portrayed the wonders of creation before Job, he had no further arguments against God. Instead, he said (Job 42:6), "I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes." When the apostle John, who formerly had rested his head on Jesus' chest, saw Him in His glory on the Isle of Patmos, he fell at His feet as a dead man (Rev 1:17-[note](#)). ([Sermon](#))

Self-centeredness brings misery,  
A proud heart brings much pain;  
But those with true humility

Have lasting peace to gain. —Sper

**Pastor Phil Newton** offers this insight on why one would humble themselves in God's presence - "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you." Why is this so? Consider the many times we see humility taking place in Scripture. **It seems that there is a pattern of God's people recognizing the Lord's presence or something of His attributes, and then the response is humility** (e.g., Isaiah 6:1-4, 5, Joshua 5:14-15, David, Moses, Peter, John). (1) They caught a glimpse of God, as they had never had before; they saw and experienced something of the divine character before them. (2) Consequently, each responded by seeing his own weakness, unworthiness, and helplessness (cf Mt 5:3-[note](#)). This is the very opposite of the pastor from another generation of whom it was said he could "strut sitting down." So, think upon the Lord; get a clear view of your own selfishness with time, money, conversation, and interests; acknowledge God's worth above all. (Sermon)

**Richard DeHaan**, wrote an excellent little book on 1 Peter, in which he gave this test of true humility describing

**First**, the test of precedence

"Do you feel badly when others are honored, because they outshine you?"

**Second**, he noted that then comes the test of sincerity

"All too often, people say things about themselves to sound humble, when they really are not."

**Third**, the test of criticism:

"Do you react unfavorably when someone points out your shortcomings?"

If you gave yourself a perfect score on this test, you failed the test of humility (from [Richard DeHaan, Good News for Bad Times](#)).

**Archibald Alexander** once said that "Humility is to the Christian what ballast is to the ship; it keeps him in his proper position and regulates all his thoughts and feelings."

**Spurgeon** - There is a conspiracy of heaven and earth and hell to put down proud men, neither good nor bad, the highest nor the lowest, can endure those who are self-exalted; but if you are willing to take your right place, which is probably the lowest, you shall soon find honour in the midst of your brethren.

**MacArthur** - Honor and blessing in God's kingdom eludes those who think they can earn it; salvation comes only to the humble (Matt. 5:3-5). Those bloated with the edema of pride will not pass through the narrow gate leading to salvation.

Lowell Johnson (scroll down) This is one of the wonderful paradoxes of Jesus that is totally contrary to the way the world thinks. The world says if you want to climb higher and be somebody you must push, fight, claw, and work your way to the top of the heap. The world says "the way up is up!" But Jesus says just the opposite. He says the way up is down. In other words, if you try to promote your prideful self, you'll end up humbled. And He also says the way up is down. Someone has said, "Conceit – self-exaltation – is a disease that makes everyone sick except the one who has it."

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**Will be humbled** (5013) ([tapeinoo](#) from [tapeinos](#) = low, not high, figuratively of one's attitude) literally means to level, to cause something to be lower or to make low (eg, to level off a mountain in Lk 3:5 from Lxx of Is 40:4). **Tapeinoo** means to bow down, to make low, to humble. Most NT uses of **tapeinoo** are figurative and include the following meanings: To cause someone to lose prestige, to reduce to a meaner condition or lower rank, to abase.

**Tapeinoo** - 15x/11v - **brought low(1), get along(1), humble(2), humble means(1), humbled(4), humbles(4), humbling(1), humiliate(1)**. Matt. 18:4; Matt. 23:12; Lk. 3:5; Lk. 14:11; Lk. 18:14; 2 Co. 11:7; 2 Co. 12:21; Phil. 2:8; Phil. 4:12; Jas. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6

**Exalted** (5312) ([hupsoo](#) from [hupsos](#) = height, elevation) means to lift up spatially, to raise high. Figuratively, it can describe lifting one up to a place of honor, fame, power, or position (to exalt). **Dauids** comments on the use of **hupsoo** in Jas 4:10 - The picture is that of someone prostrate before an oriental monarch, begging mercy. The monarch leans down from the throne and lifts the petitioner's face from the dust. The person rises with grateful joy, knowing he or she is forgiven. (New International Biblical Commentary).

**Hupsoo** - 17x/16v - **exalt(2), exalted(9), exalts(3), lift(1), lifted(4), made...great(1)**. Matt. 11:23; Matt. 23:12; Lk. 1:52; Lk. 10:15; Lk. 14:11; Lk. 18:14; Jn. 3:14; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 12:32; Jn. 12:34; Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31; Acts 13:17; 2 Co. 11:7; Jas. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6

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**Steven Cole** - The more we grow in grace, the more we will grow in humility. Biblical humility is the recognition that everything good

that we are and have comes as an undeserved gift from God. As Paul put it to the Corinthians, "And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). Biblical humility is a recognition that apart from Christ, I can do nothing (John 15:5), and so I do not trust in myself, but in the Lord. Biblical humility is always accompanied by a growing awareness of the depths of my own sinfulness, along with a growing appreciation for the abundant grace of God shown to me in Christ. The psalmist put it, "If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared" (Ps. 130:3-4). As the pioneer missionary, William Carey, had inscribed on his tombstone, "A wretched, poor and helpless worm, on Thy kind arms I fall." Biblical humility runs completely counter to the predominant self-esteem teaching that has flooded the church. We are being told that at the root of our problems is the fact that we do not think highly enough of ourselves. For example, I have a brochure from a well-known Christian treatment program. It has glowing endorsements from several well-known Christian leaders. The brochure explains, "Part of [our] success is found in the unique ability to target and resolve problems of low self-esteem. At the core of all emotional problems and addictive disorders is low self-worth. It is never the only problem; but it is so major an issue that, if not dealt with adequately, one is kept from experiencing lasting, positive results."

Contrast that with John Calvin, who wrote (The Institutes of the Christian Religion [Westminster], 2:1:2):

Here, then, is what God's truth requires us to seek in examining ourselves: it requires the kind of knowledge that will strip us of all confidence in our own ability, deprive us of all occasion for boasting, and lead us to submission.... I am quite aware how much more pleasing is that principle which invites us to weigh our good traits rather than to look upon our miserable want and dishonor, which ought to overwhelm us with shame. There is, indeed, nothing that man's nature seeks more eagerly than to be flattered.... For since blind self-love is innate in all mortals, they are most freely persuaded that nothing inheres in themselves that deserves to be considered hateful. Thus even with no outside support the utterly vain opinion generally obtains credence that man is abundantly sufficient of himself to lead a good and blessed life. But if any take a more modest attitude and concede something to God, so as not to appear to claim everything for themselves, they so divide the credit that the chief basis for boasting and confidence remains in themselves. Nothing pleases man more than the sort of alluring talk that tickles the pride that itches in his very marrow. Therefore, in nearly every age, when anyone publicly extolled human nature in most favorable terms, he was listened to with applause.

He goes on to say that those who assent to such teaching are deceived and are driven to utter ruin. Throughout The Institutes and his other writings, Calvin extols humility as the chief virtue and pride as the main vice of the human race. It is amazing to me how we could have gotten so far off base in our day (and I used to teach it myself!) when Scripture so thoroughly confronts our pride and continually calls us to humble ourselves before God and others. ([Jesus the Confronter](#))

Lowell Johnson - Jesus is going to give a lesson on humility as He talks about the problem of pride.

Pride is basically the attitude that says, "I'm the center of my universe."

Let me mention two things that makes pride such a problem.

A. Pride is hard to recognize in yourself.

The Dutch painter, Bosh, painted a picture of each of the Seven Deadly Sins on the Catholic list. For the sin of Pride, he painted the picture of a woman looking at her face in a mirror held by the devil.

To help us to determine how much pride we are carrying, I ran across a test called the P. Q. (Pride Quotient) Test. If you want to see what your P. Q. is, just answer "Yes" or "No" if any of these statements applies to you:

1. I enjoy being the center of attention.
2. I think I deserve the best.
3. Much of my conversation is filled with "I".
4. I find it difficult to admit that I'm wrong.
5. I seldom pass a mirror without looking at myself.
6. I'm stubborn – I don't like to be corrected or challenged.
7. My feelings are easily hurt.
8. I am impatient with other people's mistakes.
9. I don't get enough appreciation for all I do.
10. I'm offended if I render a service and don't receive a "Thank You."
11. I seldom ask for help, because I can do the job better myself.

If you have one or more "Yes" answers, it reveals the presence of Pride in your life. If you don't have any "Yes" answers, it simply

reveals you are lying to yourself about yourself. Pride is hard to see in ourselves, but we can easily see it in others.

Another problem with Pride is:

B. It leads to Ruin

Proverbs 16:18: Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

The best way to guarantee you'll fall is to let pride take over your life.

I heard a funny story about a frog that wanted to go South with the birds for the winter. It was too far to hop and he couldn't fly, so he thought about it and came up with a solution.

He got a couple of his bird friends to hold each end of a stick in their beaks and then the little frog clamped down on the center of the stick with his mouth. The birds took off and the frog was hanging from the stick they were carrying in their mouths.

They flew over a couple of farmers who observed the scene. One farmer said to the other, "What a brilliant idea! Whoever came up with that idea is a genius. I guess it was one of those birds who had the idea!"

When the frog heard that, he just couldn't let the birds get the credit for his good idea, so he said, "I ... I ... I" as he fell to the ground. The moral of that story is: If someone else gets the credit for your good idea, just keep your mouth closed.

You don't find a lot of people who are asking the question, "How can I be more humble?"

IV. The Summary Luke 14:12-14

True humility is revealed by how we treat others.

It is the old formula for joy. JOY which is JESUS first, OTHERS second, and YOURSELF third.

It is pride that makes you want to rush to get the best seats at the table. It is pride that makes you rush to the front of the line so you can eat before anyone else.

Pride keeps "I" at the center of the universe and it's constantly looking out for No. 1. Humility has replaced "I" with "Christ," and Jesus Christ was the most humble man who ever lived.

See Philippians 2:3-5.

The rest of the passage tells how far Jesus humbled Himself – even to die on the cross. And what did God the Father do?

See Philippians 2:5-11.

May God teach us to humble ourselves and treat others with kindness and respect.

We aren't Rednecks, but we are country folks and I think of our church as a country church. I read a similar list the other day. It says, "You know you go to a country church if ..."

1. "The church votes not to buy a chandelier because nobody knows how to play one."
2. "The opening day of deer season is a church holiday."
3. "A member request to be buried in his 4-wheel drive truck because 'It ain't never been in a hole it can't get out of.'"
4. "Folks think the 'Rapture' is what you get from lifting something too heavy."
5. "The pastor asks 'Bubba' to take up the offering and five guys and two women stand up."

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## Radical And Upside-Down

Read: Luke 14:7-14

There are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last. —Luke 13:30

The values of the kingdom that Jesus came to establish were radically different than those of His day. The Pharisees and teachers of the law clamored for the spotlight and sought the adulation of the crowds. Many of us still do this today.

In Luke 14, Jesus told a parable that taught His followers not to be like that. The parable talks about people who chose the most honored seat for themselves at a wedding feast (Lk 14:7-8). He said they would be embarrassed when the host asked them publicly to take their rightful place (Lk 14:9). Jesus went on in His story to talk about whom to invite to such dinners. He said they shouldn't

invite friends and family, but “when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you” (Lk 14:13-14).

Disappointed because you have not broken into the more elite group in your church or neighborhood? Stuck down on rung two when you'd rather be on rung eight or at least climbing the social ladder? Listen to what Jesus said: “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Lk 14:11). That's the radical and upside-down way of God's kingdom! By David C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Blessed Savior, make me humble,  
"Take away my sinful pride;  
In myself I'm sure to stumble,  
Help me stay close by Your side. "  
—D. De Haan

In Christ's kingdom, humility trumps pride every time.

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## Humility's Reward

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. —Luke 14:11

A small western college was struggling financially. The buildings were shabby, and staff salaries were meager.

A stranger visited the campus one day and asked a man who was washing a wall where he could find the president. “I think you can see him at his house at noon,” was the reply.

The visitor went as directed and met the president, whom he recognized as the same man who was scrubbing a wall earlier in the day, though he was now in different clothes.

Later that same week, a letter came with a gift of \$50,000 for the college. The spirit of service on the part of the president had made a positive impression on the visitor. Because the benefactor saw a man who was not too proud to help where needed, even though it involved what some might term a menial task, he was moved to contribute generously to the school.

The lesson is clear. God rewards those who take a lowly place. The Savior Himself set the pattern by becoming man and giving His life for us (Phil. 2:3-11).

Keep in mind Jesus' words in Luke 14:11. “He who humbles himself will be exalted.” That's humility's reward! By Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God often uses lowly ones  
His purpose to fulfill,  
Because it takes a humble heart  
To carry out His will. —DJD

True service is love in working clothes.

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**Illustration** - A man who had just been elected to the British Parliament brought his family to London and was giving them a tour of the city. When they entered Westminster Abbey, his eight-year-old daughter seemed awe-struck by the size and beauty of that magnificent structure. Her proud father, curious about what was going on in her mind, asked, "And what, my child, are you thinking about?" She replied, "Daddy, I was just thinking about how big you are in our house, but how small you look here!"

Pride can creep into our lives without our awareness. From time to time it's good for us to be "cut down to size." We need to be reminded not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think (Ro 12:3-[note](#), cf Php 2:3-5-[note](#)). It's easy to become proud when we stay in our own circles of life. But when we are thrust into larger situations, with increased demands, pressures, and competition, we come to the shocking realization that **"big fish in small ponds" shrink quickly in a large ocean.**

One thing that stands out in the Word of God is that the Lord despises the haughty. Under inspiration the psalmist said, "One who has a haughty look and a proud heart, him I will not endure" (Psalm 101:5-[note](#)) . And James said, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6-[note](#)).

**If we ask the Holy Spirit to help us see ourselves as we really are, He will enable us to control our foolish pride** (Ed: And a "good mirror" helps us see who we really are - cf James 1:23-25-[note](#))—R W De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**Mattoon** - In the history of American figure skating, we find a classic example of someone who lost face in the fuss to be first. According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia, on January 6, 1994, Nancy Kerrigan was attacked during a practice session for the 1994 U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit. Nancy was a contender for the championship. The attack was plotted by the husband and body guard of Tonya Harding, another girl competing in the skating championship. These two men hired a man to break Nancy Kerrigan's right leg so that she would be unable to skate in the competition. Shane Stant hit Nancy with a police baton on the thigh, but did not break the leg. It was, however, seriously bruised. She was unable to compete in the championship in Detroit and Tonya ended up winning it. Tonya and Nancy were both picked for the 1994 Olympic Skating team. When Tonya's husband's connection to the attack was discovered, Tonya admitted to helping cover up the attack. Tonya Harding avoided further prosecution and a possible jail sentence by pleading guilty to conspiring to hinder prosecution of the attackers. She received three years probation, 500 hours of community service and a \$160,000 fine. As part of the plea bargain, Harding was also forced to withdraw from the 1994 World Figure Skating Championships and resign from the United States Figure Skating Association. She was stripped of her 1994 title and was banned for life from participating in USFSA events as a skater or coach. In the professional skating circuit, she found that few skaters and promoters would work with her. She was totally disgraced. She lost face in the fuss to be first. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

If honor is a big deal to you, then seek the honor of God in your life.

If You Seek God's Honor

1. Desire to Obey His Word
2. Determine to Honor and Glorify God in Your Life
3. Disdain Sin in Your Heart
4. Discern Your Weaknesses and God's Greatness
5. Determine to be Available to the Lord
6. Do Your Best Always
7. Dependency on the Lord should be Practiced Each Day
8. Dedicate Yourself to Serving Him

Don't lose your face in the fuss to be first. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Luke 14:12** And He also went on to say 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 neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment.

KJV Luke 14:12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

- **When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends** Lk 1:53; Pr 14:20; 22:16; James 2:1-6
- **and that will be your repayment** 6:32-36; Zech 7:5-7; Mt 5:46; 6:1-4,16-18
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

## JESUS CONTINUES TO REBUKE THEIR SINFUL PRIDE

**And He also went on to say to the one who had invited ([kaleo](#)) Him** - Referring to His host, the leader of the Pharisees in Lk 14:1<sup>+</sup>.

**Warren Wiersbe** - Jesus knew that the host had invited his guests for two reasons: (1) to pay them back because they had invited him to past feasts, or (2) to put them under his debt so that they would invite him to future feasts. Such hospitality was not an expression of love and grace but rather an evidence of pride and selfishness. He was "buying" recognition. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Robertson** - This is a parable for the host as one had just been given for the guests, though Luke does not term this a parable.



**Rod Mattoon** has an interesting introduction to this next section he entitles "The Three Stooges" writing - When I was growing up as a boy, I can remember watching three men that were constantly doing foolish, nutty things and beating up on one another. These guys were absolutely crazy and were known as Moe, Larry, and Curly, otherwise known as The Three Stooges. Two of the men were actual brothers, Moe and Curly. The constant bings, bangs, bongos, dings, dongos, slaps, and punches would almost drive a person crazy, yet, people came back for more. In fact, they performed from 1922 to 1975. Their comedy, mockery, and foolishness drove Adolph Hitler into a rage. They were the first to do a small film making fun of Hitler. In 1940, their short film called "You Natzy Spy" put them on Hitler's Death List. When we look in this portion of Luke 14, we find the original Three Stooges. These men were also characterized by foolish, stupid thinking and behavior. The reason we note them is because many folks today think and act just like them. Let's take a look at this story so you can understand why many folks behave like The Three Stooges. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends ([philos](#)) or your brothers ([adelphos](#)) or your relatives or rich ([plousios](#)) neighbors ([geiton](#))** - Jesus is addressing the idea of [reciprocity](#), the practice of exchanging things (in this case dinner invitations) with others (other prideful Pharisees) for mutual benefit. **Do not invite ([kaleo](#))** is a command, [present imperative with a negative](#), which calls for this Pharisee to stop inviting only friends, et al. Jesus is not saying he could not invite friends, but that he needed a "motive check!" He should not do so to the exclusion of others. In other words, Jesus is condemning his social [exclusivism](#) (then and now)! This host was self-seeking in his selection of guests!

**Warren Wiersbe** - Jesus does not prohibit us from entertaining family and friends, but He warns us against entertaining only family and friends exclusively and habitually. That kind of "fellowship" quickly degenerates into a "mutual admiration society" in which each one tries to outdo the others and no one dares to break the cycle. **Sad to say, too much church social life fits this description.** (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**C H Spurgeon** - Our Saviour, you see, keeps to one line of instruction. It was a feast, so he used the feast to teach another lesson. It is always well, when men's minds are running in a certain direction, to make use of that particular current. When a feast is uppermost in the minds of men, it is no use starting another subject. So the Saviour rides upon the back of the banquet, making it to be his steed. Note his advice to his host: "Try to avoid doing that for which you will be recompensed. If you are rewarded for it the transaction is over; but if not, then it stands recorded in the book of God, and it will be recompensed to you in the great day of account."

**Craig Keener** - Not to invite people of one's own social status would offend them; but Jesus says that the other's need, not one's own social standing, must determine the giving of gifts. The Old Testament forbade charging interest on a loan and so profiting by one's neighbor; but Jesus' principle here excludes looking for any repayment at all; cf. "'If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount. 35"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men." Lk 6:34-35+. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

**They may also invite ([kaleo](#)) you in return and that will be your repayment ([antapodoma](#))** - The "benefit" of the [reciprocity](#) in this case is an invitation. As MacArthur says this "was a zero sum game with no winners, in which the participants' gains and losses of prestige evened out in the end. In Jewish society an invitation to a meal with a Pharisee was a kind of currency; they exploited hospitality for the sake of self-glory and elevation. Disinterested kindness was foreign to them; everything they did was self-serving."

**Warren Wiersbe** - Our motive for sharing must be the praise of God and not the applause of men, the eternal reward in heaven and not the temporary recognition on earth. A pastor friend of mine used to remind me, "You can't get your reward twice!" and he was right (see Matt. 6:1-18). On the day of judgment, many who today are first in the eyes of men will be last in God's eyes, and many who are last in the eyes of men will be first in the eyes of God (Luke 13:30). (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Darrell Bock** - The invitation of friends is limited to repayment in an invitation to eat at their home. But the more gracious action that Jesus suggests has a bigger, more permanent, reward from God. The major point is that customary "pay back" hospitality is of no great merit to God. Fellowship should not have social limits. The best hospitality is that which is given, not exchanged. (See [Luke Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Rod Mattoon** - Jesus gives these Pharisees instructions for hosting a party or dinner. The principles given here are applicable for us today. When people made a grand feast in Bible days, they would invite famous and important people to their dinner, which would give them prestige if they attended. These important folks would return the favor by inviting them to their social functions. In a sense, they would give to those in authority or important positions in order to get something in return. Jesus was condemning this motive. Do people do this today? Of course they do. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Rich** (rich man) ([4145](#))([plousios](#) from [ploutos](#) = wealth, abundance, riches) is an adjective which literally refers to having an

abundance of earthly possessions that exceeds normal experience. **Rich** is used often of material wealth and was a frequent topic addressed by the Lord Jesus.

**Luke's** uses of **plousios** - Lk. 6:24-note; Lk. 12:16-note; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 16:1; Lk. 16:19; Lk. 16:21; Lk. 16:22; Lk. 18:23; Lk. 18:25; Lk. 19:2; Lk. 21:1

**Repayment** (468) (**antapodoma** from **antí** = in turn + **apodidomi** = render; cognate verb **antapodidomi**) a noun which means a giving back in return for something received and so that which is offered or given as recompense or retribution (in both a good sense and a bad sense). The thing paid back in a good sense (Lk 14:12) or bad sense (Ro 11:9).

**Anatpodoma** - 3v - Neh. 11:6; Lk. 14:12; Rom. 11:9

**Neighbors** (1069) (**geiton** from **ge** = earth, land) means literally one "of the same land," one living nearby and sharing ethnic and cultural similarities. Always used in plural. Synonym = plesion.

**Gilbrant** - The adjective "neighboring" oftentimes gives this word a locative sense as in the English "neighborhood." However, in the few times it is used in the New Testament, *geitōn* is more broadly used to mean "human relationships" which pass beyond the limits of geography. This is especially true in Luke 14:12 and Luke 15:6,9 where the term is used with *adelphos*, "brother." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Geiton** - 4x in NT - Lk. 14:12; Lk. 15:6; Lk. 15:9; Jn. 9:8. **Lxx** = Ex. 3:22; Ex. 12:4; Ru 4:17; 2 Ki. 4:3; Job 19:15; Job 26:5; Ps. 31:11; Ps. 44:13; Ps. 79:4; Ps. 79:12; Ps. 80:6; Ps. 89:41; Jer. 6:21; Jer. 12:14; Jer. 49:10  
- Lxx uses frequently in context of "reproach to one's neighbors."

**Luke 14:13 "But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,**

KJV Luke 14:13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

- **invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind** Lk 14:21; 11:41; Dt 14:29; 16:11,14; 26:12,13; 2 Sa 6:19; 2 Chr 30:24; Neh 8:10,12; Job 29:13,15,16; 31:16-20; Pr 3:9,10; 14:31; 31:6,7; Isa 58:7,10; Mt 14:14-21; 15:32-39; 22:10; Acts 2:44,45; 4:34,35; 9:39; Ro 12:13-16; 1 Ti 3:2; 5:10; Titus 1:8; Phile 1:7; Heb 13:2
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

## TRUE DISCIPLESHIP CALLS FOR UNSELFISH GENEROSITY

**But** - A [term of contrast](#) which should always prompt the question "What is being contrasted?" In this case the contrast is striking - the way of the Pharisees who sought to be exalted among men, and the way of God, which is the humble path that leads to true blessing.

**When you give a reception** (banquet, "elaborate meal" = NET), **invite** ([kaleo](#)) **the poor** ([ptochos](#)), **the crippled** (maimed, disfigured - [anaperos](#)), **the lame** ([cholos](#)), **the blind** ([tuphlos](#)) (4 groups in Lk 14:21) - This focuses on those who have need and have no funds to repay with a reciprocal invitation. To the Pharisees such a suggestion would be absurd as these low caste people could provide no benefit to them in their desire for prestige. In fact the Pharisees shunned this genre of non-genteel folk! The OT clearly taught concern for the poor and powerless (Dt. 14:28–29; 16:11–14; 26:11–13.)

**David Guzik** - There is something wonderful in giving a gift that can never be repaid. This is some of the more blessing Jesus spoke of when He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35). ([Commentary](#))

**Craig Keener** - Well-to-do persons in the Greco-Roman world usually invited people of somewhat lower social status in return for receiving honor, but these invitees would still be relatively respectable, not absolute dependents or beggars, as crippled, lame and blind people would be in that society, or peasants (although many Jewish teachers might regard inviting beggars and peasants as an act of piety). The crippled, lame and blind were not permitted on the premises of the probably Essene community at Qumran. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

**Steven Cole** - True ministry out of Christian love serves and gives without thought of return. It isn't manipulative, serving for what you can get out of it. As Christians, we should serve others out of love for God and others. To go Jesus' way, you have to have your focus on eternity, not on the rewards of this life. You have to believe that God "is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

Often there are many blessings that come back on you in this life when you serve the Lord. But, often there are not any visible rewards here and now. You serve and no one notices. You give to help a needy person and you get ripped off, and the person never even says, "Thanks." **One test of whether your motives are right in your service for Christ is** "Are you hurt when you don't get the recognition you think you deserve?" (WOE!) **Another test is, "What is your attitude toward the poor and the hurting?"** If you're only willing to serve those who can pay you back or who might later be able to advance your cause, you're using people, not loving them. Jesus confronts our motives for service. Any selfish motives in serving Christ are sin. [Jesus the Confronter](#)

**Darrell Bock** - Unlike much of ancient culture, Jesus urges that reciprocity not be a factor in deciding whom to invite (Marshall 1978: 584). Hospitality is generosity when no motive exists besides. (See [Luke Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Mattoon** - He instructed them to invite those who were poor, maimed, lame, and blind. By doing this, they would show they were not controlled by a spirit of repayment, that their giving was unselfish, and their love was genuine. The Lord is trying to get us to examine our motives of service and doing things for others. Is it for self-glory or for God's glory? Are we seeking to be seen of others? Are we trying to gain something down the road? One day our motives will be revealed. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Brian Bell** - We should examine the motives behind all our generosity: . [1] A man may give from a sense of duty.. [2] A man may give purely from motives of self-interest. But not if he invites someone who can't ever invite him to his next feast! {i.e. can't reciprocate} [3] A man may give in order to feel superior. The Rabbis had a saying that the best kind of giving was when the giver did not know to whom he was giving, and when the receiver did not know from whom he was receiving. [4] A man may give because he cannot help it. That is the only real way to give. God gave because He so loved the world—and so must we. How much better to reach out in love to those who no one knows but God.

You can be paid back in this life or the next!

Paul alludes to this by giving us a "motive check" in First Corinthians

Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God. (1 Cor 4:5)

**Comment** - "Judge nothing before the time", for all such judgment must be premature and faulty, partial and inconclusive, invalid and illegal. The "time" is when the Lord comes and sets up His Judgment Seat. In view of this "time", all human verdicts must be [prejudice](#). Then the Lord will bring into the light the hidden things of darkness, those deep inner springs that lurked unseen, things of which we were not aware, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart, those secret desires and motives which were concealed but were the basis of decision and action. Then everything will be "named and open". Then each shall receive the praise that is his due from God, the only praise that really matters, the only judgment that possesses true value. (What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians) (Ed: The truth this verse prompts me to pray Ps 139:23-24 frequently!)

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**Poor** (4434) [ptochos](#) from [ptosso](#) = crouch, cringe, cower down or hide oneself for fear, a picture of one crouching and cowering like a beggar with a tin cup to receive the pennies dropped in!) is an adjective which describes one who crouches and cowers and is used as a noun to mean **beggar**. These poor were unable to meet their basic needs and so were forced to depend on others or on society. Classical Greek used the [ptochos](#) to refer to a person reduced to total destitution, who crouched in a corner begging. As he held out one hand for alms he often hid his face with the other hand, because he was ashamed of being recognized. **Ptochos** describes not simply honest poverty, and the struggle of the laboring man to make ends meet but also describes abject poverty, which has literally nothing and which is in imminent danger of real starvation.

**Crippled** (376) ([anaperos](#) from [aná](#) = up, or used as a distributive + [pērós](#) = maimed, disabled in a limb) means crippled, maimed, mutilated. Gilbrant - Only Luke used this term in the New Testament. Although adjectival in form, [anapēros](#) functions as a noun in the Third Gospel (14:13, 21). In the Parable of the Great Banquet the man giving the banquet instructed his servants to invite the "poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," because none of the invited guests would come. Such action on the part of the man is reminiscent of Jesus who proclaimed the gospel to those in desperate circumstances: help for the poor, freedom for the prisoners, and recovery of sight to the blind (cf. Luke 4:18; Luke 7:22). Outside of the New Testament it occurs in the Septuagint (e.g., Tobit 14:2; 2 Maccabees 8:24) as well as in secular sources.

**Anaperos** - Lk. 14:13; Lk. 14:21

**Lame** (5560) ([cholos](#)) is an adjective that describes a physical "disability that involves the imperfect function of the lower limbs" (Louw-Nida). It is used in the NT primarily to describe those who are literally crippled in the feet or legs (Acts 3:2, 11, 14:8, Mt 11:5, 15:30-31, 21:14, Lk 7:22, Jn 5:3) or deprived of one foot, maimed (Mt 18:8, Mk 9:45). **Cholos** is used once in a figurative sense to

describe spiritual weakness in Heb 12:13 (cf Lxx use in 1 Ki 18:21) where the limb that is lame denotes those wavering between two opinions within the Christian community.

**Gilbrant** - This adjective is used in both the Septuagint and the New Testament to designate the group of people who suffer such afflictions, usually grouped together with "the blind" and other handicapped groups. Since the Law forbade the full cultic participation of people who were physically impaired, the healing of such people and their consequent reintegration into society was symbolic of the glories of the coming kingdom of God in both the Old and New Testaments (cf. Matthew 11:4-6 and Isaiah 35:5,6 which is alluded to there). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Cholos** in NT - 14x in 14v - Mt. 11:5; 15:30-31; 18:8; 21:14; Mk. 9:45; Lk. 7:22; 14:13,21; Jn. 5:3; Acts 3:2; 8:7; 14:8; Heb. 12:13

**Cholos** in Septuagint - 11x in 11v - Lev. 21:18; Deut. 15:21; 2 Sam. 5:6,8; 9:13; 19:26; Job 29:15; Isa. 33:23; 35:6; Mal. 1:8,13;

**Blind** (5185)(**tuphlos** from **tuphlóo** = envelop with smoke, be unable to see clearly) can refer to literal blindness as here in Luke 14:13 (cf Mt 9:27, 28; 11:5; 12:22; Lk 7:21, 22; Jn 9:1, 2, 3.; Acts 13:11 Lv 19:14; Job 29:15) but more often the NT uses **tuphlos** to describe spiritual blindness. Figuratively the picture is of one's mind as blind, ignorant, stupid, slow of understanding, being unable to understand, incapable of comprehending (see Mt 15:14; 23:16, 17, 19, 24, 26; Lk 4:18; Jn 9:39,40,41; Ro 2:19; 2Pe 1:9; Rev 3:17; Isa 42:16,18,19; 43:8) This sense speaks of both mental and spiritual blindness, often the result of self-deception so that one is unable to understand (spiritual truth). The Greek writers used **tuphlos** to describe those who were "mentally blind".

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### [A New Tradition](#)

When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. —Luke 14:13

In the United States, Thanksgiving is traditionally a day of feasting with family. But changing circumstances may lead us to rethink our holiday traditions.

It happened to Sharon Randall during a year in which her mother died, her father-in-law had to be moved to a rest home, and her husband was undergoing treatment for cancer. As the Thanksgiving holiday drew near, the Randall family decided it was time for a new approach. So instead of preparing a feast just for themselves, they invited people outside their family circle to join them. The next year they expanded the guest list even more.

"If your family has changed and you need a new tradition," says Sharon, "look around. You're not alone. Invite someone to join you for Thanksgiving. Or volunteer to help serve at a church or shelter or community dinner."

Those are challenging words for every follower of Jesus Christ. Perhaps it's time to start a new tradition for your next holiday feast by inviting people outside your usual circle, or by serving those in need. In Luke 14:12-14, Jesus said that when we include those who can't repay us, we are blessed in a special way. Sharing the feast is Thanksgiving indeed! By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Just a "cup of cold water" was given in His name,  
But the soul of the giver was never the same!  
For he found that when giving was done with a zest,  
Both the heart of the giver and taker were blest. —Anon.

Life takes on new meaning when we give ourselves to others.

**Luke 14:14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."**

KJV Luke 14:14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

NET Luke 14:14 Then you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

CSB Luke 14:14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

ESV Luke 14:14 and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

NIV Luke 14:14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

NLT Luke 14:14 Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you."

NRS Luke 14:14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

- **for you will be repaid** Pr 19:17; Mt 6:4; 10:41,42; 25:34-40; Phil 4:18,19
- **at the resurrection of the righteous** Lk 20:35,36; Da 12:2,3; Jn 5:29; Acts 24:15
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:1-14 Jesus the Confronter](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:7-14 Humbling the Exalted--Exalting the Humble](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Proverbs 19:17 [Bridges' note](#) One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, And He will repay him for his good deed.

## THE PROMISE OF FUTURE BLESSING

**And you will be** (prophetic promise) **blessed** ([makarios](#)), **since they do not have the means to repay** ([antapodidomi](#)) **you** - The point is that you "gave" expecting nothing in return. God notes and approves of such generosity. You gave with pure motives, motives of compassion and love for your fellow man. These are God-like attributes. And God honors selfless graciousness. While they do not have the means to repay, God does and God will repay! Note that "**be blessed**" is the "[Divine Passive](#)" indicating it is God Who will repay.

**Wiersbe** - If our hearts are right, God will see to it that we are properly rewarded, though getting a reward must not be the motive for our generosity. When we serve others from unselfish hearts, we are laying up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20) and becoming "rich toward God" (Luke 12:21). Our modern world is very competitive, and it is easy for God's people to become more concerned about profit and loss than they are about sacrifice and service. "What will I get out of it?" may easily become life's most important question (Matt. 19:27ff). We must strive to maintain the unselfish attitude that Jesus had and share what we have with others. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Rob Morgan - Makarios** (blessed) means happy, fortunate, blissful. Homer used the word to describe a wealthy man, and Plato used it of one who is successful in business. Both Homer and Hesiod spoke of the Greek gods as being **happy** ([makarios](#)) within themselves, because they were unaffected by the world of men-who were subject to poverty, disease, weakness, misfortune, and death. **The fullest meaning of the term, therefore, had to do with an inward contentedness that is not affected by circumstances.** That is the kind of happiness God desires for His children, a state of joy and well-being that does not depend on physical, temporary circumstances (cf Php 4:11, 12, 13). (From his sermon entitled "Blessed")

**For you will be repaid** ([antapodidomi](#)) **at the resurrection** ([anastasis](#)) **of the righteous** ([dikaios](#)) - **For** is a [term of explanation](#) introducing Jesus explanation of how you will be **blessed**. **Will be repaid** is in the passive voice is the "[Divine Passive](#)" indicating it is God Himself Who will repay their selfless generosity and speaks of God's commendation. The blessing will not be bestowed by those who have to means to repay but by God has has all means to repay and to repay throughout eternity! Hallelujah! I would call that a blessing beyond belief and certainly beyond anything we could ever earn or ever deserve. That God would save us is "reward" enough, but that He will reward us in eternity future is nothing short of indescribably amazing grace! Amazing grace indeed! Contrast the repayment of the Pharisees from one man to another in time, with the repayment from the infinitely rich and generous almighty God throughout eternity! This future hope (absolute certainty) mindset is living in time with an eternal perspective (cf 2Cor 4:17-18).

**THOUGHT** - With what perspective are you spending your short time on earth? Read about your life in James 4:13-14+, then Ps 144:4 and then Ephesians 5:16KJV+.

One is reminded of Jesus' words in Rev 22:12+ "Behold (TO GET OUR ATTENTION), I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man (NOTE THE ADJECTIVE "EVERY" - SOME GOOD, SOME BAD, BUT SOME TO EVERYONE!)



according to what he has done."

**THOUGHT** - Are you storing up for yourself treasure in heaven, where the R.O.I. (Return On Investment) is "out of this world?" If you are not, begin today! Do not procrastinate! Here's a great little book to motivate you to get moving! Borrow [The Treasure Principle](#) by Randy Alcorn.

**Keener** - Judaism taught that the righteous would ultimately be rewarded at the resurrection of the dead; here Jesus applies this truth to distribution of resources. That God repaid those who helped the poor was already taught in the Old Testament (Prov 19:17).

**Spurgeon** - It should be your ambition to have something set down to your credit "at the resurrection of the just." If you do someone a kindness with a view to gaining gratitude, you will probably be disappointed; and even if you should succeed, what is the gratitude worth? You have burned your firework, you have seen the brief blaze, and there is an end of it. But if you get no present return for your holy charity, so much the better for you.

Daniel alludes to God's repayment at **the resurrection of the righteous** -

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake (RESURRECTION), these to everlasting life (cf "REPAYMENT" "of the righteous"), but the others to disgrace (cf temporal "disgrace" in Lk 14:9) and everlasting contempt. "Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. (Da 12:2,3+)

Luke mentions **the resurrection of the righteous** again in Acts

Acts 24:14-15+ "But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets; having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that **there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.**

Jesus describes this **resurrection** in the Gospel of John

John 5:28-29+ Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a **resurrection of life** (= "resurrection of the righteous"), those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

**Keener** - Resurrection was a holistic Jewish hope that the dead (or at least the righteous dead) would be raised to a new bodily existence of some sort at a future time....Jewish people expected the resurrection at the end of the age, usually associating it with the time of the Messiah's coming and his kingdom. (NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible)

**Stein on of the righteous** - From Acts 24:15 it is evident that this is short for "of the righteous and the unrighteous." Compare John 5:28-29; 2 Tim 4:1; cf. also Luke 10:12; 11:31-32; Rom 2:5-11. (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**John Piper** - This is the way Jesus said the hope of the resurrection is supposed to change our behavior. For example, he told us to invite to our homes people who cannot pay us back in this life. How are we to be motivated to do this? "You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). This is a radical call for us to look hard at our present lives to see if they are shaped by the hope of the resurrection. Do we make decisions on the basis of gain in this world or gain in the next? Do we take risks for love's sake that can only be explained as wise if there is a resurrection? May God help us to rededicate ourselves for a lifetime to letting the resurrection have its radical effects. ([Radical Effects of the Resurrection](#))

**MacArthur** -The Lord had concluded His illustration with a reference to the resurrection and reward of the righteous. **The scribes and Pharisees understood that He was referring to eternal life, and challenging them to humble themselves to receive it.** Earning that resurrection was their supreme hope. They believed that by enduring the minute prescriptions, deprivation, self-sacrifice, and rituals of their religious system they would gain eternal life in God's kingdom. In all false religions the promise of a good life in the future after death motivates people to put up with the restrictions and burdens imposed on them in this life. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

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**Blessed** (3107)(**makarios** from root **makar**, but others say from **mak** = large or lengthy) means to be happy, but not in the usual sense of happiness based on positive circumstances. From the Biblical perspective **Makarios** describes the person who is free from daily cares and worries because his every breath and circumstance is in the hands of His Maker Who gives him such an assurance (such a "blessing"). **Makarios** describes the kind of happiness that comes from receiving divine favor. God wants to bless His creation, but we must be in a position to receive His blessing. Proud people are not in such a position, for "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace (cf "blessing") to the humble." (James 4:6-[note](#)).

**Makarios** - 49v - blessed(1), blessed(46), fortunate(1), happier(1), happy(1). Matt. 5:3; Matt. 5:4; Matt. 5:5;



Matt. 5:6; Matt. 5:7; Matt. 5:8; Matt. 5:9; Matt. 5:10; Matt. 5:11; Matt. 11:6; Matt. 13:16; Matt. 16:17; Matt. 24:46; Lk. 1:45; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 6:21; Lk. 6:22; Lk. 7:23; Lk. 10:23; Lk. 11:27; Lk. 11:28; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 12:38; Lk. 12:43; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 14:15; Lk. 23:29; Jn. 13:17; Jn. 20:29; Acts 20:35; Acts 26:2; Rom. 4:7; Rom. 4:8; Rom. 14:22; 1 Co. 7:40; 1 Tim. 1:11; 1 Tim. 6:15; Tit. 2:13; Jas. 1:12; Jas. 1:25; 1 Pet. 3:14; 1 Pet. 4:14; Rev. 1:3; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 16:15; Rev. 19:9; Rev. 20:6; Rev. 22:7; Rev. 22:14

**Repay...repaid** (paid back) (467) (**antapodidomi** from **antí** = in turn + **apodídomi** = render <> from **apo** = from + **didomi** = give) means to give back in return for something received. The idea is to practice reciprocity with respect to an obligation. It means to pay back something owed. Antapodidomi is a strong verb (having two prefixes) and is emphatic as indicated by its two uses in this verse.

**Antapodidomi - 6v - paid back(1), render(1), repaid(1), repay(4), return(1).** Lk. 14:14; Rom. 11:35; Rom. 12:19; 1 Thess. 3:9; 2 Thess. 1:6; Heb 10:30

**Resurrection** (386) (**anastasis** from **ana** = up, again + **histemi** = to cause to stand) literally means "to stand again" or "to cause to stand again" and most NT uses refer to a physical body rising from the dead or coming back to life after having once died. The **resurrection** is distinguished from belief in reincarnation, which usually involves a series of rebirths from which the soul may seek release. Resurrection has primary reference to the body. The resurrection is the central, defining doctrine and claim of the gospel for as Paul wrote "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain." (1 Cor 15:14)

**Anastasis - 40v -** Matt. 22:23; Matt. 22:28; Matt. 22:30; Matt. 22:31; Mk. 12:18; Mk. 12:23; Lk. 2:34; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 20:27; Lk. 20:33; Lk. 20:35; Lk. 20:36; Jn. 5:29; Jn. 11:24; Jn. 11:25; Acts 1:22; Acts 2:31; Acts 4:2; Acts 4:33; Acts 17:18; Acts 17:32; Acts 23:6; Acts 23:8; Acts 24:15; Acts 24:21; Acts 26:23; Rom. 1:4; Rom. 6:5; 1 Co. 15:12; 1 Co. 15:13; 1 Co. 15:21; 1 Co. 15:42; Phil. 3:10; 2 Tim. 2:18; Heb. 6:2; Heb. 11:35; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rev. 20:5; Rev. 20:6

**Righteous** (1342) (**dikaïos** from **dike** = right, just) defines that which is in accordance with high standards of rectitude and in this context pertains to being in accordance with what God requires. He requires righteousness and provides it by grace through faith in Christ (cf verb form **dikaioo** translated **justified** in Lk 18:14). In Matthew 13 Jesus describes the **righteous** as those "who will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Mt 13:43).

**Dikaïos in Luke and Acts -** Lk. 1:6; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 2:25; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 12:57; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 18:9; Lk. 20:20; Lk. 23:47; Lk. 23:50; Acts 3:14; Acts 4:19; Acts 7:52; Acts 10:22; Acts 22:14; Acts 24:15

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### **Who's On My Guest List?**

When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed. —Luke 14:13-14

I love hosting festive dinners. Sometimes I'll say: "Tonia, we haven't had anyone over for dinner in a while. Who do you think we should invite?" We go through our proposed guest list and suggest friends we have never invited or have not invited in a while. And it seems like this list is normally comprised of people who look and sound and live like we do, and who can reciprocate. But if we were to ask Jesus whom we should have over for dinner, He would give us a totally different guest list.

One day a prominent Pharisee invited Jesus into his home, probably for table fellowship, but possibly to watch Him closely so he could trap Him. While there, Jesus healed a man and taught the host a significant lesson: When making out your guest list for a dinner party, you should not be exclusive—inviting friends, relatives, rich neighbors, and those who can pay you back. Instead, you should be inclusive—inviting the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. Although such people would not be able to pay the host back, Jesus assured him that he would be blessed and that God would reward him (Luke 14:12-14).

Just as Jesus loves the less fortunate, He invites us to love them by opening up our hearts and homes. By Marvin Williams [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The poor and needy everywhere  
Are objects of God's love and care,  
But they will always know despair  
Unless His love with them we share.  
—D. De Haan

Opening our hearts and homes blesses both us and others.

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### **I'll Pay You Later**

You shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just. —Luke 14:14

Suppose a boss were to say to an employee, “We really appreciate what you’re doing around here, but we’ve decided to change the way we pay you. Starting today, we’re going to pay you later—after you retire.” Would the employee jump for joy? Of course not. That’s not the way things work in this world. We like our payment now—or at least every payday.

Did you know that God promises to “pay” us later—much later? And He asks us to be happy about it!

Jesus suggested that our ultimate reward for the good things we do in His name comes after we die. In Luke 14, Jesus said that if we care for the poor, the lame, and the blind, our reward for such kindness will come at the resurrection of the righteous (Luke 14:14). He also said that if we are persecuted, we should “rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed [our] reward is great in heaven” (6:22-23). Surely, the Lord gives us comfort, love, and guidance today, but what wonderful things He has planned for us in the future!

This may not be the way we would have planned it; we don’t enjoy waiting for things. But imagine how glorious it will be when we receive our rewards in Jesus’ presence. What a grand time we’ll have as we enjoy what God has reserved for later. By Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Beyond earth's sorrows, the joys of heaven,  
Eternal blessings with Christ my Lord;  
Earth's weeping ended, earth's trials over,  
Sweet rest in Jesus, O blest reward! —Gilmore

What is done for Christ in this life will be rewarded in the life to come.

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### [Guest List](#)

When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed. —Luke 14:13-14

Qumran was a first-century Jewish community that had isolated itself from outside influences to prepare for the arrival of the Messiah. They took great care in devotional life, ceremonial washings, and strict adherence to rules of conduct. Surviving documents show that they would not allow the lame, the blind, or the crippled into their communities. This was based on their conviction that anyone with a physical “blemish” was ceremonially unclean. During their table fellowship, disabled people were never on their guest lists.

Ironically, at that same time the Messiah of Israel was at work in the cities and villages of Judea and Galilee. Jesus proclaimed His Father’s kingdom, brought teaching and comfort, and worked mighty miracles. Strikingly, He proclaimed: “When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed” (Luke 14:13-14).

The contrast between Jesus’ words and the guest list of the Qumran “spiritual elite” is instructive to us. Often we like to fellowship with people who look, think, and act like us. But our Lord exhorts us to be like Him and open our doors to everyone. By Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The gospel must be shared with all,  
Not just with those like you and me;  
For God embraces everyone  
Who turns to Him to set them free. —Sper

The inclusive gospel cannot be shared by an exclusive people. —George Sweeting

**Luke 14:15 When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"**

KJV Luke 14:15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

- **Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"**Lk 12:37; 13:29; 22:30; Mt 8:11; 25:10; Jn 6:27-59; Rev 19:9
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)

## TABLE TALK: HESITANCY

**When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this** - What did he hear that prompted the question? In Lk 14:14 he had just alluded to the resurrection of the righteous in the context of a man giving a luncheon or dinner (Lk 14:12ff) and that prompted his statement about the messianic banquet which was an important truth to the Jews.

Jesus told the parable in Lk 14:15-24 to show that many of the Jews would be shut out of the kingdom and many Gentiles would be included. Remember that Jesus was still at the Sabbath-day meal at the home of a Pharisee.

**Wiersbe** - The Jewish people pictured their future kingdom as a great feast with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets as the honored guests (Luke 13:28; see Isa. 25:6). This anonymous guest was confident that he would one day be at the “kingdom feast” with them! Jesus responded by telling him a parable that revealed the sad consequences of false confidence. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Bock** - The banquet imagery and the mention of the resurrection of the righteous in Luke 14:14 causes one of the guests to reflect on the greatest banquet of all: the eschatological fellowship that comes in God’s future glorious kingdom (Isa. 25:6; also Ps. 22:26, Rev 19:9). This guest declares the blessedness of anyone who is permitted to eat at that table. In fact, the underlying assumption of this remark is that the Pharisees will be the blessed at that table. Such hope is a significant one, for at that time God’s people will be fully vindicated and blessing will come to all whom he receives in his kingdom. The remark will cause Jesus to expound on who will be at the table. (See [Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Stein** introduces this next section with these comments - The ethical behavior enjoined here, however, stands in sharp contrast to the arrogance of the Pharisees (Luke 11:43–44; 14:7, 11; 20:46), who neglect justice and mercy (Lk 11:42; 13:15–16; 20:47). As a result this section also helped Theophilus and Luke’s other readers understand why the Pharisees’ lack of repentance led both to their exclusion from the people of God and to the events of A.D. 70 (Lk 13:5, 9, 25, 28–30, 34–35). (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**Blessed (*makarios*) is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom (*basileia*) of God** (see [notes](#))! - This statement makes it clear that Jesus’ hearers understood by His reference to the **resurrection of the righteous** that it had reference to the time of God’s coming Kingdom. Most Jews expected the **resurrection** at the end of this age when the Messiah would come (to them the first time, to us of course the second time). And at this time many Jews expected a banquet (**will eat bread**) in the kingdom, as foretold in passages like

Isaiah 25:6 The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain (referring to Mt Zion ~ Jerusalem); A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.

**Comment:** Notice that this banquet in the kingdom ([Millennium](#)) is not just for Jews but also for Gentiles (all peoples). Sadly, the only Jews who will attend will be the [remnant](#) who have been declared righteous by faith, just as the Gentiles in attendance are also those who are righteous by faith. Note the context also speaks of death being swallowed up (Isa 25:7). And we who are the redeemed, Jews and Gentiles, will declare the wonderful words of Isa 25:9 - “Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.” Hallelujah!

**MacArthur on blessed is everyone** - This was a beatitude; a toast directed at himself and his fellow Pharisees, affirming that they will be among the blessed at the heavenly banquet in the kingdom of God. It was not only a pronouncement of blessing on themselves, but also a scornful rebuke of the Lord’s declaration that they were too proud to enter God’s kingdom (cf. 14:11). His words bounced off their confidence that their Abrahamic ancestry (cf. John 8:33–59) and adherence to the traditions, regulations, and rituals would secure a place for them at God’s banquet. Not only did they fully expect to be at that heavenly feast, but also to be in the seats of honor. Jesus always sought to shatter unwarranted religious hope, and never encouraged anyone’s false sense of security, so that arrogant, misguided assumption called for immediate and unmistakable correction. Following His example is essential to all true evangelism. **Those with an unfounded assumption that they are headed for heaven need to know that they are fatally deceived.** To expect heaven while rejecting Jesus Christ and His gospel is the most deadly and serious of all false hopes (cf. Heb. 10:26–31). Jesus’ illustration and its application was a direct assault on the delusional self-confidence of the Jewish people, in particular the scribes and Pharisees. (Bolding added) (See [Luke 11-17 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Allison Trites** writes that the marriage story and the instructions to the hosts are clearly “metaphorical and teach a general attitude toward self and others appropriate to members in God’s kingdom (cf. Lk 14:15). Meekness and humility are basic to the proper attitude believers should display in their relationship toward God, and service to the needy is characteristic of the proper attitude one should have toward others” (See [Luke, Acts](#))

**The Kingdom of God** - This individual's question is undoubtedly related not to the present aspect but to the future aspect of the **Kingdom of God**, the **Messianic Age**, the **Millennial Kingdom**. To understand what he is saying, one must understand that there are two phases to the **Kingdom of God** (See more detailed explanation of Jesus' meaning of the **Kingdom of God** in [notes](#) on Luke 17:20-21). The first phase is the invisible, internal Kingdom of God which Jesus described as “**in your midst**” (Lk 17:21-note), the Kingdom in which the King reigns in the heart of the person who has accepted Jesus as Messiah. When the King returns on “**the day that the Son of Man is revealed**” (Lk 17:30-note) the heart of every person will also be revealed as to whether they sought the kingdom of “self” or the kingdom of the Savior!

**The Kingdom of God** - One must understand that there are two phases to the **Kingdom of God**. The first phase is the invisible, internal **Kingdom of God** and which He later described as “**in your midst**” (Lk 17:21-note), the Kingdom in which the King reigns in the heart of the person who has accepted Jesus as Messiah. To proclaim the Kingdom of God is to preach the Gospel, to proclaim the good news of salvation, explaining how one can enter the Kingdom of God. When the King returns on “**the day that the Son of Man is revealed**,” (Lk 17:30-note) the heart of every person will also be revealed as to whether they sought the kingdom of “self” or the kingdom of the Savior! The future phase of the **Kingdom of God** is known as the **Messianic Age** or the **Millennial Kingdom**. (See more detailed explanation of Jesus' meaning of the **Kingdom of God** in [notes](#) on Luke 17:20-21). Jesus knew the Jews were looking for the future aspect of the **Kingdom of God**, but His preaching and that of His disciples was to explain how one could enter the invisible aspect of the **Kingdom of God** in the present and in that way they would be assured of experiencing the visible **Kingdom of God** in the future.

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**Steven Cole** - Have you ever had dinner with a famous person? If so, you probably paid dearly for the privilege (\$1,000 a plate to have dinner with the President) or you knew someone who got you in the door. Or, perhaps you were privileged to know the famous person yourself. But in any case, dining with a famous person is not something for the masses. Only a few get that privilege. **Today I want to tell you how you all can have dinner with Jesus. You would think that everyone would jump at that opportunity, but as we will see, many turn down the invitation.** When I say, “have dinner with Jesus,” I am using a metaphor of the joys and delights of being with Him in His kingdom, dining at the Messianic banquet that He provides throughout all eternity. The Book of Revelation refers to it as the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9) and makes it clear that you will want to be there. Jesus Himself referred to it in Luke 13:28-29, where He said that people from all corners of the earth will dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom, but many who assumed that they would be included will be cast out. I want to show you how you can be sure that there will be a place at the table with your name on it.

The unstated question that lies behind our text is, “**What sort of person will be in the kingdom of God?**” The Jewish leaders assumed, “People just like us will be in the kingdom, of course: good Jews who keep the Law of Moses, who follow the traditions of the elders, who keep themselves from ceremonial defilement.” If you had asked them, “What sort of people will be excluded from the kingdom?” they would have responded, “Gentile dogs, the immoral, the greedy, dishonest tax collectors-those kinds of scum will not be in the kingdom.” But Jesus yanks the rug out from under their self-righteous assumptions by telling a parable. To catch the full flavor of this parable, you must understand the setting. Jesus was eating in the home of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath. They were watching Jesus carefully to catch Him in some violation of their Sabbath laws (Lk 14:1). They believed that to heal someone was work and therefore not permitted on the Sabbath. They probably planted this man with dropsy right in front of Jesus to trap Him. Jesus was not your typical, “polite” dinner guest who went out of His way not to offend anyone. So, He defied the Pharisees by healing the man (Lk 14:1-7). Next, Jesus watched as these proud men picked out the places of honor for themselves at the table. **Then He delivered a pointed message about humility, which must have humiliated the guests**(Lk 14:7-11). Finally, as if the tension were not great enough already, the Lord told the host that he had invited the wrong guests! He said, “**You should have invited the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind instead of all these friends, relatives, and rich neighbors who can return the favor**” (Lk 14:12-14)! At this point you could have sliced the atmosphere with a knife! At the end of Jesus' rebuke (Lk 14:14), He mentions the resurrection of the righteous. To break the tension and to try to sound spiritual, one of the guests exclaims, “Blessed is everyone who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!” (Lk 14:15). He probably thought that both Jesus and all the guests could agree with this pious comment. Everyone around the table probably nodded in agreement and said to one another, “Amen! It will be wonderful when we’re all there, won’t it!” Perhaps there was some nervous laughter. But Jesus wasn’t one to pass up opportunities! He was quick and ready to correct wrong ideas in the spiritual realm. And so He told this parable about the great dinner to correct this man, who wrongly was assuming that he and all of his cronies would be present at that banquet due to the fact

that they were Jews, and not just any Jews, but Pharisees. They saw themselves a few notches above the common Jewish people, and not even in the same league with pagan Gentiles. Jesus shows them that many of them would not be in the kingdom because they were refusing the Lord's invitation. To their great surprise, many whom they assumed would not be there would in fact be there because they responded to the invitation. The last would be first and the first last (Lk 13:30). The answer to the question, "Who will be at God's banquet in the kingdom?" is, those who respond personally to the invitation. **To have dinner with Jesus in His kingdom, you must respond personally to His invitation.** ([How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#))

**Luke 14:16 But He said to him, "A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many;**

KJV Luke 14:16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

- **A man was giving a big dinner** Pr 9:1,2; Isa 25:6,7; Jer 31:12-14; Zech 10:7; Mt 22:2-14
- **he invited many** Song 5:1; Isa 55:1-7; Mark 16:15,16; Rev 3:20; 22:17
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)
- [Luke 14:16-24 The Excuses - Indifference to the Heavenly Life](#) - Edward C Mitchell - from [The Parables of the NT Spiritually Unfolded](#)

### **A GREAT BANQUET WITH MANY INVITED**

**But** - [term of contrast](#) - Jesus is not refuting the fact that there will be blessing for those who will eat in the Kingdom of God (those who are saved by grace through faith), but uses this statement to lead into a parable which will contradict how the Jews like this man thought one could gain entrance into the Kingdom of God. As alluded to in the notes on Lk 14:15, this man (almost certainly a Pharisee), was so deceived that he (like all the Pharisees) thought they were assured of a place at the banquet table in the Messianic kingdom. So Jesus now tells them a story in parable fashion to show that they were gravely mistaken and in danger of missing the blessed banquet and entering a Christ-less eternity. **MacDonald** entitles this section (Lk 14:15-24) the **'Parable of Excuses'** and notes "wonderful as it may be to eat bread in the kingdom of God, the sad fact is that many of those who are invited make all kinds of foolish excuses for their failure to accept." (Believer's Bible Commentary)

**MacArthur** - In His reply to the guest's smug and erroneous assumption that he and his fellow Pharisees would be in the kingdom, the Lord addressed the issue of who really will enter the kingdom. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**He said to him, "A man was giving a big dinner ([deipnon](#)), and he invited ([kaleo](#)) many;** The verb **invited** is repeated throughout this chapter (Lk 14:8-10, 12-13, 16, 18, 24) Who are the many who were invited? In context this refers to the religious leaders who had the privilege of studying Moses and the Prophets which predicted the coming of Messiah (cf Ro 3:2 = "they were entrusted with the oracles of God"). Notice that this is the first of the "two part invitation" and "presumably those invited would have sent a reply with the invitation stating their desire to attend, much like a modern R.S.V.P. Then they waited for the servant to announce the beginning of the celebration." ([NET Note](#)) Notice Jesus' descriptions of **big** and **many**, emphasizing that this is a huge, grand banquet, a celebration that all in that culture would normally gratefully attend. The point is that the Kingdom of God is very desirable, and all who are invited should desire to come to the great Messianic banquet in the Kingdom. But as the parable unfolds we see that is not to be the case.

**John MacArthur** adds that "The personal, formal invitations to the dinner would have come in two stages to the invited guests. The first, like invitations today, would have informed the recipient that they were invited to the event. Unlike modern invitations, however, the exact date and time would not have been specified due to the complexities of preparing the feast. When all was ready, a second invitation would notify the pre-invited guests that the banquet was about to begin." (See [Luke Commentary](#))

Although some think this parable is identical with that in Matthew 22, **Norman Crawford** distinguishes them noting that "There are as many similarities as differences between the "great supper" here and the supper of Matt 22:2-14, which was "a certain king, which made a marriage for his son" (Mt 22:2). In both cases, the invitation was sent ahead of the time for the supper (Matt 22:3), and at the supper hour, there was refusal. Matthew says, "they made light of it and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise" which is paralleled in Luke by the excuses. In both cases, the refusal of those who were originally invited led to the invitation being extended to others. The differences are: Matthew describes a wedding supper for a king's son; Luke says, "A certain man made a great supper". Matthew tells of the spiteful treatment of the servants who were slain by the guests who had refused the



invitation; the murderers and their city were then destroyed. Matthew's account of the guest without the wedding garment is not in Luke. These two parables were told at different times. The one in Matthew was told because of an attempt to arrest Jesus (Mt 21:46), but Luke's parable resulted from a self-righteous comment at a feast." ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

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**Dinner (1173)(deipnon)** refers to breakfast in Homer, but is generally among the Jews and Greco-Roman culture it referred more to the evening meal (dinner, supper), and could refer as here in Luke 14 (Lk 14:12, 16, 17, 24) to a banquet or feast in general. Deipnon was used of the Passover meal (Jn 13:2, 4, 21:20) and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:20). It was used to speak of the food taken at supper in 1 Cor 11:21 ("in your eating", cf Lxx - Da 1:16 = King's "choice food").

**Deipnon** - 16x in 16v - banquet(1), banquets(3), dinner(4), supper(8). Matt. 23:6; Mk. 6:21; Mk. 12:39; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 14:16; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:24; Lk. 20:46; Jn. 12:2; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:4; Jn. 21:20; 1 Co. 11:20; 1 Co. 11:21; Rev. 19:9; Rev. 19:17

**Deipnon** - 5x in 5v in the Septuagint - Dan. 1:8; Dan. 1:13; Dan. 1:15; Dan. 1:16; Dan. 5:1;

**Gilbrant** - During classical times a **deipnon** was important in the worship of Greek deities. **Participating in a religious "meal" meant one actually participated in the god's nature** (Behm, "deipnon," Kittel, 2:34f.). In ancient times Jews placed great importance on social interaction through meals. To offer or accept a dinner invitation signaled intents of goodwill, trust, and prosperity. To decline or forbid such an opportunity indicated ill will and also the highest insult (e.g., Luke 14:16-24). The Septuagint makes limited usage of deipnon (Da 1:8,13,15,16). In the New Testament **deipnon** often refers to the "main meal" of the evening (John 13:2,4; 21:20). In addition, it is a "feast" or "banquet" with the added touch of formality (Matthew 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke 11:43; 14:17,24; 20:46). **Deipnon** appears in contexts of judgment (Revelation 19:17), celebration (Revelation 19:9), memorial (1 Corinthians 11:20), and farewell (John 12:2; 13:2,4; 21:20). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**J. Behm** - In the NT the word takes on theological significance (1) . by its cultic use in 1 Cor 11:20+: → κυριακὸν δὲ πῖνον, "the meal consecrated to the Lord," "the Lord's Supper."<sup>3</sup> The evening table fellowship of the community constitutes divine service. It is profaned by the separation of individuals to διὸν δὲ πῖνον (1 Cor 11:21+). According to the Pauline tradition (1 Cor 11:23ff.), the celebration rests on the institution of Jesus on the night of His betrayal, i.e., after the Last Supper, cf. v. 25 (Lk. 22:20 HK): μετὰ τὸ δεῖπνόν σου (cf. also Jn. 13:2, 4; 21:20). For more general points, → γάπη (agape I, 55), πάσχα, τράπεζα. **It also takes on theological significance (2)** as an eschatological image. The "heavenly banquet of the last time," in which the redeemed will participate, is a meaningful expression for perfect fellowship with God and with Christ in the consummation. Cf. esp. Lk. 14:24+, in interpretation of the parable of the Great Supper, Lk 14:16ff.: οὗτος δεῖπνον κείνων τῶν → κεκλημένων → γεύσεται μου τὸ δεῖπνον, and Rev. 19:9±: → μακάριοι οἱ ἐσθίουσιν τὸ γάμου τοῦ → ἁγίου κεκλημένοι where the images of the eschatological banquet and the marriage-feast (→ γάμος) merge into one another, as already in Mt. 22:2 ff. Cf. also Mt. 8:11; 26:29; Lk. 22:29f., 16, 18. The saying of Christ as He knocks at the door in Rev. 3:20±: ἂν τις κούσῃ τὴν φωνήν μου καὶ ανοίξῃ τὴν θύραν, ἐσελεύσομαι πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ δεῖπνήσῃ μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς μετ' αὐτοῦ, also points us, in the context of the Revelation Epistles (cf. Rev 2:5, 16, 25; 3:11), to eschatological union with the Friend Who is welcomed in, the Lord of the parousia. The dreadful opposite of the final banquet of the blessed is τὸ δεῖπνον τὸ μέγα τοῦ θεοῦ (Rev. 19:17±, based on Ezek 39:17 ff.), to which the birds of prey are summoned (cf. Mt. 24:28; Lk. 17:37), the hosts of Antichrist having been overthrown and destroyed.

**δεῖπνον is common for a "cultic meal" in the religious speech of Hellenism**, e.g., Jos. Ant., 18, 73: an invitation to the δεῖπνον of Anubis in the temple of Isis in Rome; an Ephes. inscription (BMI, III, 2, 483 B, 10) refers to νόλωμα τοῦ δεῖπνου in the cult of Artemis; an inscription from Notion (BCH, 47 [1923], 375, 6) refers to the δεῖπνον of an Aesculapius fraternity; Plut. Ser. Num. Pun., 13 (II, 557 f.): the invitation of Pindar by a herald to the cultic meal of the Delphic priesthood in the days of Plutarch: Πίνδαρος πρὸς τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ θεοῦ; similarly Ael Var. Hist., 9, 95: the invitation of Homer with Apollo πρὸς ξένια in Argos. Cf. also the δεῖπνον τοῦ κλήρου in the circle of the Gnostic Marcus, Iren., I, 13, 4. Original invitations may be consulted in P. Oxy., 1755: ῥωτᾶσε πῖνον δεῖπνόν σου ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ Στραπειοῦ ἐκ κλείνου τοῦ κυρίου Σαράπιδος τῆς ἡμέρας θ'; P. Oxy., 110; 523; 1484; 1485: ῥωτᾶσαι δεῖπνόν σου ξηγητῆς ἐν τῇ Δημητρῆς σήμερον πρὸς τὸν θῆρα πρὸς ζ. **The underlying thought is that of communio, of the union of those who eat with the deity.** So also in the Gr. church, cf. Chrys. Liturg., p. 396, 5 ff.: τὸ δεῖπνον σου τὸ μυστικὸν σήμερον ὑμεῖς θεοκοινωνόν με παράλαβε. On the suspecting of Θεύστεια δεῖπνον or νθρωποφαγία among Christians, cf. Athenag. Suppl., 3, 1; Tat. Or. Graec., 25, 3. The image of the



eschatological feast (of rejoicing or judgment) goes back to the eschatology of Israel. Cf. Is. 34:6 ff.; Jer. 46:10; Zeph. 1:7 and esp. Is. 25:6 (the feast of fat things and wine on the lees prepared by Yahweh on Mount Zion [24:23] for all nations). A grotesque note is first introduced in Ezek. 39:17 ff. (→ <34). It is used as an image of fellowship with God in the last days in 1 Enoch 62:14: “The Lord of spirits will dwell over them, and they will eat and lie down and rise up to all eternity with that Son of Man”; Slavic 2 Enoch 42:5: “At the last coming he will lead out Adam and the patriarchs and bring them (into the paradise of Eden) that they may rejoice, as when a man invites his friends to eat with him, and they come and speak with one another before the palace, joyously awaiting his feast, the enjoyment of good things, of immeasurable wealth and joy and happiness in light and everlasting life.” In Christian apocalyptic cf. 2 Esdras. 2:38: videte numerum signatorum in convivio Domini; Herm. s., 5, 2, 9; 5, 3 (moralised) In Rabb. writings, cf. the parables in b. Shab., 153a; Midr. Cant. r., 9, 8; also Midr. Est., 1, 4: “The feast of our God, which He will prepare for the righteous, has no end”; 12 Pesikt. r., 41, where Jacob is invited to the feast of redemption גְּאוּלָּה לְעוֹדוֹת; cf. Midr. Ps. 14:7: לְעוֹדוֹת לְעוֹדוֹת. (TDNT Vol 2, page 34 or borrow [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

**Invited** (2564) (**kaleo**) in this passage means to request the presence of someone at a social gathering. Kaleo also means **to call in the sense of to choose** so that one might receive some special benefit or experience and so can refer to God's call of sinners = "Divine call" of God to participation in salvation, to partake of the blessings of redemption. **Kaleo** in this usage is figurative for it is not a literal call.

This sense includes the **call to discipleship** - Mt 4:21, Mk 1:20; He 5:4-note (called to priesthood) and the **call to salvation** - Mt 9:13, Mk 2:17, Lk 5:32 Jn 10:3KJV (not in NAS), Ro 1:6, 7-note; Ro 8:28-note, Ro 8:30-note; Ro 9:24-note; 1 Co 1:9, 24; 1 Co 7:15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, Gal 1:6, 15; Gal 5:8, 13, Ep 4:1-note, Ep 4:4-note; Col 3:15-note, 1 Th 2:12-note, 1 Th 4:7-note, 1 Th 5:24-note, 2 Th 2:14 1Ti 6:12, 2 Ti 1:9-note; He 9:15-note, 1 Pe 1:15-note; 1 Pe 2:9-note, 1Pe 2:21-note; 1 Pe 3:9-note, 1Pe 5:10-note 2 Pe 1:3-note; Jude 1:1

**Kaleo** is used by John who writes

Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are **invited** to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” (Rev 19:9+)

### Excuses Luke 14:16–24 - John Phillips

It is astonishing what excuses people make for not coming to Christ. Some people are too busy to bother; some are too clever to come; some are too religious to repent; some are too worldly to want to; some too proud to pray. The Lord Jesus once focussed on this problem. He told a story in which three kinds of men emerged together with their empty reasons for not responding to the invitation. And with a sure hand He drew the picture of the consequences. They rejected the invitation. Very well, they too would be rejected.

1. The Business Man's Excuse: "My wealth!" (14:18)
2. The Working Man's Excuse: "My work!" (14:19)
3. The Family Man's Excuse: "My wife!" (14:20)

**Illustration:** When Queen Elizabeth II was to be crowned, she sent an invitation to those of her subjects chosen to be present for that occasion. The invitation was sent to peers of the realm, to members of her government, to representatives of the common people. But every invitation bore the same closing statement: "All excuses ceasing." For when royalty issues an invitation it is no ordinary matter. It is a command. Thus the Lord's gospel invitation is a command; making an excuse is nothing short of rebellion. (100 NT Sermon Outlines)

**Luke 14:17 and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'**

KJV Luke 14:17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

- **at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited**Lk 3:4-6; 9:1-5; 10:1-12; Pr 9:1-5; Mt 3:1-12; 10:1-4; Acts 2:38,39; Acts 3:24-26; 13:26,38,39

- **Come; for everything is ready now** Mt 11:27-29; 22:3,4; Jn 7:37; 2 Cor 5:18-21; 6:1
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)

## THE FOLLOW-UP INVITATION COME - EVERYTHING IS READY!

**At the dinner ([deipnon](#)) hour he sent his slave ([doulos](#)) to say to those who had been invited ([kaleo](#))-** Notice that this is **at the dinner hour** and is in essence the second or follow-up invitation -- it was common practice to send two invitations to an oriental party, the first to announce the event and the second to tell them all the arrangements were complete. **Had been invited ([kaleo](#))** is in the [perfect tense](#) signifying the invitation had been given at point in time and was still valid or in effect.

**Keener** adds "Invitees would have responded to the first invitation already; it was common for such invitations to require a response in advance ([RSVP](#))."

**Life Application Commentary** - In Israel's history, **God's first invitation came from Moses and the prophets; the second came from his Son.** Jesus' listeners, the religious leaders, accepted the first invitation. They believed that God had called them to be his people. But they insulted God by refusing to accept his Son. They would miss the banquet completely because they refused to accept the Son's invitation—they would not get even the smallest taste of what had been prepared for them. And there would be no second (or third) chance. Thus, just as the master in the story sent his servant into the streets to invite the needy to his banquet, so God was sending his Son to the whole world of needy people (Jews and Gentiles) to tell them that his kingdom had arrived and was ready for them. ([Luke Application Study Notes](#) - Pdf scroll to page 74)

**Rod Mattoon** - When the man speaks about the blessing of eating bread in the kingdom of God, Jesus speaks up and shares a story to illustrate an important truth about God's love for sinners and His invitation for men to come to Him for salvation. The Lord speaks of a certain man who prepared a great supper and invited many to come to it. The certain man is a picture of the Lord Himself. Great preparation and effort has been made for men to come to Christ and receive God's gift of eternal life. For two thousand years, Christ has invited mankind to accept His invitation of salvation and eternal life. There is no other way to get into God's supper, if you please. You cannot work your way into Heaven. Ephesians 2:8-9. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Normal Crawford** tells a story illustrating this oriental custom of double invitations - An illustration may help the reader. A christian attended a breaking of bread meeting in an assembly in the Middle East. At the close of the meeting, a well-dressed Arab invited him to dinner. When the invitation was accepted the host walked away without giving instructions about how to get to his home or the time of the meal. Worried, the christian asked for information from others, and was told to go to his hotel and await developments. In a short time a servant came and asked the christian to follow him. He was taken to the home of the gracious host and the dinner was ready. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Come for everything is ready ([hetoimos](#)) now** - Everything is ready. There is enough room for everyone. Now is the time. All you have to do is **come!** The fact that everything was ready now, reminds us of Jesus' completion of the work of redemption when He uttered the incredible word "[tetelestai](#)" signifying "It is finished" and all the "preparations" for entrance into the great banquet in the Messianic Kingdom have been completed, everything has been paid for in full! the gospel invitation goes out on the basis of that completed work. All that is left for those invited is simply to **come** ([present imperative](#)). This also reminds us of Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11

"All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. 28 **Come** to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 **Take** My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. (Mt 11:27-29+)

**Bock** writes that "The meal at the table pictures entry into salvation's ultimate benefits."

The phrase **everything is ready now** reminds us of Paul's solemn words regarding the importance of **NOW** in Second Corinthians

"AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU."  
**Behold ([idou](#))**, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," **Behold ([idou](#))**, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION!" (2 Cor 6:2+)

**Comment:** Dear reader, are you "investigating" the claims of Christ and the surety of His Gospel, but procrastinating on accepting His invitation to "Come to Him?" If so, you need to consider where you will be

tonight if **TODAY** should be your last day on earth! Remember the warning in James 4:14-15+ "you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills (AND HIS WILL IS THAT YOU BELIEVE TODAY AND BE SAVED TODAY!), we will live and also do this or that."

**Crawford** writes "All the great cost of the feast had been fully met, the supper was fully prepared. All was ready and those who were invited just needed to come. Over the cross where the Saviour suffered, bled and died the words could be emblazoned, "Come; for all things are now ready". ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Guzik** - In an age before the clock, the date of the banquet was announced long before, but the exact time only was announced the very day. This means that many accepted the invitation when it was first given; yet when the actual time of the banquet came, they were of a different mind. "To accept the invitation beforehand and then to refuse it when the day came was a grave insult." ([Barclay](#)). By analogy, we can say that God has made it so all things are now ready for men to come and receive from Him. We come to God and find that He has been ready for us. ([Commentary](#))

**Steven Cole** sees in this passage "a great picture of the abundant salvation God so freely provides for sinners! When you come to His banquet table in Christ, He doesn't just give you a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. He gives you the works! He is a fountain of living water to wash away all of your sins. He gives you the indwelling Holy Spirit who gives you peace to replace your anxiety, joy to replace your depression, power to overcome your sins and wisdom to make the right decisions. You have fellowship every day with the gracious Savior and the promise of eternity with Him in heaven. The apostle Peter describes it like this: "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence" (2 Pet. 1:3). Long before we ever thought of God, He thought of us and made ample provision for our salvation. His abundant provision means that you are welcome to come to His table and eat until you are satisfied." With that kind of offer, you may wonder, "How can anyone refuse?" But Jesus' parable clearly warns that some do refuse God's broad, free, and ample invitation.

**Steven Cole** applies this second invitation to God's invitation through His messenger, John the Baptist writing "When the dinner hour came, God sent His messenger, John the Baptist (Mal 3:1-note), to say, "Everything is ready now." But the Jewish leaders made excuses and did not come. So the Lord expanded the invitation to the "outcasts" of Israel. The Pharisees despised these people as "born entirely in sin" (John 9:34). Many of the prostitutes, tax collectors and other notorious sinners responded to God's invitation and were following Jesus. This proud Pharisee who invited Jesus to dinner would never have thought of extending his invitation to these outcasts (Lk 14:13), but Jesus is telling him that God's invitation includes those whom the proud Pharisees had rejected. (Lk 14:21) But there was still room at the master's table (Lk 14:22). And so the invitation goes still wider, outside the "city limits" of Judaism, to the Gentiles who are out in the highways and along the hedges (Lk 14:23). At His great banquet the Lord will have a great multitude which no one can count from every nation and tribe and people and tongue (Rev. 7:9). God's invitation is a broad invitation! It includes every person from every race, no matter whether his or her background is very religious or completely pagan. We commit a great error when we make the church an exclusive club for the religiously inclined. Have you ever looked at someone and thought, "That person would not be interested in the gospel because he lives a very ungodly life"? Or, you see someone who looks like he belongs to a motorcycle gang and you think, "That person doesn't look like a good candidate for a Christian!" Or perhaps we see a person whose attire identifies her as a Hindu or a Muslim. We think, "She has her own religion and way of life. The gospel is not for her." Whenever we think like that (and we all have), we're limiting God's broad invitation of the gospel. His gospel will transform every sinner from every background who will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. To every person on this planet the Lord says, "Come, for everything is ready now." ([How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#))

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**Slave** (servant) ([1401](#)) See [doulos](#). (contrast the parable in Mt 22:3, 4 where the king sent out not one but many slaves) This is the man's personal servant conveying the invitation. It was common in such upper-class meals to send servants to call guests to come to the table. "This custom made perfect sense in a time frame of no telephones, watches, or assured timing for preparation of a huge meal. So the second invitation helped everyone to know exactly when to come." (Life Application Bible Commentary)

**Ready** ([2092](#)) ([hetoimos](#) from an old noun [heteos](#) = fitness) means ready, prepared, in a state of readiness. Luke's uses of [hetoimos](#) - Lk. 12:40-note; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 22:33; Acts 23:15; Acts 23:21. The English word "ready" means completely prepared or in condition for immediate use! Inherent in this word is a sense of urgency. My mother used to yell at me when I delayed to come to supper "You had better come now while everything is still hot!" I usually responded.

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**Rod Mattoon** writes that "God's invitations to man have been constant throughout history.

#### 1. The Invitation for the Removal of Sin

Isaiah 1:18— Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

## 2. The Invitation to Refresh Your Soul

Isaiah 55:1— Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

## 3. The Invitation to find Rest for your Soul

Matthew 11:28— Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

## 4. The Invitation to Receive the Savior

Revelation 3:20— Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Illustration** - At Christmas one year a pastor hoped to illustrate God's free salvation. He pointed to a beautiful Christmas poinsettia setting on the platform, wrapped in red cellophane with a ribbon, and said, "Whoever wants this gorgeous flower may have it. All you have to do is take it." He waited, but no one came forward to get it. Finally, a mother timidly raised her hand and said, "I'll take it." "Great, it's yours," said the pastor. But then the woman nudged her son and said, "Go get it for me." The pastor said, "No, whoever wants this plant must come and get it personally. You can't send a substitute." The woman shook her head, unwilling to risk embarrassment. She wouldn't go get it for herself. The pastor waited, pointing to this beautiful plant that would make a fine decoration in any home. It was free for the taking, but no one was coming up to get it. Someone snickered, "What's the catch?" "No catch," said the pastor. "It's totally free."

A college student asked, "Is it glued to the platform?" Everyone laughed. "No," the pastor said, "it's not glued to the platform. It's just setting there, free for the taking." A teenage girl asked, "Can I take it after the service?" The pastor was tempted to give in, but he thought of the verse, "Today is the day of salvation," and shook his head: "You must come and get it now." He was just beginning to wish that he had never started the whole thing when a woman he had never seen before stood up in the back. Quickly, as if she were afraid that she would change her mind, she strode to the front and picked up the plant. "I'll take it," she said. After she had gone back to her seat, the pastor launched into his message on Romans 6:23, that the gift of God is eternal life, free to all who will receive it. After the service, when most of the people had gone home, the woman who had claimed the poinsettia came up to the platform where the pastor was picking up his Bible to leave. "Here!" She held out her hand. "This flower is too pretty to just take home for free. I couldn't do that with a clear conscience." The pastor looked down at the crumpled paper the woman had stuffed into his hand. It was a ten dollar bill. (Adapted from "Leadership," Spring, 1990, p. 125.)

Friends, you can't stuff the ten dollar bill of your good works into God's hand to pay for His salvation banquet. He provides it all, totally free to you, but at great expense to Himself. Human nature is so inclined to boast in good works that when you tell people the good news about Jesus, you must take pains to make it clear that God's invitation is free and only free. (Steven Cole)

**Luke 14:18 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'**

KJV Luke 14:18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

- **But they all alike began to make excuses** Lk 20:4,5; Isa 28:12,13; 29:11,12; Jer 5:4,5; 6:10,16,17; Mt 22:5,6; Jn 1:11; 5:40; Acts 13:45,46; 18:5,6; 28:25-27
- **I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it** Lk 8:14; 17:26-31; 18:24; Mt 24:38,39; 1 Ti 6:9,10; 2 Ti 4:4,10; Heb 12:16; 1 Jn 2:15,16
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)
- [Luke 14:18 - Excuses](#) - R A Torrey
- [Luke 14:15-24 The Great Supper](#) - Hampton Keathley

**ALL HAVE EXCUSES  
LEADING TO EXCLUSION!**

**But they all alike began to make excuses** ([paraiteomai](#)) - **But** introduces a sad contrast. All invited but all turning down the invitation. **ALL** means **ALL** without exception and this implies that there were not just three because earlier we see **many** were invited (Lk 14:17), but here we see that "**ALL**" of that many refused! Unbelievable! And without exception they **ALL** gave weak, even dumb excuses. Making excuses is equivalent to refusing the invitation. And keep in mind that this wasn't a small dinner they were turning down, but was a "**big dinner!**" The expectation of the reception by those invited to such a dinner would have been that most would want to attend. Instead ALL made the choice to refuse to come! Surely we can see in the wonderful invitation to this "big dinner" the Lord's invitation of the "Good News" and the tragic personal choice of refusing His invitation! This reminds me John's sad commentary declaring that Jesus "came to His own (ISRAEL), and those who were His own (ABSOLUTELY) did not receive Him." (John 1:11+).

**Bock** - Since the eschatological banquet is the object of the allusion, Jesus is making the point that other concerns get in the way of deciding for Jesus and sharing the hope of the eschaton. Such excuses are lame, even insulting, in light of the occasion and their previous willingness to come. (See [Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** commenting on their excuses writes that "This was completely contrary to expected behavior. No one invited to an extravagant dinner by a wealthy host would have refused to come, let alone everyone. It was so absurd as to be incomprehensible to the status-seeking scribes and Pharisees, who must have stared at the Lord in disbelief. Jesus gave three sample excuses that heightened the absurdity of the situation by making it obvious that the guests had no rational reasons for refusing to attend." (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - "Excuses are curses, and when you have no excuses left there will be hope for you."

**Wiersbe** - I think it was Billy Sunday who defined an excuse as "the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie." The person who is good at excuses is usually not good at anything else. These three guests actually expected to get another invitation in the future, but that invitation never came. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

## LOVE OF POSSESSIONS TAKES PRIORITY

**The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need** ([anagke](#)) **to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'** - This is a very weak "excuse" (dumb is probably a better adjective!), because normally one would have gone and looked at a piece of land before purchasing it! The inspection could have been carried out later (after all, he had already purchased it and could not cancel the check at the bank even if it were bad land!). There was no sense of urgency for the examination of the land, but there was a sense of urgency to attend the dinner because "**everything is ready now**" (Lk 14:17)! The real issue was (is) not the condition of the land, but the condition of his (every refusing hearer's) heart! This one was putting the love of material things ahead of the invitation to the "big dinner."

**Wiersbe** - In the East, the purchasing of property is often a long and complicated process, and the man would have had many opportunities to examine the land he was buying. Anybody who purchases land that he has never examined is certainly taking a chance. Since most banquets were held in the evening, the man had little daylight left even for a cursory investigation. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Keener** - this late notice would be heard as a weak excuse that would serve as a grievous insult to the dignity of the host, who had prepared the feast at much expense. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

**Mattoon** writes that "The love of possessions or wealth is one reason why people reject Christ. They feel they do not need Him for they are totally secure. It was the love for possessions that caused Achan, Ananias and Sapphira to lose God's best for their lives. It led to their deaths." I would add, they had eyes for the temporal, but not for the eternal! How is your spiritual eyesight beloved? Are your eyes focused more on the temporal things of this earth (horizontal vision) than the unseen things of eternity (vertical vision)? If so, perhaps you need to take Paul's test in 2 Cor 13:5-note! ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Make excuses** (twice in this verse, once in Lk 14:19)([3868](#))([paraiteomai](#) from **pará** = aside and in this word gives a nuance of aversion or repudiation + **aitéo** = ask, beg) is literally to ask alongside. Here in Luke 14:18, 19 it conveys the sense of to beg and hence to "[beg off](#)," to decline or to refuse.

**Paraiteomai** - 10v - **begged(1), excused(2), have nothing to do with(1), make excuses(1), refuse(4), refused(1), reject(1), requested(1)**. Mk. 15:6; Lk. 14:18; Lk. 14:19; Acts 25:11; 1 Tim. 4:7; 1 Tim. 5:11; 2 Tim.



**Need** (constraint) (318)(**anagke** from **ana** = up, again, back, renewal, repetition, intensity, reversal + **agkale** = arm when bent) refers to any necessity or compulsion, outer or inner, brought on by a variety of circumstances. This implies that this man has given priority to the material, temporal things rather than the banquet which speaks of divine, eternal things (which is obviously a form of idolatry!). As Bock says "it is the judgment that other things are more valuable than Jesus' ministry that will create the tragedy of missing the celebration."

**Anagke- 18v - compulsion(3), constraint(1), distress(3), distresses(1), hardships(1), inevitable(1), necessary(2), necessity(3), need(2), obliged\*(1).** Matt. 18:7; Lk. 14:18; Lk. 21:23; Lk. 23:17; Rom. 13:5; 1 Co. 7:26; 1 Co. 7:37; 1 Co. 9:16; 2 Co. 6:4; 2 Co. 9:7; 2 Co. 12:10; 1 Thess. 3:7; Phlm. 1:14; Heb. 7:12; Heb. 7:27; Heb. 9:16; Heb. 9:23; Jude 1:3

**Luke 14:19 "Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.'**

- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
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## SECOND REFUSAL OF THE GRACIOUS INVITATION

**Another one said I have bought five yoke of oxen** - Now recall that this man had already sent in his "RSVP" so to speak with the first invitation (or at least he did not reject the invitation). Though he consented initially, now he **reneges** and declines the second and final invitation. He had purchased not 5 but 10 oxen, because a "**yoke of oxen**" was one ox "yoked" to another one. The implication is that this is a very wealthy person, because only a person of wealth with many fields would or could afford to buy five yoke of oxen.

**Guzik** - Preoccupation with material things and experiences is a common excuse for not following Jesus. **Ed comment** - I once shared the Gospel with a physician with whom I practiced medicine, and he at first seemed interested and intrigued but hesitant. When I asked him why would he hesitate to accept Jesus as his Savior and Lord, he told me he was afraid he would no longer be able to enjoy his favorite pastime which was hunting with his bird dogs. He told me he was not willing to give that up! I was flabbergasted, but that was 15 years ago and he still has not accepted Christ. I fear he is much like these men who made excuses which are really outright refusals of the invitation to come to the great banquet! ([Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** asks "who would purchase that many animals without first testing them? Not many customers in our modern world would buy a used car that they had not taken out for a "test drive." Furthermore, how could this man really put these oxen to the test when it was so late in the day? His statement "I go to prove them!" suggests that he was already on his way to the farm when the servant came with the final call to the dinner." (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**I am going to try (dokimazo) them out please consider me excused (paraitomai)** - Think about this one's excuse - would he have purchased the oxen if he had not "tested" them? Of course he would have, so this another very weak, **lame** excuse. And now could he test them at night? Jesus is showing the utterly absurd nature of the excuses people come up with to refuse His invitation to the Messianic Banquet! **Excused** is in **perfect tense** indicates excused at a point and time with ongoing effect - in other words he is seeking a permanent excuse.

**Crawford** rightly reasons "It was a large purchase and must have occupied his attention to such a degree that the "supper" became unimportant to him. This attitude is behind all the excuses which actually were outright refusals." ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

This wealthy man felt he had no time for the Lord and no need for Him. He had love of money

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (1 Ti 6:19)

A man that lost God's best for his life because of professional pursuits was Felix.

But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. 25But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to



come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."  
(Acts 24:24-25)

**Try** ((1381)(**dokimazo** from **dokimos** = tested, proved or approved, tried as metals by fire and thus purified from **dechomai** = to accept, receive) means to put to the test or make a trial of. **Dokimazo** involves not only testing but determining the value of the object (the five oxen).

**Dokimazo - 20v - analyze(2), approve(3), approved(1), approves(1), examine(4), examines(1), prove(1), proving(1), see fit(1), test(2), tested(3), try(1), trying to learn(1).** Lk. 12:56; Lk. 14:19; Rom. 1:28; Rom. 2:18; Rom. 12:2; Rom. 14:22; 1 Co. 3:13; 1 Co. 11:28; 1 Co. 16:3; 2 Co. 8:8; 2 Co. 8:22; 2 Co. 13:5; Gal. 6:4; Eph. 5:10; Phil. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Thess. 5:21; 1 Tim. 3:10; 1 Pet. 1:7; 1 Jn. 4:1

**Please** (2065)(**erotao**) means to ask for, usually with implication of an underlying question. To request something from someone, in this case to request he be excused from attending the banquet.

**Erotao in Luke and Acts** -Lk. 4:38; Lk. 5:3; Lk. 7:3; Lk. 7:36; Lk. 8:37; Lk. 9:45; Lk. 11:37; Lk. 14:18; Lk. 14:19; Lk. 14:32; Lk. 16:27; Lk. 19:31; Lk. 20:3; Lk. 22:68; Lk. 23:3; Acts 1:6; Acts 3:3; Acts 10:48; Acts 16:39; Acts 18:20; Acts 23:18; Acts 23:20

**Luke 14:20 "Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'**

KJV Luke 14:20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

- Lk 14:26-28; 18:29,30; 1 Cor 7:29-31,33
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)

### THIRD LAME EXCUSE

**I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come**- This excuse is also weak. In fact he really does not ask to be excused. He simply puts family before everything, a hindrance that Jesus directly addresses in Lk 14:26. In essence this man is making an idol of his wife (even as the two above made their material possessions their idols).

**Cole** - The interesting thing is that none of these excuses was sinful, in and of itself. There is nothing wrong with buying land or animals (or machinery) to work the land. The Bible commends enterprise and hard work. There is nothing wrong with marriage and the love of family. The Bible commands us to love our families. But the point is, things that are legitimate in their rightful place can be wrong if they hinder us from getting right with God. It is not just gross, flagrant sins that keep people out of God's kingdom. Good things wrongly emphasized will do the trick just as well. If a person gets wrongfully caught up with these otherwise good things, he can invent all sorts of excuses for not accepting the Lord's invitation to His dinner. There may be someone here who is so caught up with your possessions or your leisure pursuits or your career that you are neglecting your soul. Perhaps you are single and longing for a mate and you would consider marrying even a non-Christian, because you think he or she would bring you fulfillment and happiness. You would put momentary pleasure above the eternal pleasure of dinner with Jesus. You're saying, "Lord, I can't come to Your dinner because I have married a wife." To allow anything to cause you to refuse or put off accepting God's offer of salvation is a foolish decision. ([How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#))

**MacArthur** - Given their low view of women, the Pharisees would have found this excuse the most laughable of all. In first-century Jewish society, women did not dictate to their husbands what they could do. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Guzik** cuts to the chase in explaining these three excuses - These excuse makers condemned themselves; their excuses were only a thin veil hiding the fact that they did not want to come. "**Back of an excuse is a lack of desire**" (Morgan) There is no rational reason why someone would not want to be part of this feast; they just didn't want to. ([Commentary](#))

**Keener** - This man's excuse is a valid one for not going to war during the first year of marriage (Dt 20:7; 24:5; cf. 1 Macc 3:56), but it is not valid for skipping a feast one had promised to attend, even though women (including his new wife) were often not invited to such dinners. Banquets generally lasted into the night. Wedding feasts (which this feast probably is; cf. Mt 22:2) were planned far in

advance, and the man should have known not to schedule two events at the same time. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

**Crawford** writes that "It is interesting that Luke 13, 14 and 15 contain teaching about coming into the blessings of salvation: in Lk 15:28-note there is a tender entreaty from the father to come in; in Lk 14:18-20 there are trifling excuses from sinners; and in Lk 13:25 there is a tragic exclusion of those who came too late. The pride of the elder brother made him choose to remain outside; the pursuits of the invited guests made them excuse themselves; the closed door made the seekers unable to go in. It is so tragic that those who would not go in discovered later that they could not go in. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Spurgeon on I cannot come** - "In saying, 'I cannot come,' the man intended, as it were, to dismiss the matter. He wished to be understood as having made up his mind, and he was no longer open to argument. He did not [parley](#); he did not talk; but he just said, off-hand, 'I want no more persuading; I cannot come, and that settles it' "

**Luke 14:21** "And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'

KJV Luke 14:21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

- **slave came back and reported this to his master.** Lk 9:10; 1 Sa 25:12; Mt 15:12; 18:31; Heb 13:17
- **Then the head of the household became angry** Lk 14:24; Ps 2:12; Mt 22:7,8; Heb 2:3; 12:25,26; Rev 15:1-8; 19:15
- **Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city** Lk 24:47; Pr 1:20-25; 8:2-4; 9:3-4; Jer 5:1; Zech 11:7,11; Mt 21:28-31; Jn 4:39-42; 7:47-49; 9:39; Acts 8:4-7; James 2:5; Rev 22:17
- **bring in here the poor** Lk 14:13; 7:22,23; 1 Sa 2:8; Ps 113:7,8; Mt 11:5,28
- **crippled and blind and lame** Ps 38:7; Isa 33:23; 35:6
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
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- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)

## SUPERFICIAL EXCUSES KINDLE THE MASTER'S ANGER

**And the slave** ([doulos](#)) **came back and reported** ([apaggello](#)) **this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry** ([orgizo](#)) **and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor** ([ptochos](#)) **and crippled** ([anaperos](#)) **and blind** ([tuphlos](#)) **and lame** ([cholos](#)) Some interpret the "slave" as a picture of the Holy Spirit Whose "invitation" to the big dinner (salvation) was rejected but that seems a bit of a stretch. **Go out** ([aorist imperative](#) - Do this now! Conveys urgency) **and Bring in** ([aorist imperative](#) - Do this now! Conveys a sense of urgency) is a verb ([eisago](#)) which means to lead someone into something (of leading blind Saul into the city of Damascus in Acts 9:8). The two commands in the [aorist imperative](#) and the adverb [tacheos](#) is clearly a call for urgency regarding the task at hand. Why? Recall that in this parable, the banquet had already been prepared and in that context the food would spoil (especially in generally hot Palestine) if not consumed immediately. To invite **the poor** ([ptochos](#)), etc was unheard of in the oriental culture of Jesus' day.

**MacArthur** - The head of the household decided that too much time, effort, and expense had gone into preparing the banquet to cancel it. The celebration would go on, but with a different and utterly unlikely set of guests. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

Paul mentions the bad news of God's wrath just after mentioning the good news of the Gospel in Ro 1:16-17-note writing

For the **wrath** ([orge](#)) of **God** is ([present tense](#) = continuously being [passive voice](#) = "[Divine Passive](#)") **revealed** ([apokalupto](#) - first in Greek sentence for emphasis) from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who **suppress** ([katecho](#) [literally hold down] in [present tense, active voice](#) = they actively, volitionally "hold down") the truth in unrighteousness, (Ro 1:18+)

**Bock** notes that "The inclusion of the maimed (lame) is significant in that they were banned from full participation in Jewish worship (Lev. 21:17-23). The movie pictures Jesus' offer of the gospel to the nation's common and needy people, after the leadership's hesitation to respond to Him".

**Rod Mattoon** - The description of these people is a picture of what our sin does to us. The Poor: Our sin makes us spiritually bankrupt. The Maimed and Halt: A maimed person was crippled in the hands or arms. Halt refers to being crippled in the feet or legs. This is what sin does to us. It keeps us from serving God and walking in His ways. The Blind: What a reminder of the darkness of the sinner. Without Christ a person is spiritually blind and walks in spiritual darkness. 2 Corinthians 4:4 ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**MacArthur** explains that "In reality such people would have to be strongly persuaded, if not brought in, because they would be reluctant to come on their own, since they understood that social protocol would have obligated them to reciprocate. That they did not have the means to do. The notion that a wealthy, prominent man would invite poor, despised outcasts to such a banquet was as preposterous as imagining that the original guests would turn down his invitation en masse. There was not the slightest chance that either would have happened, much less both." (See [Luke Commentary](#))

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**Reported** (518)([apaggello](#) from **apó** = from + **aggéllō** = tell, declare from **aggelos** = messenger) means to bring a message from one person and thus to relate, inform or tell what has occurred. Friberg - (1) as carrying back word from a happening report (back), inform, tell (Mt 2:8); (2) as announcing something proclaim, declare (Mt 12:18); (3) as acknowledging something publicly confess (Lk 8:47); as announcing what must be done order, command (Acts 17:30) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Apaggello - 46v - announced(1), declared(1), declaring(3), proclaim(4), report(10), reported(22), take word(1), tell(1), told(3).** Matt. 2:8; Matt. 8:33; Matt. 11:4; Matt. 12:18; Matt. 14:12; Matt. 28:8; Matt. 28:10; Matt. 28:11; Mk. 5:14; Mk. 5:19; Mk. 6:30; Mk. 16:10; Mk. 16:13; Lk. 7:18; Lk. 7:22; Lk. 8:20; Lk. 8:34; Lk. 8:36; Lk. 8:47; Lk. 9:36; Lk. 13:1; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 18:37; Lk. 24:9; Jn. 16:25; Acts 4:23; Acts 5:22; Acts 5:25; Acts 11:13; Acts 12:14; Acts 12:17; Acts 15:27; Acts 16:36; Acts 16:38; Acts 17:30; Acts 22:26; Acts 23:16; Acts 23:17; Acts 23:19; Acts 26:20; Acts 28:21; 1 Co. 14:25; 1 Thess. 1:9; Heb. 2:12; 1 Jn. 1:2; 1 Jn. 1:3

**Became angry** (being furious or enraged) (3710)([orgizo](#) from **orge** = wrath) describes a brooding, simmering anger that is nurtured and not allowed to die.

**Orgizo - 8v - angry(4), enraged(3), moved with anger(1).** Matt. 5:22; Matt. 18:34; Matt. 22:7; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 15:28; Eph. 4:26; Rev. 11:18; Rev. 12:17

**At once** ([hastily](#))(5030)([tacheos](#) from **tachus** = quick) means quickly, without delay or at once (qualifying an action) as here in Lk 14:21. When qualifying time tacheos means soon (1 Cor 4:19). In a negative sense in Gal 1:6 = quickly, hastily. From the time of Homer into the era of New Testament, it is most frequently translated "quickly, shortly, hastily."

**Gingrich** - 1. positive = quickly, without delay, soon Lk 14:21; 16:6; J 11:31; 1 Cor 4:19; Phil 2:19, 24; 2 Ti 4:9. Too quickly, too easily, hastily Gal 1:6 ; 2 Th 2:2; 1 Ti 5:22.—2. comparative—a. more quickly, faster Heb 13:19. With gen. of comparison Jn 20:4. —b. without comparative meaning quickly, soon, without delay Jn 13:27; 1 Ti 3:14 ; Heb 13:23.—3. superlative (os tachista) = as soon as possible Acts 17:15. (BORROW [Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Zodhiates** - In the NT, equivalent to soon, shortly, quickly, hastily (1 Cor. 4:19; Gal. 1:6; Phil. 2:19, 24; 2 Tim. 4:9; Sept.: Jdg. 9:48; Isa. 8:3). In the sense of hastily (Luke 14:21; 16:6; John 11:31; 2 Thess. 2:2; 1 Tim. 5:22; Sept.: Prov. 25:8). (BORROW [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Tacheos** - 10x in 10v - hastily(1), once(1), quickly(4), shortly(2), soon(2).

Luke 14:21 "And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'

Luke 16:6 "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.'

John 11:31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

1 Corinthians 4:19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power.

Galatians 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

Philippians 2:19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.

Philippians 2:24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly.

2 Thessalonians 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

1 Timothy 5:22 Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin.

2 Timothy 4:9 Make every effort to come to me soon;

**Tacheos** - 10x in the Septuagint - Jdg. 9:48; 2 Sam. 17:18; 2 Sam. 17:21; 2 Ki. 1:11; Prov. 25:8; Eccl. 4:12; Isa. 8:3; Jer. 50:44; Dan. 2:16; Joel 3:4;

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## The Poor Man's Banquet

Read: Luke 14:12-24

Go out . . . and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind. —Luke 14:21

During the North African campaign of World War II, some German troops became detached from their source of supplies. With their throats parched by the intense desert sun, they were overjoyed when they found a newly constructed British waterline. Shooting it full of holes, they fell on their stomachs and began gulping furiously.

But they realized something too late—the British had been testing the pipeline with salty seawater. Within 24 hours all of the Germans were dying of thirst. Recognizing the severity of their situation, they quickly surrendered.

In a similar way, life's painful reverses are sometimes required to break down the willful resistance of people who would reject God's terms of surrender. Jesus' parable in Luke 14 reminds us that misfortune can be a blessing if it makes us willing to accept God's invitation. He said that only the poor and needy accepted the offer to attend the banquet. The rest were too self-sufficient and preoccupied.

Whether our need is salvation or development of Christlike character, adversities are often necessary to help us sort out what really counts. May we see them as God's loving invitation to take our place at the "poor man's banquet." By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

God offers us His matchless grace  
If only we believe,  
But not until we sense our need  
Will we His love receive. —DJD

Admitting our weakness makes room for God's strength.

**Luke 14:22 "And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.'**

KJV Luke 14:22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

- **what you commanded has been done** Acts 1:1-9
- **and still there is room** Ps 103:6; 130:7; Jn 14:2; Eph 3:8; Col 2:9; 1 Ti 2:5,6; 1 Jn 2:2; Rev 7:4-9
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)

**NO ROOM IN THE INN FOR THE KING  
BUT ROOM IN THE KING'S KINGDOM**

**And the slave said "Master, what you commanded has been done and still there is room"** - The Slave accomplishes the Master's will without fail or fault. "This comment suggests the celebration was quite a big one, picturing the openness of God's grace." ([NET Note](#)) And where is there **still room**? Recall that Lk 14:15 introduced the term **Kingdom of God** which is what prompted this parable. In sum, the "room" is the Kingdom of God or one could say it is Heaven. God is generous in seeking people

for salvation.

**Matthew Henry on still...room** - Though many have been brought in to partake of the benefits of the gospel, yet still there is room for more; for the riches of Christ are unsearchable and inexhaustible; there is in him enough for all, and enough for each; and the gospel excludes none that do not exclude themselves.

**Luke 14:23 And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.**

KJV Luke 14:23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

NET Luke 14:23 So the master said to his slave, 'Go out to the highways and country roads and urge people to come in, so that my house will be filled.

CSB Luke 14:23 "Then the master told the slave, 'Go out into the highways and lanes and make them come in, so that my house may be filled.

ESV Luke 14:23 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.

NIV Luke 14:23 "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.

NLT Luke 14:23 So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full.

NRS Luke 14:23 Then the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled.

- **Go out into the highways and along the hedges** Ps 98:3; Isa 11:10; 19:24,25; 27:13; 49:5,6; 66:19,20; Zech 14:8,9; Mal 1:11; Mt 21:43; 22:9,10; 28:19,20; Acts 9:15; 10:44-48; 11:18-21; Acts 13:47,48; 18:6; 22:21,22; 26:18-20; 28:28; Ro 10:18; 15:9-12; Eph 2:11-22; Col 1:23
- **compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.**Lk 24:29; Ge 19:2,3; Ps 110:3; Acts 16:15; Ro 11:13,14; 1 Cor 9:19-23; 2 Cor 5:11,20; 6:1; Col 1:28; 2 Ti 4:2
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
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## COMPEL THEM TO COME

**Go** ([aorist imperative](#) speaks of urgency) **out into the highways and along the hedges** - Since there is still room, the Slave is sent out again to gather folks even further down on the social ladder!

**Crawford on highways and along the hedges** - The city was a place where many could be found easily, but "the highways and hedges", that is, the main roads in the country and the hedges that lined them would present a far greater problem in finding people, and suggests a more intensive search. This is an apt picture of the close of the day when it has become much more difficult to find guests for the supper, as many who labor in the gospel will agree. Easy profession is no more difficult than ever it was, but to see a genuine work of God in hearts is becoming more rare. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**NET Note on highways...hedges** - This suggests the inclusion of people outside the town, even beyond the needy (poor, crippled, blind, and lame) in the town, and so is an allusion to the inclusion of the Gentiles. The Greek word (for **hedges**) phragmos refers to a fence, wall, or hedge surrounding a vineyard (BDAG). "**Highways**" and "country roads (**hedges**)" probably refer not to separate places, but to the situation outside the town where the rural roads run right alongside the hedges or fences surrounding the fields."

**And compel** ([anagkazo](#)) **them to come in, so that my house may be filled**([gemizo](#)) - **Compel** is in the [aorist imperative](#) which is a command to "Do this now!," "Don't delay," and as noted above conveys a sense of urgency. The alternative is the peril of procrastination. God's bondservant must redeem the time. Today's opportunities may not be here tomorrow. **So that** is a [term of](#)



[purpose](#) explaining the purpose for which the master sending the slave out again.

**THOUGHT** - Applying this to our life as His disciples, as His bondservants, are there any souls for which you are feeling a compulsion to go to and speak the Gospel that they might be rescued from darkness to light and for the wrath to come?

**Bock on compel them to come in** - The master will take in anyone who will respond. The appeal is not so much to compel people to come in as it is to urge them to attend (anankazō; Ge 19:3 [conceptually parallel]). Urging is necessary because the people do not know the host and so need encouragement to attend. He is not going to force anyone to come, as his response to the original invitees shows. He is, however, going to try to persuade them to participate....many who attend will be among those who were least expected to attend. God makes himself available—even to those whom many reject. Often it is the rejected who respond favorably to God. Disciples should seek such people. In warning the Pharisees, Jesus also instructs his own. God's people must be sought and found in surprising places. (See [Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** - These men may have had only one reason for refusing the kind invitation: they were unprepared to attend such a fine dinner. So, the servant constrained them to accept. See 2 Cor. 5:20 "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Bock** - The whole point is that the invitation to the banquet comes through Jesus. The blessings he offers are beginning to arrive. If the original invitees do not come, the supper will still be given and the blessings still will come. They will just go to others, and many others will respond. (See [Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Cole** - The striking thing is that everyone who accepted the invitation could have come up with seemingly legitimate excuses for not coming. The poor man could say, "I don't have anything decent to wear to such a feast." The crippled man could say, "I can't get anyone to carry me there." The blind could say, "I can't see to find my way." The lame could say, "It hurts me too much to walk on my bad leg." Those along the highways and hedges, the street people, could say, "I haven't had a bath in days and my clothes are dirty and ragged. I can't come." But they all accepted the offer because the servant convinced them that they were welcome and they clearly knew their own need; they were hungry. They believed the offer and they responded personally to it in spite of the potential excuses they each could have come up with. The servant didn't run a background check on all these people before he invited them to the feast. Their background didn't matter. He didn't find out their nationality. He didn't ask about their religious background or whether they even had one. He didn't get a promise that they would behave and show proper manners at the dinner table. **The invitation was not based on anything in the recipients; it was based totally on the goodness and bounty of the host. All that these people had to do was recognize their hunger, believe that the offer was true, and say, "Yes, I'll come."** When they came, they found that the feast was far better than they had ever expected or imagined. ([How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#))

**Crawford** has an interesting note on **the master said to the slave...go out...compel them** - The reader will now see why we have insisted on the distinction between the many servants and the one Servant. Servants can warn, entreat, persuade, win, point to the Saviour and urge men to accept Him, but they cannot compel a sinner to come to Christ. It is very possible to use coercion to compel people to do things against their will, but it is not possible for men to compel their fellows to come to Christ against their will. But does the Holy Spirit compel sinners to come against their will? No, but by His awakening and convicting power He makes them willing and anxious to flee from the wrath to come (John 16:8-11). We must never read into the word "compel" (anankazō) the thought of "irresistible grace". The Spirit does not use force, but He does constrain sinners to come, in spite of their reluctance, urging them by His patient strivings. However the ultimate responsibility for rejection lies at the door of the sinner; he can still refuse the invitation, and perish in his folly. The NT use of anankazō in all of its nine occurrences (Matt 14:22; Mark 6:45; Luke 14:23; Acts 26:11; 28:19; 2 Cor 12:11; Gal 2:3, 14; 6:12) show that it means "to put constraint upon (from anankē, necessity), to constrain by threat, entreaty, force or persuasion" (W. E. Vine, NT Words, p. 219). ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

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**Compel** (force) (315) ([anagkazo](#) from [anagke](#) - compelling need requiring immediate action, a pressing situation) refers to an inner or an outward compulsion (coercion) for someone to act in a certain manner (Gal 2:3, 14, 6:12, Acts 26:11), and to do so with a sense of urgency (as a pressing necessity). Anagkazo conveys the idea of to urge strongly in Mt 14:23. It conveys the idea of an inward feeling of obligation in Acts 28:19. This word was used in surgery of force to reduce dislocations, etc. (Liddell-Scott). Anagkazo is the same verb used in Mt 14:22 where Jesus made His disciples get into a boat, in Acts 26:11 of Paul's attempts before his conversion to force Christians to blaspheme, in Acts 28:19 of Paul's being forced to appeal to Caesar, and in Gal 2:3 of Titus not being compelled to be circumcised.

**May be filled** (1072) [gemizo](#) means filling a vessel with a solid object. To "put something into an object to the extent of its capacity (the procedure of filling)" (BDAG). To fill an object with something (Jn 2:7). Passive voice, be filled, become full (Mk 4:37) **Gilbrant** - In classical Greek this verb was used by Aeschylus (early Fifth Century B.C.) and carried the meaning of "loading," or "lading" or "freighting." The -izō suffix conveys the sense of the act of loading, or making something full. An object or vessel is



literally filled with a physical substance. Thucydides (7.53) reported ships filled with fagots and pinewood while Xenophon (Historia Graece 6.2.25) recorded the loading of transports with slaves and captured property. Gemizō carries the meaning of a material object being placed on a ship, in a vessel, etc. Plēroō (3997), in comparison, can mean “to fill” and also “to fulfill a duty, perform a task, bring to completion.” ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION OF COMPELLED** - This parable was the text of the last sermon **D.L. Moody** preached, “**Excuses.**” (Read [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)) It was given on November 23, 1899 in the Civic Auditorium in Kansas City, and Moody was a sick man as he preached. “I must have souls in Kansas City,” he told the students at his school in Chicago. “Never, never have I wanted so much to lead men and women to Christ as I do this time!” There was a throbbing in his chest, and he had to hold to the organ to keep from falling, but Moody bravely preached the Gospel; and some fifty people responded to trust Christ. The next day, Moody left for home, and a month later he died. Up to the very end, Moody was “compelling them to come in.”

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Mattoon illustrates the urgency of taking advantage of the opportunity - In 1973, Gary Kildall wrote the first popular operating system for personal computers, named CP/M. According to writer Phillip Fiorini, IBM approached Gary in 1980 about developing the operating system for IBM personal computers. But Kildall snubbed IBM officials at a crucial meeting, according to another author, Paul Carroll. The day IBM came calling, he chose to fly his new airplane. The frustrated IBM executives turned instead to a man named Bill Gates, founder of a small software company called Microsoft, and his operating system named MS-DOS. The rest is history. In 2010, Bill Gates was worth more than 53 billion dollars. Of Mr. Kildall, who has since died, author Paul Carroll says, "He was a smart guy who didn't realize how big the operating system market would become." He missed a huge opportunity. In a similar way, people often don't realize how big God's kingdom will become someday. God is calling with the offer of a lifetime ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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### **Bring Them In!**

Read: Matthew 22:1-10

Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. —Luke 14:23

Some Christians have gotten the idea that if they erect a beautiful building, put up a sign, and place an ad in the newspaper, the unsaved will flock to church. But it just doesn't work that way. There's an impelling go in the gospel that makes us responsible for our friends and neighbors. We must reach out to lost sinners and bring them in.

In D. L. Moody's day, it was a common practice for people to rent a church pew. One Sunday morning, 19-year-old Moody marched down the aisle with a motley crew of society's outcasts trailing behind him. He had rented four pews and was determined to fill them with those who were spiritually needy. Having taken the Savior's "Go" personally (Mt. 28:19), he literally "went out into the highways and gathered together . . . both bad and good" (22:10).

Don't make the mistake of believing that Jesus' command to go applies only to missionaries in faraway places. All of God's children are to share the good news of salvation. What a tragedy it would be if our own neighbors never heard the gospel because we never told them!

Ask the Lord to place a burden on your heart for a friend or loved one who is lost. Then go and bring them in! By Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Who'll go and help this Shepherd kind,  
Help Him the wandering ones to find?  
Who'll bring the lost ones to the fold  
Where they'll be sheltered from the cold? —Thomas

We must go to sinners if we expect sinners to come to the Savior.

**Luke 14:24 'For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'"**

KJV Luke 14:24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

NET Luke 14:24 For I tell you, not one of those individuals who were invited will taste my banquet!"

CSB Luke 14:24 For I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will enjoy my banquet! "

ESV Luke 14:24 For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet."

NIV Luke 14:24 I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.' "

NLT Luke 14:24 For none of those I first invited will get even the smallest taste of my banquet."

NRS Luke 14:24 For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner."

- Pr 1:24-32; Mt 21:43; 22:8; 23:38,39; Jn 3:19,36; 8:21,24; Acts 13:46; Heb 12:25,26
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:15-24 How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:15-24 An Invitation to God's Great Banquet](#) - John MacArthur
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Great Banquet \(Luke 14:15-24\)?](#)

## SHUT OUT OF THE GREAT BANQUET

**For (gar) I tell you none (oudeis absolutely not one) of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner-** For is a [term of explanation](#) which introduces Jesus summary conclusion of this parable for the religious folk seated at the table that day. The phrase **I tell you** was Jesus' way of directly applying to His audience what He was getting ready to say. Just try to imagine what went through their minds, especially as He spoke these final words. This is a frightening conclusion from the Master. These men were invited to the meal, but now they are excluded by virtue of their refusal.

**I tell you** is frequent in the Gospels, most commonly in Luke - Matt. 2:13; Matt. 10:27; Matt. 11:9; Matt. 12:36; Matt. 21:27; Matt. 26:64; Mk. 11:33; Lk. 11:8; Lk. 11:51; Lk. 12:5; Lk. 12:27; Lk. 12:51; Lk. 13:3; Lk. 13:5; Lk. 13:24; Lk. 13:27; Lk. 14:24; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 15:10; Lk. 17:34; Lk. 18:8; Lk. 18:14; Lk. 19:26; Lk. 19:40; Lk. 20:8; Lk. 22:37; Lk. 22:67; Jn. 3:12; Jn. 16:7

**Bock** adds that "Jesus commonly ends his parables and teaching with a personal note (Luke 11:8; 15:7, 10; 16:9; 18:8, 14; 19:26). Those originally invited to the feast will not be present. If the host is speaking, the allusion is the refusal to send food from the banquet to them. Even this favor will not be performed (Marshall 1978: 591; Derrett 1970: 126–55, esp. 141; Neh. 8:10–12). If Jesus is speaking, then the point is simply that the leadership missed an opportunity to sit at the table of God's blessing, even though it appeared that they were at the head of the line. They rejected their opportunity, so appearances are deceiving. Under either view, the point is that those who seemed to be in line will miss out, and others who do not seem even close at the time of initial promise will end up at the meal." (See [Luke Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** - We rarely think of God expressing judicial anger against those who reject His gracious invitations, but verses like Isaiah 55:6 and Proverbs 1:24–33 give a solemn warning that we not treat His calls lightly. This parable had a special message for the proud Jewish people who were so sure they would "eat bread in the kingdom of God." Within a few short years, the Gospel would be rejected by the official religious leaders, and the message would go out to the Samaritans (Acts 8) and then to the Gentiles (Acts 10; 13ff). (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

In Romans 1:16 Paul writes that the Gospel "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Some Jews did in fact "accept the invitation" (the Gospel), but in Jesus' day most of the religious leaders and the rest of the nation refused His invitation (cf "made excuses"). This refusal by the majority of Israel continues to the present time. It will only be at the end of this age when Messiah returns that a substantial number (one-third) of Israel will recognize and turn to their Messiah. At that time Zechariah writes

"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. (Zech 12:10)

And in Zechariah 13 records the result of the effects of Zech 12:10

"It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. 9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

In other words at the end of this age when Messiah returns to defeat the Antichrist and the anti-god Gentile kings and kingdoms, there will be a large harvest of Jewish souls, one third of the nation being saved, but sadly still two-thirds perishing forever to eternal destruction and hell. Paul describes this same event in Romans 11

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.” 27 “THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.” (Romans 11:25-27)

Notice that Paul says "all Israel will be saved" which needs to be interpreted in light of the truth revealed in Zechariah 13. So the "all Israel" clearly refers to the one-third who receive Messiah by grace through faith. ALL of them will be saved.

**NET Note** explains the meaning - "This is both the point and the warning. To be a part of the original invitation (Ed: One could see the original invitation as God's calling Israel out of the world as His Chosen People but this earthly privilege) does not mean one automatically has access to (Ed: eternal, Messianic) blessing. One must (personally) respond when the summons comes in order to participate. The summons came in the person of Jesus and His proclamation of the kingdom (Ed: and the Gospel of the Kingdom). The statement here refers to the fact that many in Israel will not be blessed with participation (Ed: in the future Messianic Kingdom), for they have ignored the summons when it came."

**Manson** says, "The two essential points in His teaching are that no man can enter the Kingdom without the invitation of God, and that no man can remain outside it but by his own deliberate choice. Man cannot save himself; but he can damn himself. And it is this latter fact that makes the preaching of Jesus so urgent."

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, have you ever come to the banquet? Have you accepted Jesus' gracious invitation to come? You say "I'm not good enough." Jesus is good enough and He calls all who are not good enough to stand in the presence of a holy God. So all you have to do is COME. Receive His invitation of eternal life. COME JUST AS YOU ARE! Ponder Jesus' invitation to dinner as you listen to...

### [Come Just as You Are](#)

Come just as you are  
Hear the spirit call  
Come just as you are  
Come and see  
Come receive  
Come and live forever  
Come just as you are  
Hear the spirit call  
Come just as you are  
Come and see  
Come receive  
Come and live forever

Life everlasting  
Strength for today  
Taste the living water  
And never thirst again

Come and see  
Come receive  
Come and live forever

Life everlasting  
Strength for today  
Taste the living water  
And never thirst again

Life everlasting  
Strength for today  
Taste the living water  
And never thirst again

Come just as you are  
Don't you hear the spirit call?  
Come just as you are  
Come and see  
Christ My King  
Come and live forever more

**Cole** - One of the main hindrances that will keep you from having dinner with Jesus is that you are so full of your own goodness that you won't acknowledge your need for His banquet. Your pride will make you say, "I'll bring the salad and dessert." But the Lord says, "No, I provide it all. You just come." Imagine a multimillionaire who sends his servant out in his limousine to the poorest section of town. The servant tells the chauffeur to stop by a bum in ragged clothes. He gets out and asks, "Would you like to come to a feast at my master's mansion? We'll take you. Please, get in." The guy on the street eyes the servant warily and asks, "What's the catch?" "There's no catch; my master is a kind and generous man. He has prepared a meal like you wouldn't believe. Won't you come?" "I haven't had a bath in days. I haven't washed my clothes in weeks, and these rags are all I own. I would feel out of place at a mansion." "There will be many others there just like you. The food is on the table and the dinner is about to begin. Just come as you are." **It sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? It is good, but it's also true, according to Jesus. The main catch is, you have to see and admit that you are that needy bum. Spiritually, you have nothing to commend yourself to God. Salvation is not based on anything in you.** In fact, it is offered freely in spite of you. It is all of God's free grace, not at all of your works, lest anyone should boast. Jesus is saying to each person, no matter how great your sins, "Come, for I have prepared everything for you to be saved from God's judgment and to dine with Me for all eternity." Will you say, "Yes, Lord. I'll come!" Jesus seemed to ignore "politeness" at times to jar people out of their spiritual complacency. Should we do likewise? How?. If no one can come to Christ without the Father's drawing him (John 6:44) should we appeal to lost people to come? Why?. How can we know if a person's excuse for not receiving Christ is genuine or a smokescreen? Jesus says, "Compel them to come in." To what extent can we use persuasiveness or "sales techniques" in evangelism? ([How to Have Dinner With Jesus](#))

**MacArthur** offers an interesting explanation of Jesus' parable - The **head** of the household represents God, Who issued the invitation; the **banquet** represents salvation in His eternal kingdom; the pre-invited guests are **Israel** (and Gentile proselytes); the **first invitation** was delivered by the Old Testament prophets (cf. Ro 9:4-5). The guests initially said yes to God's invitation; they accepted the Old Testament revelation that they were God's chosen people, and would therefore enter the kingdom (even though they rejected and murdered the prophets; cf. Lk 13:34). At the **dinner hour**, which Jesus called the "**favorable year of the Lord**" (Luke 4:19), the second invitation was delivered by John (Mt 3:2) and Jesus (Mt 4:17). Everything was ready. But like the fictional guests in Jesus' illustration, those invited refused to attend. They had no interest in the banquet of God if Jesus Christ was the door to the banquet hall (cf. Jn 10:9). They were not interested in Him, or His message. When He presented the true Gospel of salvation, they sought to kill Him (Mt. 26:59; Mk 14:1; Jn 11:53). And like the guests in the illustration, they offered foolish excuses. Two of those excuses had involved material possessions, the third a relationship. Both of those types of excuses have been offered throughout history by those who are more interested in the things of the world than God's invitation to salvation. For that reason Jesus warned, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple ... So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions" (Luke 14:26, 33). Like the guests in the illustration, Israel said yes to God's original invitation, and no to the second invitation; they said yes to God's promises, but no to His Son. Uninterested, indifferent, and self-satisfied, they clung tightly to the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this world (Lk 8:14; cf. Mt. 13:22; Mk 4:18-19) and missed God's heavenly banquet. As a result, **God was angry** with them and abandoned them to judgment, leaving their house to them desolate (Lk 13:35). Spiritual judgment comes on all unbelievers at death. Physical judgment fell on that generation in A.D. 70 when the Romans massacred tens of thousands of Jews and destroyed the temple. Judgment continues to fall on all who reject God's invitation to salvation in Jesus and thus dishonor His Son. In Jn 3:36 John the Baptist warned, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."...Instead of experiencing God as gracious host, those who reject His invitation to the heavenly banquet will one day face Him as sovereign judge and forever be shut out of His heaven (Rev. 20:10-15). (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Luke 14:25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them,**

KJV Luke 14:25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

NET Luke 14:25 Now large crowds were accompanying Jesus, and turning to them he said,

CSB Luke 14:25 Now great crowds were traveling with Him. So He turned and said to them:

ESV Luke 14:25 Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them,

NIV Luke 14:25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said:

NLT Luke 14:25 A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them,

NRS Luke 14:25 Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them,

- Lk 12:1; Jn 6:24-27
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-27 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14 Should a Christian Hate His Family?](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

John 12:25 "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.

## FACE TO FACE CONFRONTATION OF CROWD

**Now large crowds were going along with Him and He turned and said to them** - **Now** marks a new topic or transition. Recall that His journey to Calvary began with resolution back in Lk 9:51+ (really it began before the foundation of the world!). Beginning in Lk 4:37 the "report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district" which would explain the increasing crowds. While many Jews drew near to follow Jesus, Jesus knew their hearts were far away from Him. Yes, there were the true 11 disciples, probably the 70 other disciples, and some who were very interested by not yet committed and then there were those who were not all prepared for commitment to Jesus as Lord. They were all **going along with Him** "enjoying the ride" (so speak), but His next words will test whether they were truly devoted to Him. Jesus sought not great crowds, but great hearts, hearts that were reflective of true disciples, genuine believers in Him. While one might think Jesus would soften His message given the size of the crowds, instead He begins to declare the high cost of discipleship. The last time Jesus "**turned**" was in Lk 9:55 (cf Mt 16:23) and rebuked His disciples, for He knew that that was not the time for judgment (context - Lk 9:54). One can picture the crowds following Jesus like sheep follow a shepherd, but then all of a sudden Jesus does an about face and confronts the multitudes with some of the most sobering statements in the Gospels. He is turning dramatically to get their attention because what He is getting ready to say is radical teaching about the meaning of true conversion.

Earlier Luke had recorded a similar call by Jesus describing the high cost of discipleship:

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. (Luke 9:23-24)

**Robert Stein** - The conditions of discipleship that follow were not addressed to believers in order to make them apostles but to the crowds. They are therefore conditions for salvation, not conditions for Christians to become a spiritual elite or to reach a new level in their Christian lives. (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**J C Ryle** on the **large crowds** - The conduct of our Lord on this occasion stands out in strong contrast to that of many ministers of the Gospel, in the present day. The temptation to admit people to full communion, and endorse and approve them as true Christians, before they have given evidence of decided grace, is very strong. The inclination to set before young enquirers the joys and comforts of the Gospel, without any proportionate exhibition of the cross and the fight, requires constant watching against. The close imitation of our Lord's conduct in this passage would probably greatly lessen the number of our communicants. But it may be doubted whether we should not gain in quality what we lost in quantity, and whether we should not be freed from many of those disgraceful backslidings, and gross inconsistencies, which so often now-a-days bring discredit on religion. It may be laid down as a general rule that communicants cheaply admitted are worth little, and that to call people Christians upon lower terms than those which our Lord sets forth, in the long run does more harm than good.

**Gary Inrig** - There is a phrase that rings through the passage three times and makes the Lord's message unmistakably clear: "he

cannot be My disciple ... [he] cannot be My disciple ... [he] cannot be My disciple." Rather than actively recruiting supporters for His program, the Savior seems to be effectively discouraging followers. Since He clearly desires people to commit their lives to Him, His motivation must be to enlist intelligent, realistic devotion. The context in which Luke places this story clarifies the Lord's motivation. What immediately precedes is the parable of the great banquet, a story that celebrates the free grace of God. The gospel banquet is for all who will accept the invitation. Immediately following Lk 14:25-35 are the three parables of seeking, which describe God's joy in calling the unworthy and the lost. There could be no clearer reminder that salvation is by grace through faith. It is not reserved for those who meet certain conditions, but is for any who will trust in Christ. However, there are people whose relationship to Jesus is one of attachment without commitment. Luke tells us that "**large crowds were traveling with Jesus.**" Physically, these people are on their way to Jerusalem in Jesus' entourage. But there is a suggestion that they are merely "going along" with Him spiritually as well. They certainly have beliefs about Him, but it is not clear that they truly believe in Him. Probably some are truly saved while others are not. Like many groups of people, this is a mixed company spiritually. **But whatever their spiritual status, they need to understand the full implications of being a Christ-follower.** ([The Parables : Understanding What Jesus Meant](#) - Borrow)

**Steven Cole** notes that "Lu 14:25 is crucial for interpreting what follows. **Great multitudes were going along with Him.**" Every pastor would love to have that kind of congregation. Every ministry desires more followers. Pastors with large congregations get their books published and are invited to speak all over the world because they are successful. We measure success by numbers. **But Jesus was different.** Large crowds did not fool Him. He knew that many were following Him for selfish or superficial reasons. It was the exciting thing to do. Maybe you or someone you knew would be healed. But Jesus was not a false recruiter. He wanted to weed out those who followed Him for superficial reasons, because when the battle heated up, He knew that they would fall away and cause damage for His cause. So He turned to the great multitude and laid out these demands of discipleship." ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

**Greg Allen** - Jesus was never guilty of false advertising. There were no 'bait-and-switch' tactics with Him. He laid it on the line, and always let His would-be disciples know up front that following Him was a costly enterprise. And what's more, He made it clear that whoever was unwilling to pay the price for following Him could not be His disciple. Look at that passage again. Can you see that, three times in this passage, He repeats the phrase, "cannot be My disciple"? The word He uses in this phrase literally means 'not able'. That is to say, whoever is unwilling to pay the price would not merely find it difficult to be His disciple, or that such a person would have to settle for being a second-rate disciple. He literally says that they are "not able" to be His disciple at all. He says this in verses 26, 27 and 33 - that they "cannot be My disciple". I believe we can take this to mean that there are a lot of people - perhaps some here this morning - who have come to Jesus, and who have taken up the ambition of becoming His disciples; but who are literally unable to do what they aspire to do, and cannot be His disciples. And it's very important to understand that this is not because the Lord does not permit them to be His disciples. He welcomes everyone who sincerely comes to Him and genuinely follows Him. He says, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37). Rather, if they are unable to become His disciples, the fault is in them. They cannot, because they are unwilling to pay the price of becoming His disciples. They had hoped to come at the matter cheaply. They had hoped to sign-up for "discipleship-lite". They didn't realize - or perhaps chose to ignore - the very important fact that the Christian martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer once affirmed; "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."...the Holy Spirit is calling us - who call ourselves 'disciples of Jesus' - to an abrupt halt through this Scripture passage. He is calling us to do something that we wouldn't ordinarily do if it were up to us. He is calling us to stop in the midst of our pursuit of being followers of Jesus, and take very seriously what Jesus says. He's calling us to count the cost of being His disciples; and then, to examine ourselves before God and ask, "Am I truly willing to pay the price that Jesus Himself says must be paid, or have I been kidding myself all along in counting myself among His disciples?" ([Luke 14:25-35 Who Cannot Be Jesus' Disciple](#))

**Gotquestions** - In Luke 14, Jesus lays out the terms of discipleship. There were great crowds following Him. Everyone loved the miracles, healing, and free food. Jesus was cool, the talk of the town, and the latest fad. But He knew their hearts. He knew they desired the benefits of what He *did* rather than an understanding of who He was. They loved His gifts, not the life He was calling them to. So He explained what it takes to be one of His followers (Lk 14:26-33) ([What does it mean to 'count the cost'](#))?

**William MacDonald** - Most leaders would be elated by such widespread interest. But the Lord was not looking for people who would follow Him out of curiosity, with no real heart interest. He was looking for those who were willing to live devotedly and passionately for Him, and even die for Him if necessary. And so He now began to sift the crowd by presenting to them the stringent terms of discipleship. At times the Lord Jesus *wooed* men to Himself, but after they began to follow Him, He *winnowed* them. That is what is taking place here. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#) - borrow)

**Steven Cole** - To truly follow Jesus Christ, we must consider the cost and put Him above everything else. Salvation is both absolutely free and yet it costs you your very life. You receive it freely at no expense to you, but once you receive it, you have just committed everything you are and have to Jesus Christ. You may protest, "That's a contradiction! How can something be both free and costly at the same time?" Let me illustrate. Suppose I had a desire to climb Mount Everest. (I don't have such a desire and I think that those who do are lacking in common sense.) But suppose that I did desire to climb Everest. But it costs about \$70,000 to



do it and I don't have that kind of money. Suppose a wealthy businessman heard of my desire and offered to pay for the entire expedition. He would buy all the expensive clothing and gear, he would pay for my transportation, the guides, and the training. It's totally free for me. But if I accept his free offer, I have just committed myself to months of difficult training and arduous effort. It could even cost me my very life, because many good climbers die trying to climb Mount Everest. It is free and yet very costly. Or, consider a friend who offers me a free ride in his airplane. He invites me to come along at his expense. In accepting his free offer, I've just committed my very life to him. If he flies safely, I am safe. If he crashes, I die. The instant I say yes to his free offer, I am totally committed to him. I have entrusted my very life into his hands. Jesus Christ freely offers the water of life to everyone who thirsts. But, we need to understand that when we receive His free offer, we are no longer our own; we have been bought with a price. Thus, to truly follow Christ, we must consider the cost and not begin to follow Him superficially, only to turn back later when things get tough. That is what Jesus warns against in our text. ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

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**R C Sproul** - The corrupting influences of [pragmatism](#) are seen even in the church. "Seeker-sensitive" worship can increase attendance without ever seeing the congregation grow to maturity. Churches targeting specific ages or lifestyles might attract a lot of people from these groups and not minister to those who do not fit certain classifications. Beware of any ministry that emphasizes "what works" and do what you can to help your church avoid slipping into pragmatism. (Read this entire interesting devotional - [Luke 14:25-33 Pragmatism](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Pollster George Gallup contends that fewer than ten percent of evangelical Christians could be called deeply committed. Most of those who profess Christianity don't know basic teachings and don't act differently because of their Christian experience. George Barna found that almost half (46%) of evangelicals read their Bible only once a week or not at all.

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**ILLUSTRATION OF COMMITMENT** - As Alexander the Great was carrying his triumphant military campaign towards the East, he and a section of his army approached a strongly fortified, walled city. Alexander approached the city, demanded to see the king and set out terms of surrender. The king only laughed: "Why should I surrender to you? You can't do us any harm! We can endure any siege." In response, Alexander offered to give the king a demonstration. Nearby, within sight of the city walls, was a sheer cliff. He ordered his men to line up in single file and began to march them towards the precipice. The city's citizens watched with horrified fascination as the column moved unhesitatingly towards and over the edge. Only after several men had plunged to their deaths did Alexander order the rest of the column to halt. He then called his troops back to his side and stood silently facing the city. The effect on the citizens was stunning. From spellbound silence they moved to terror. They realized they had no walls thick enough and no resources extensive enough to defend themselves against that kind of loyalty and commitment. Spontaneously they rushed through the gates to surrender themselves to Alexander.

It is impossible today to be sure of the authenticity of such a story. But there can be no doubt about the power of commitment. People loyal to a leader or a principle and willing to pay the price required will always overwhelm people who value comfort and convenience more than a cause. Our society generally does not breed strong commitment. The self-fulfillment ethic seduces us to believe that we have no higher loyalty than one to ourselves. The tragedy is that self-centered values eat away at commitment—not only at commitment to leaders and causes, but at commitments to marriage, family, and friends.

Believers are not immune to the world's value system. One missionary statesman has observed an irony of church life in the 1990s.

**While Third-World Christians are information-poor, they are commitment-rich.**

**Sadly, Western Christians are information-rich, but they are commitment-poor.**

All generalizations are suspect, but that one seems to be uncomfortably true. Yet this condition collides with the plain teaching of Jesus. The demands of our master are incompatible with partial commitment or casual discipleship. The Lord's call to Himself requires intelligent, unconditional allegiance to His person and work. Jesus was always intensely realistic about what it meant to be His follower. He was never a huckster pushing a product while hiding the real costs in the fine print. Instead, He realistically spelled out His requirements, nowhere more clearly than in Luke 14:25-35. In this passage Jesus makes a different use of parables than we usually find. Normally the main point the Lord makes is made powerfully in the parable itself and needs little explanation. However, the parables of the careless builder and the careful king are used almost as a modern preacher would use a sermon illustration.

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### **The Cost of Comfort**

Isaiah 39:1-40:31; Luke 14:1-35; Job 9:12-19

" '[You all] comfort; comfort my people,' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and call to her, that her compulsory labor is fulfilled, that her sin is paid for, that she has received—from the hand of Yahweh double for all her sins' " (Isa 40:1-2). God directed this command at the prophet and a group of people—possibly all those remaining in Israel. They were to speak comfort to the exiled Israelites, to call them home again. Sometimes we feel the need for this kind of comfort. Like the prodigal son in the pig sty, we feel

exiled and alone; we have paid our sentence, and we want to go home. We're not even asking for joy—just comfort. Despite their sins, God responded to the Israelites. But God did not merely restore them to their former state. He sent the Suffering Servant, prophesied later in Isaiah (Isa 52:13–53:12), to die on behalf of the people, to pay for the sins that resulted in exile in the first place. God does this so that all our sins—past, present and future—might be paid once and for all. But God requires much from those to whom much has been given, which is all of us. The great news of the Suffering Servant, Jesus, is not only that we find comfort and peace in Him, but also that we are empowered to act—free from sin. As Jesus' disciples, we must live the way that He has called us to live, being willing to make the sacrifices that discipleship requires (e.g., Luke 14:25–35).

The grace we receive from God is free, but a great price was paid for it. We must live fully in it. We must embrace it with our entire being. For when we do, we become not just a comforted people, but a restored people, instruments of God's work in the world.

What is God calling you to sacrifice? How can you take joy in the comfort He has brought you, and then show others that joy? JOHN D. BARRY

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## What's The Cost?

Read: Luke 14:25-33

What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. —Philippians 3:7

Years ago when Romania was under the control of Communism, Bela Karolyi coached gymnastics. He skillfully developed the talents of stars such as gold-medalist Nadia Comaneci. For his success in training athletes who were bringing fame to his Iron Curtain country, he was rewarded with an expensive car and many other favors. But Bela hungered for freedom. So one day, carrying only a small suitcase, he resolutely walked out of Romania into penniless liberty.

There's also a cost in following Jesus and experiencing the freedom He gives. When fishermen Peter and Andrew heard Jesus call, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men," they "immediately left their nets and followed Him" (Matt. 4:19-20). Similarly, James and John left their father and their livelihood to embark on a precarious life of discipleship. They knew the cost and chose to follow Jesus, leaving everything behind (vv.21-22).

What an example for all of us who claim to be disciples of Jesus! He said, "Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:27). Are we willing to make sacrifices—major and minor—for our Lord? Let's respond to the Savior's invitation, "Follow Me," not merely in word but in action. By Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When we follow Jesus, all of life changes direction.

**Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."**

KJV Luke 14:26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

NET Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

CSB Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters-- yes, and even his own life-- he cannot be My disciple.

ESV Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

NIV Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.

NLT Luke 14:26 "If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison-- your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters-- yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.

NRS Luke 14:26 "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.

- **If anyone comes to Me** Dt 13:6-8; 33:9; Ps 73:25,26; Mt 10:37; Phil 3:8
- **and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters**, Ge 29:30,31; Dt 21:15; Job 7:15,16; Eccl 2:17-19; Mal 1:2,3; Jn 12:25; Ro 9:13
- **yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple** Acts 20:24; Rev 12:11
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-27 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14 Should a Christian Hate His Family?](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:26 The Cross and Relationships \(includes several real life examples\)](#) - L E Maxwell
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!

#### Related Passage:

Mt 10:37+ "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." (THIS VERSE IS THE KEY TO INTERPRETING Luke 14:26).

### A DISCIPLE'S LOVE FOR JESUS SURPASSES ALL FAMILY TIES

**If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate** ([miseo](#) in present tense) **his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he** (ou = ABSOLUTELY) **cannot** ([dunamai](#)) **be My disciple** ([mathetes](#)) - If is a first class condition introducing what follows as assumed to be true from Jesus' perspective. Note the pronoun anyone, which implies a "no exception" clause. "**Hate**" is a Semitic expression for loving less. The parallel passage in Mt 10:37+ helps us understand what Jesus means by hate. Jesus is referring to coming to Him by grace through faith for salvation. When we compare the passage in Matthew, we can understand that Jesus is not using hate in an absolute sense, but in a relative sense. In other words, Jesus calls for such love and devotion of Himself, that by comparison all other relationships appear to be hatred. Jesus does not prohibit love of those close to us, but calls for our greatest love to be toward Himself. When we evaluate our devotion to every earthly tie, they must all be given a lesser place with Jesus alone receiving preeminence. Jesus is calling for complete commitment. Jesus is calling us to love Him above every person and every thing! **He cannot be My disciple** is a strong warning which is repeated three times for emphasis (Lk 14:26, 27, 33). The Greek negative term (for "not") used here is "ou" which speaks of absolute negation. The point is that if one is devoted to anyone more than Christ, he **absolutely** cannot be Jesus' disciple. Jesus is very clear about this.

Beginning with these words, Jesus "quickly put an end to the idea that He offered some kind of welfare program. Although the gift of eternal life is free to anyone who asks (John 3:16), the asking requires a transfer of ownership (Luke 9:23-note; Galatians 5:24-note). "Counting the cost" means recognizing and agreeing to some terms first. In following Christ, we cannot simply follow our own inclinations. We cannot follow Him and the world's way at the same time (Matthew 7:13-14). Following Him may mean we lose relationships, dreams, material things, or even our lives. Those who are following Jesus simply for what they can get won't stick around when the going gets tough. When God's way conflicts with our way, we will feel betrayed by the shallow, me-first faith we have bought into. If we have not counted the cost of being His child, we will turn away at the threat of sacrifice and find something else to gratify our selfish desires (cf. Mark 4:5, 16-17). In Jesus' earthly ministry, there came a time when the free food stopped and public opinion turned ugly. The cheering crowds became jeering crowds. And Jesus knew ahead of time that would happen." ([What does it mean to 'count the cost'](#))?

**THOUGHT** - As you (I) go through each requirement of discipleship, you will need to take a close look at yourself asking, "Am I a disciple of Jesus Christ?"

**Steven Cole** has an excellent summary of Lk 14:26-35 - Jesus first lays out two of the costs of discipleship (Lu 14:26-27); then, He gives two parables (Lu 14:28-32) that make the same overall point, namely, that **a person must give careful consideration to the cost before he rashly jumps into it.** (ED: SO MUCH FOR "[EASY BELIEVISM!](#)") Then He states a third cost of discipleship (Lu 14:33). He then (Lu 14:34-35) gives an illustration about salt to illustrate the cost of *not* truly following Him. He concludes by warning, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (ED: LORD GOD, GIVE ALL OF US EARS TO HEAR THIS TRUTH. AMEN!) ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

**Gene Brooks** - **Hate** here is used in the sense of decisive rejection of competing claims to one's allegiance. We must understand the Lord's use of **hate** in terms of Jewish hyperbole (Remember the Lord says we must love even our enemies (Matt 5:44; Luke 6:27, 35). The words "**love**" and "**hate**" can express **emotion**, but Jesus is using them to express the **will** as in God's use of Jacob and Esau in Mal 1:2-3 and Rom 9:13. God chose Jacob. He had set Esau, the firstborn, aside. **To love is to choose or to submit**

**to. To hate is to set aside or refuse to submit to.**

**Bob Utley - 'hate his own father'** " This is a Hebrew idiom of comparison (cf. Gen. 29:31, 33; Deut. 21:15; Mal. 1:2–3 [Rom. 9:13]; John 12:25). It is obvious that this cannot be taken literally because of Jesus' statement of honoring your father and mother in Matt. 15:4 which reflects the Ten Commandments. This section speaks of death to self (cf. Gal. 2:20) and earthly priorities. In the Near East commitment to family superseded every other commitment, but Jesus must become believers' first priority (cf. 12:49–53; Matt. 10:34–39). ([Luke 14](#))

**Gary Inrig on hate his own** - The language is shocking. After all, this is the same man who has spoken of the great commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:34-40) and who has excoriated the Pharisees for their failure truly to honor father and mother (Matthew 15:1-9). ([The Parables : Understanding What Jesus Meant](#) - Borrow)

**J C Ryle** has an interesting comment - We must never explain any verses of Scripture in such a way that they contradict other verses of Scripture. Our Lord is not telling us here to hate our relatives. This would be against the fifth commandment. He only meant that those who follow him must love him with a deeper love than their nearest and dearest, or their own lives. He must be prepared to offend his family, rather than offend Christ. Thousands of Christians will bless God on the last day that they had relatives and friends who chose to displease them rather than Christ. That very decision was the first thing that made them think seriously, and led finally to the conversion of their souls.

In Matthew and Luke Jesus warned that families would be divided over Him:

Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. (Matthew 10:34-36+)

Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; 52 for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. 53 "They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." (Luke 12:51-53+)

**Rod Mattoon** - The word "hate" that is used here does not mean you are to be hateful, bitter, and angry with your family. This word is a word of contrast, emphasizing "position" not "feelings." He is contrasting our attitude about Christ with respects to others. Our love for Christ is to be greater than our love for our family. Jesus Christ is to be number one in our lives. This is what Jesus is teaching here. If your love for Christ is not greater than your love for others, you cannot be His disciple. Other people will hinder you from serving Him and doing the will of God in your life. They will distract you from obeying God if you let them. So let me ask, "Is Jesus Christ first in your life?" Almost everyone wants the kingdom of God, the problem is few want it first. Your purpose in life is to put the Lord first in your life in every area and decision. He is to be first in our time and in our giving. As a Christian, your life does not belong to you. Sometimes a Christian will shout, "It's my life! Don't tell me what to do!" No, beloved, it is not your life. It belongs to the Lord and when we realize this and yield to this truth, we begin to fulfill God's purpose for our lives. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Robert Stein** - A person who commits himself or herself to Christ will develop a greater love for both neighbor and family, although at times loving and following Christ may be seen as renunciation, rejection, or hate if the family does not share the same commitment to Christ. (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**Darrell Bock** - Discipleship is fundamentally a call to allegiance. Jesus is to have first place over all, including family....Following Jesus is to be the disciple's "first love." This pursuit is to have priority over any family member and one's own life, which means that other concerns are to take second place to following Jesus (Luke 8:19–21; 9:59–62; 12:4, 49–53; 16:13). (See [Luke : 2 Volumes \(Baker Exegetical Commentary\)](#))

**Hate...yes, and even his own life** - If you are a believer, your life is no longer your own!

1 Corinthians 6:20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

**Guzik** - Think of how audacious Jesus is! He asks for this kind of ultimate commitment, and we give it to Him-why? Because of love. When we know the love of Jesus; when we are in a love-relationship with Him, only then can we be committed to Him with this great devotion. **ILLUSTRATION**. Napoleon understood this principle when he said, "I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander [the Great], Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded his empire upon love; and this hour millions of men would die for him." ([Commentary](#))

**Robert Stein** - This refers to becoming a Christian, i.e., becoming a "disciple," (In the sense used in Acts 6:1–2, 7; 9:1, 10, 19, 26, 38) not to becoming an apostle or one of the "twelve disciples." (In the sense used in Lk 5:30; 6:1, 13.) Matthew 10:37–38 uses these words in the same way, for the person not fulfilling these conditions "will not be worthy of Jesus" (Mt 10:37), which is further described as "losing one's life" (Mt 10:39). (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

There are some evangelical writers (e.g., Thomas Constable) who teach that one can be a **Christian** without being a **disciple** and that a disciple is one which has a higher level of commitment. **I personally believe that all Christians are disciples and thus Jesus' teaching in this section applies not just to a select group but to all believers!** It is notable that in Acts the term **disciple** occurs some 30x (majority refer to disciples of Jesus ) and the term **Christian** occurs only twice (Acts 11:26, Acts 26:28). That fact alone ought to be sufficient proof that the early church (and the writer Luke) considered genuine believers to be disciples of Christ and did not advocate a "two-tiered" Christianity. **Beware** of this dangerous teaching! While I agree that *mathetes* is not found after Acts, the principle is clearly described (e.g., 2 Ti 3:10- "Now **you followed** my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance").

**Gary Inrig** explains that "Discipleship was common in the ancient world, roughly equivalent to our practice of apprenticeship. In a religious context, a disciple was a pupil who attached himself to a teacher or rabbi to acquire his religious knowledge and skill. He went through a process of training and testing, but his ultimate loyalty was not to his rabbi, but to the Torah and tradition. Because the Torah and tradition stood above the rabbi, a disciple would join himself to a teacher of his own choosing, much as a modern student makes the choice of a university. The disciple's real attachment was to the law and to a way of life. **Discipleship to Jesus is very different.** The disciple's allegiance is not to the Torah and tradition but to the Lord Himself. (**Ed:** This same truth is brought out by the phrase entering the "new covenant" because to enter this covenant by faith resulted in a oneness with Jesus much as when a man marries a woman and they supernaturally become one flesh - see notes below for more detailed description). A disciple does not merely join the Jesus school, he binds himself in complete personal commitment to Him. Jesus' disciples do not merely choose; they are called, and they share not only in His message but also in His mission. A disciple is first someone who comes to Jesus in faith and trust (Lk 14:26). He comes for salvation to receive a free gift. But a disciple is also someone who follows Jesus. This is not a call to accept a certain way of life and to pass it on, as Jewish disciples did. It is not a call to adopt a philosophical position or a pattern of ritual behavior. **It is rather a call to fellowship with Jesus and to obedient service for and to Him** As the Lord makes clear in Lk 14:27, the way of discipleship is nothing less than the way of the cross. ([The Parables : Understanding What Jesus Meant](#) - Borrow)

#### **Related Resources on Covenant:**

- [Covenant: Solemn and Binding](#)
- [Covenant: A Walk Into Death](#)
- [Covenant: The Oneness of Covenant](#)
- [Covenant: Oneness Notes](#)
- [Covenant: Withholding Nothing from God](#)

**John Piper** adds that "The word **disciple** in the New Testament does not mean a **second-stage Christian**. There are some ministries that are built around this distinction that is just so unbiblical, as if there were **converts**, then there are **disciples** who are little "stage-two Christians" who learn more, and then there are disciple makers....Everybody that was converted to Jesus was a disciple. Everybody that was converted to Jesus was a Christian. ([What Is Discipleship and How Is It Done?](#))

**Gotquestions** has an excellent discussion (with which I totally agree) regarding the relationship between a "**Christian**" and a "**disciple**":

Jesus used the term disciple but never Christian. The first instance of the word Christian is found in the book of Acts: "The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). Most Bible scholars agree that it is unlikely that the believers themselves thought up the name "Christians." The early church had other names for themselves, such as "disciples" (Acts 13:52; 20:1; 21:4) and "saints" (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Ephesians 1:1) and "brothers" (1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Peter 3:8). The name "**Christian**," meaning "belonging to Christ," appears to have been invented by those outside of the church. It was most likely meant as a derogatory term. Only two other times does the word appear in the New Testament (Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). The idea that the term Christian was originally a pejorative finds some support in 1 Peter 4:16: "However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name." Biblically speaking, **a Christian is a disciple of Christ**. A Christian is someone who has placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12). A Christian has been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3). A Christian "belongs to Christ" and is daily being transformed into the likeness of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). **A true Christian (and not one in name only) will have to be a disciple of Christ as well.** That is, he



has counted the cost and has totally committed his life to following Jesus. He accepts the call to sacrifice and follows wherever the Lord leads. The Christian disciple completely adheres to the teaching of Jesus, makes Christ his number-one priority, and lives accordingly. He is actively involved in making other Christian disciples (Matthew 28:19–20). A true Christian disciple is a believer in Christ and possesses new life through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Because he loves Christ, a Christian will also be an obedient disciple (John 14:15). Paul describes the reality of being a Christian disciple: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). ([What is the difference between a Christian and a disciple?](#))

**Steven Cole** adds "At the outset I need to point out that there are many in evangelical circles who draw a sharp distinction between **salvation** and **discipleship**. (Ed: e.g., see note by [Thomas Constable below](#)) **Salvation**, they say, is God's free gift, but **discipleship** is costly. They would also say that while every believer ought to pursue discipleship, it is not linked to saving faith. In other words, there are some who are truly saved, but who never commit themselves to being disciples. They say that it is possible to receive Jesus as Savior, but not to follow Him as Lord. I cannot find any basis for such teaching in the New Testament, and I can find many Scriptures to refute such teaching. To believe in Jesus Christ as Savior necessarily entails following Him as Lord. Salvation is not just a decision that a man makes, but it is the mighty power of God in raising a dead soul to eternal life. God, who began that good work in you, will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus (Php 1:6). **The new life God imparts inevitably results in a new way of life in accord with its nature, namely growth in holiness.** The seed of the Word will bear fruit unto eternal life. While believers must grow as disciples and while we never perfectly arrive in this life (Php 3:12), if a person claims to be a believer, but he isn't seeking to grow in obedience to Christ, he is fooling himself. He is saying, "Lord, Lord," but on that fearful day, he will hear the awful words, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness" (Mt 7:23-[note](#)). In Paul's words, "They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed" (Titus 1:16-note). Thus it is possible to follow Christ superficially and it is to such followers that Jesus lays out the cost of discipleship (cf Jn 6:66)." ([Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#))

**C. S. Lewis** alluded to the danger of those who claim to follow Christ but are not genuine followers writing that "Of all bad men religious bad men are the worse." Why? Because Jesus' disciples are to be living proof of the power of the Gospel to transform a life. When a person who professes Christ with their LIPS fails to back up that testimony with their LIFE, the world says "See, there's another hypocrite! Religious on Sunday and raucous the rest of the week!"

**Gilbrant** - No one who follows Jesus with divided loyalties and halfhearted effort can successfully be His disciple, for as James 1:8 says, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Trent Butler** - Following Jesus has consequences. It isolates and separates you from those closest to you. Dedication to Jesus means rejection of any who are not dedicated to him. Dedication to Jesus means rejecting self-interest and personal fortunes. Discipleship is a full-time commitment. Nothing should modify, interrupt, or compete with it. (Holman New Testament Commentary – Luke)

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**CASUAL DISCIPLESHIP** (Ed: This sounds like an [oxymoron](#) to me!) - Is your interest in living for God halfhearted? The time may come for you to make hard choices because God doesn't take fourth priority for long. If you make career your idol, or sports or wealth, perhaps you should reevaluate (**ED**: Read Jesus' clear teaching - Mt 6:24+). You will have to decide: to what are you really devoted? to whom are you really loyal? Following Jesus must be your first priority. (Life Application Bible Commentary – Luke)

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**Hate** ([3404](#))([miseo](#) from **misos** = hatred) means to dislike strongly, to have a strong aversion to or to detest (Lk 6:22, 27). In Luke 14:26 **miseo** is used in what might be described as a "non-literal" meaning. **Friberg** has this note on **miseo** in Luke 14:26 stating "Hebraistically, requiring single-minded loyalty in discipleship prefer less, love less." (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#)) **Renn** adds that "Our love for God, for Christ, and for the cause of the gospel should so exceed all other loyalties that, compared with our earthly love for those in our family, our love for the Lord should make our mortal attachment to our loved ones seem like hatred. Explicit malice towards our families is, of course, in no way intended." **Renn** adds that in John 12:25 "Hate in this text is not literal malice towards oneself, but rather indicates symbolically the most sublime expression of selflessness, expressed hyperbolically as hatred."

**Miseo - 36v - hate(13), hated(12), hateful(1), hates(12), hating(2).** Matt. 5:43; Matt. 6:24; Matt. 10:22; Matt. 24:9; Matt. 24:10; Mk. 13:13; Lk. 1:71; Lk. 6:22; Lk. 6:27; Lk. 14:26; Lk. 16:13; Lk. 19:14; Lk. 21:17; Jn. 3:20; Jn. 7:7; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 15:18; Jn. 15:19; Jn. 15:23; Jn. 15:24; Jn. 15:25; Jn. 17:14; Rom. 7:15; Rom. 9:13; Eph. 5:29; Tit. 3:3; Heb. 1:9; 1 Jn. 2:9; 1 Jn. 2:11; 1 Jn. 3:13; 1 Jn. 3:15; 1 Jn. 4:20; Jude 1:23; Rev. 2:6; Rev. 17:16; Rev. 18:2

Matthew 6:24 "(ABSOLUTELY) No one can serve ([douleuo](#)) two masters; for either he will **hate** the one and

**love** the other, or he will be **devoted** to one and **despise** the other. You (ABSOLUTELY) cannot serve ([douleuo](#)) God and wealth. (**THOUGHT** - FIRST OBSERVE WHAT IS REPEATED! CLUE "[douleuo](#)." WHO ARE YOU SERVING BELOVED? SELF OR SAVIOR? BOB DYLAN'S "THEOLOGY" WAS NOT FAR FROM BIBLICAL TRUTH - [YOU GOTTA SERVE SOMEBODY!](#))

**Can** (1410)([dunamai](#)) conveys the basic meaning of that which has the inherent ability to do something or accomplish some end. In this context, the person who fails this test of discipleship has no inherent ability to be a disciple.

**Dunamai in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:20; Lk. 1:22; Lk. 3:8; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:34; Lk. 6:39; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 8:19; Lk. 9:40; Lk. 11:7; Lk. 12:25; Lk. 12:26; Lk. 13:11; Lk. 14:20; Lk. 14:26; Lk. 14:27; Lk. 14:33; Lk. 16:2; Lk. 16:13; Lk. 16:26; Lk. 18:26; Lk. 19:3; Lk. 20:36; Lk. 21:15; Acts 4:16; Acts 4:20; Acts 5:39; Acts 8:31; Acts 10:47; Acts 13:39; Acts 15:1; Acts 17:19; Acts 19:40; Acts 20:32; Acts 21:34; Acts 24:8; Acts 24:11; Acts 24:13; Acts 25:11; Acts 26:32; Acts 27:12; Acts 27:15; Acts 27:31; Acts 27:39; Acts 27:43

Luke 14:27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me (ou = ABSOLUTELY) cannot ([dunamai](#)) be My disciple. (COUNT THE COST)

Luke 14:33 "So then, (ou = ABSOLUTELY) none of you can ([dunamai](#)) be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. (COUNT THE COST)

**Disciple** (3101)([mathetes](#) from [manthano](#) = to learn which Vine says is "from a root *math*, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor") describes a person who learns from another by formal or informal instruction. **Mathetes** means one is not just a learner but a follower, one who adheres completely to the teachings of another, making them his or her rule of life and conduct. The Pharisees prided themselves in being disciples of Moses (John 9:28). Jesus' followers were called "**disciples**" long before they were ever called "Christians." Their discipleship began with Jesus' call and required them to exercise their will to follow Him (Matthew 9:9). In John 6:66 as a result of His hard teaching that He was the bread of life, etc, we read "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore." (John 6:66). So clearly this group of followers were not genuine disciples in the sense that Jesus is describing in Lk 14:25-35). Do not be deceived by the false teaching of [easy believism](#) and the so called [carnal Christian](#).

**Mathetes - in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 5:30; Lk. 5:33; Lk. 6:1; Lk. 6:13; Lk. 6:17; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 6:40; Lk. 7:11; Lk. 7:18; Lk. 7:19; Lk. 8:9; Lk. 8:22; Lk. 9:14; Lk. 9:16; Lk. 9:18; Lk. 9:40; Lk. 9:43; Lk. 9:54; Lk. 10:23; Lk. 11:1; Lk. 12:1; Lk. 12:22; Lk. 14:26; Lk. 14:27; Lk. 14:33; Lk. 16:1; Lk. 17:1; Lk. 17:22; Lk. 18:15; Lk. 19:29; Lk. 19:37; Lk. 19:39; Lk. 20:45; Lk. 22:11; Lk. 22:39; Lk. 22:45; Acts 6:1; Acts 6:2; Acts 6:7; Acts 9:1; Acts 9:10; Acts 9:19; Acts 9:25; Acts 9:26; Acts 9:38; Acts 11:26; Acts 11:29; Acts 13:52; Acts 14:20; Acts 14:22; Acts 14:28; Acts 15:10; Acts 16:1; Acts 18:23; Acts 18:27; Acts 19:1; Acts 19:9; Acts 19:30; Acts 20:1; Acts 20:30; Acts 21:4; Acts 21:16

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#### QUESTION - [What is easy believism?](#)

**ANSWER** - *Easy believism* is a somewhat derogatory term used by opponents of the view that one needs only to believe in Jesus in order to be saved. From this they conclude that those who hold to [sola fide](#) ("[faith alone](#)") teach that no corresponding need exists for a committed life of Christian discipleship as proof of salvation; however, that is not what *sola fide* means. True faith in Christ will always lead to a changed life. Another common usage of the term *easy believism* is in regards to those who believe they're saved because they prayed a prayer—with no real conviction of sin and no real faith in Christ. Praying a prayer is easy—thus the term *easy believism*—but there is more to salvation than mouthing words.

Much of the debate over easy believism is unnecessary and is based on a misunderstanding of the Scriptures. The Bible is clear that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. The essence of this doctrine is found in Ephesians 2:8–9: "For by grace are you saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." So we see that faith, given as a gift by God, is what saves us. But the next verse tells of the results of that salvation: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Rather than being saved by some easy act of our own wills, we are saved by the hand of God Almighty, by His will and for His use. We are His servants, and from the moment of salvation by faith, we embark on a journey of pre-ordained good works that are the evidence of that salvation. If there is no evidence of growth and good works, we have reason to doubt that salvation ever truly took place. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20), and a dead faith is not a saving faith.

"Faith alone" does not mean that some believers follow Christ in a life of discipleship, while others do not. The concept of the [carnal Christian](#), as a separate category of non-spiritual believer, is completely unscriptural. The idea of the carnal Christian says that a person may receive Christ as Savior during a religious experience but never manifest evidence of a changed life. This is a false and dangerous teaching in that it excuses various ungodly lifestyles: a man may be an unrepentant adulterer, liar, or thief, but he's

“saved” because he prayed a prayer as a child; he’s just a [“carnal Christian.”](#) The Bible nowhere supports the idea that a true Christian can remain carnal for an entire lifetime. Rather, God’s Word presents only two categories of people: Christians and non-Christians, believers and unbelievers, those who have bowed to the Lordship of Christ and those who have not (see John 3:36; Romans 6:17–18; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:18–24; Ephesians 2:1–5; 1 John 1:5–7; 2:3–4).

While the security of salvation is a biblical fact based upon the finished work of salvation by Christ, it is certainly true that some of those who seemed to have “made a decision” or “accepted Christ” may not genuinely be saved. As noted before, true salvation is not so much our accepting Christ as it is His accepting us. We are saved by the power of God for the purpose of God, and that purpose includes the works that give evidence of our conversion. Those who continue to walk according to the flesh are not believers (Romans 8:5–8). This is why Paul exhorts us to “examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith” (2 Corinthians 13:5). The “carnal” Christian who examines himself will soon see that he/she is not in the faith.

James 2:19 says, “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!” The type of “belief” demons have can be compared to the intellectual assent made by those who “believe” in Jesus in the fact that He exists or that He was a good person. Many unbelievers say, “I believe in God” or “I believe in Jesus”; others say, “I prayed a prayer, and the preacher said I was saved.” But such prayers and such belief do not necessarily signal a change of heart. The problem is a misunderstanding of the word *believe*. With true salvation comes genuine repentance and real life change. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says that those who are in Christ are a “new creation.” Is it possible that the new person Christ creates is one who continues to walk in the carnality of the flesh? No.

Salvation is certainly free, but, at the same time, it costs us everything. We are to die to ourselves as we change into the likeness of Christ. Where easy believism fails is its lack of recognition that a person with faith in Jesus will lead a progressively changed life. Salvation is a free gift from God to those who believe, but discipleship and obedience are the response that will no doubt occur when one truly comes to Christ in faith. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### **QUESTION - [What is a carnal Christian?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Can a true Christian be carnal? In answering this question, let’s first define the term “carnal.” The word “carnal” is translated from the Greek word [sarkikos](#), which literally means “fleshly.” This descriptive word is seen in the context of Christians in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3+. In this passage, the apostle Paul is addressing the readers as “brethren,” a term he uses almost exclusively to refer to other Christians; he then goes on to describe them as “carnal.” **Therefore, we can conclude that Christians can be carnal.** The Bible is absolutely clear that no one is sinless (1 John 1:8).

**Every time we sin, we are acting carnally.**

**The key thing to understand is that while a Christian can be, for a time, carnal, a true Christian will not remain carnal for a lifetime.**

Some have abused the idea of a “carnal Christian” by saying that it is possible for people to come to faith in Christ and then proceed to live the rest of their lives in a completely carnal manner (ED: cf [“EASY BELIEVISM”](#)), with no evidence of being born again or a new (ED: [kainos](#) = BRAND NEW!) creation (2 Corinthians 5:17+). Such a concept is completely unbiblical. James 2:14-26+ makes it abundantly clear that genuine faith will always result in good works. Ephesians 2:8-10+ declares that while we are saved by grace alone through faith alone, that salvation will result in works.

**Can a Christian, in a time of failure and/or rebellion, appear to be carnal? Yes.**

**Will a true Christian remain carnal? No.**

Since [eternal security](#) is a fact of Scripture, even the (ED: “SO-CALLED”) “carnal Christian” is still saved. Salvation cannot be lost, because salvation is a gift of God that He will not take away (see John 10:28; Romans 8:37-39; 1 John 5:13). Even in 1 Corinthians 3:15+, the “carnal Christian” is assured of salvation: “If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” The question is not whether a person who claims to be a Christian but lives carnally has lost his salvation, but whether that person was truly saved in the first place (1 John 2:19).

Christians who become carnal in their behavior can expect God to lovingly discipline them (Hebrews 12:5-11+ - **ED: LOVINGLY YES, BUT SOMETIMES PAINFULLY!** SEE “SCOURGES” in Heb 12:6!) so they can be restored to close fellowship with Him and be trained to obey Him. God’s desire in saving us is that we would progressively grow closer to the image of Christ (Romans 12:1-2+, **ED: 2Cor 3:18+**), becoming increasingly spiritual and decreasingly carnal, a process known as sanctification. Until we are delivered from our sinful flesh (ED: 1Jn 3:2+), there will be outbreaks of carnality. For a genuine believer in Christ, though, these outbreaks of carnality will be the exception, not the rule. [GotQuestions.org](#) (Bolding added)

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**Steven Cole** writes that by **hate** Jesus "means that our allegiance and love for Him must be so great that by comparison our love for our families and even for our own lives looks like hatred. Normally, there is no conflict between loving Christ and our family members also. But sometimes a tug of war develops, where a family member puts pressure on us to back off from or even abandon our love for Christ. In those difficult situations, we do not love either Christ or the family member if we accede to the pressure. We do not love the family member, because if we bow to the pressure, we are saying that Christ is not worthy of being followed above all others, and we keep the family member from seriously considering the claims of Christ. We do not love Christ because we have put a sinful human being, who did not give himself for our sins, in a higher place than the spotless Lamb of God who freely offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins.

**ILLUSTRATION** The late theologian/philosopher, [Francis Schaeffer](#), whose life and books have impacted thousands for Christ, was raised in a non-Christian home. After he became a Christian, his father did not want him to go to college and did not want him to become a minister, which young Fran felt called to be. When the moment finally came where he had to make the decision to go with what he thought God wanted or to submit to his father's wishes, Fran asked in a strained voice, "Pop, give me a few minutes to go down in the cellar and pray." In fear and uncertainty, he went down there and wept hot tears of sorrow for his father. Then, in an act of desperate and simple faith, he did something that he would never advise anyone else to do, but what he felt was right for him at the time: he prayed, "Oh, God, *please* show me." Then he took out a coin and said, "Heads, I'll go in spite of dad's desires." It was heads. Still weeping, he cried out, "God, be patient with me. If it's tails this time, I'll go." Tails. The third time he pleaded, "Once, more, God. I don't want to make a mistake with Dad upstairs. Please now, let it be heads again." It was heads. So he went upstairs and told his dad that he *had* to go. His dad looked hard at him, then went out to slam the door. But just before the door hit the frame, his voice came through, "I'll pay for the first half year." It was many years later that Fran's dad became a Christian, but Fran thinks that this moment was the basis of his salvation, when Fran in effect declared, "I must follow the Lord." (Told by Edith Schaeffer, in *The Tapestry* [Word], pp. 60-62).

As a Christian young person, you should seek to be obedient to your parents in all things, unless they are asking you to go against what God wants you to do. You should appeal to them in a submissive manner. But if it comes down to a choice to obey your parents and disobey Christ or to obey Christ and disobey your parents, you must follow Christ. As a Christian wife, you may have an unbelieving husband who says, "I don't want you to go to church." While you must seek to be the most loving and pleasant wife you can be, you must also explain to your husband that following Jesus Christ is more important to you than your relationship with anyone on this earth. That is the clear application of Lu 14:26.

When Jesus says that we must hate even our own lives, again He means in comparison with our love for Him. Normally, when we follow Christ He lovingly gives us the desires of our hearts (Ps 37:4). He floods us with joy and true pleasure (Ps 16:11). But, there are times when it is easy to give in to the immediate gratification of the flesh and it is hard to obey Christ. The disciple has thought this through in advance and is committed to follow Christ. ([Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#))

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**J C Ryle** - WE learn, firstly, from this passage, that true Christians must be ready, if need be, to give up everything for Christ's sake. This is a lesson which is taught in very remarkable language. Our lord says, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

This expression must doubtless be interpreted with some qualification. We must never explain any text of Scripture in such a manner as to make it contradict another. Our Lord did not mean us to understand that it is the duty of Christians to hate their relatives. This would have been to contradict the fifth commandment. He only meant that those who follow Him must love Him with a deeper love even than their nearest and dearest connections, or their own lives.—He did not mean that it is an essential part of Christianity to quarrel with our relatives and friends. But He did mean that if the claims of our relatives and the claims of Christ come into collision, the claims of relatives must give way. We must choose rather to displease those we love most upon earth, than to displease Him who died for us on the cross.

The demand which our Lord makes upon us here is peculiarly stringent and heart-searching. Yet it is a wise and a necessary one. Experience shows, both in the church at home, and in the mission-field abroad, that the greatest foes to a man's soul are sometimes those of his own house. It sometimes happens that the greatest hindrance in the way of an awakened conscience, is the opposition of relatives and friends. Ungodly fathers cannot bear to see their sons "taking up new views" of religion. Worldly mothers are vexed to see their daughters unwilling to enter into the gaieties of the world. A collision of opinion takes place frequently, as soon as grace enters into a family. And then comes the time when the true Christian must remember the spirit of our Lord's words in this passage. He must be willing to offend his family, rather than offend Christ.

The line of duty in such cases is doubtless very painful. It is a heavy cross to disagree with those we love, and specially about spiritual things. But if this cross be laid upon us, we must remember that firmness and decision are true kindness. It can never be true love to relatives to do wrong, in order to please them. And, best of all, firmness accompanied by gentleness and consistency, in the long run of life, often brings its own reward. Thousands of Christians will bless God at the last day, that they had relatives and

friends who chose to displease them rather than Christ. That very decision was the first thing that made them think seriously, and led finally to the conversion of their souls.

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**Mike Andrus** says "The message in this three-fold repetition ("cannot be My disciple" Lk 14:26, 27, 33) is that we must count the cost of following Jesus. **The true disciple must realign personal relationships.** There is hardly a statement in the entire Bible more shocking and perplexing than Luke 14:26...Hatred seems to be utterly paradoxical to the nature and teaching of Christ. After all, didn't Jesus Himself say on at least four occasions, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself"? And if the neighbor must be loved, isn't it even more true that one's family must be loved? Furthermore, isn't hatred forbidden in Scripture? 1 John 4:20 reads, "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen." John also says that the one who hates his brother is a murderer. How can we possibly reconcile such statements with this demand of our Lord to hate our families? I believe the answer is that Jesus is employing a **figure of speech** here. **The stunning juxtaposition of words like "hate" with "father and mother" is designed by Jesus to convey the truth that our love and devotion to Him should be so great, so pure, so unqualified, and so unconditional, that the fondest love we have for anything or anyone else will, by comparison, appear to be hatred.** I think we find in our Lord's own words in Mt 10:37 the proper interpretation of Luke 14:26: "Anyone who loves his father or mother **more than me** is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." In other words, when Jesus calls upon us to hate our family members, He is really just asking us to **love them less than we love Him.** You know, it is precisely because family ties are so precious that Jesus uses them in this context. It would make no sense were He to say, "If any man hate not mosquitoes or tornadoes or child abuse, he cannot be my disciple," because hatred of such things comes naturally to most people. All of us love Jesus more than mosquitoes. But not all of us love Him more than our families. **How do we know whether we love Jesus more than our human relations? That's perhaps difficult to gauge. But ask yourself, "If God asked me to, could I leave my parents and go to the mission field or could I accept having my child go? If God were to take my wife or child in death, would I get bitter and quit God? If my family were to threaten to disown me because of my faith in Christ, would I renounce my faith?"** Most of us have never had to make such decisions, but many, many Christians make them every day. And someday every one of us may have to. ([Luke 14:25-35 Come at All Cost. But Count the Cost](#))

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## Killer Plants

If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, . . . he cannot be My disciple. —Luke 14:26

Some forest workers fight fires. Others battle fast-growing plants. A Mercury News article reported that teams of volunteers are working hard to remove invasive plants from the redwood forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Workers point out that many of the non-native species they are fighting are sold in garden stores. The German ivy plant, for example, has become a serious problem in California. This fast-growing exotic house plant competes with the native species, smothering and shading everything in its path. It can completely cover and destroy a tree.

Thinking about these home-grown invaders can help us understand something even more crucial than saving trees. Jesus warned us that anything that competes with Him for our hearts can choke our spiritual lives. He said that even the natural love of family can be dangerous and keep us from following Him (Luke 14:16-26). Our Lord demands our undivided love and loyalty.

Once we value Christ above everything else, we will learn to love our family with a deeper and healthier love. But until our ultimate loyalty is determined, home-grown affection will do in our hearts what fire or German ivy will do in a forest.

Don't let anything compete with Christ. By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

To follow Christ we must let go  
Of all that we hold dear;  
And once we have denied ourselves,  
Our gains become more clear. —Sper

The more we love Christ, the more we'll love others.

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**ILLUSTRATION** - In the late 19th century John Wanamaker opened a department store in Philadelphia. Within a few years, that enterprise had become one of the most successful businesses in the country. Operating his store, however, wasn't Wanamaker's only responsibility. He was also named Postmaster General of the United States, and he served as superintendent for what was then the largest Sunday school in the world at Bethany Presbyterian Church. When someone asked him how he could hold all those positions at once, he explained. "Early in life I read, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things



shall be added unto you.' The Sunday school is my business, all the rest are the things." One evidence of Wanamaker's desire to keep the Lord's work first in his life was a specially constructed soundproof room in his store. Every day he spent 30 minutes there praying and meditating upon God's Word. He had his priorities straight!

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**Thomas Constable's note** on Luke 14:25-26 - "Now Luke recorded Jesus' teaching that though **salvation** was free, **discipleship** was costly. This is important balancing revelation. **Salvation** guarantees heaven, but it also calls for complete commitment to Jesus, not to secure heaven but to express gratitude for heaven." ([Notes](#))

**COMMENT:** NOTE HIS DISTINCTION OF "**SALVATION**" FROM "**DISCIPLESHIP**" - JESUS EQUATES SALVATION WITH DISCIPLESHIP "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it." Mark 8:35 in context of His description of discipleship - Mark 8:34+. IN SHORT EVERY BELIEVER IS A DISCIPLE.! SEE PIPER'S NOTE BELOW).

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## Is Christ Worth It?

If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26–27)

Jesus is unashamed and unafraid of telling us up front the "worst" — **the painful cost of being a Christian:** hating family (v. 26), carrying a cross (v. 27), renouncing possessions (v. 33). There is no small print in the covenant of grace. It is all big, and bold. **No cheap grace! Very costly!** Come, and be my disciple.

But Satan hides his worst and shows only his best. All that really matters in the deal with Satan is in small print on the back page.

On the front page in big, bold letters are the words, "You will not surely die" (Genesis 3:4), and "All these things I will give to you, if you fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:9). But on the back page in small print — so small you can only read it with the magnifying glass of the Bible — it says:

"And after the fleeting pleasures, you will suffer with me forever in hell."

Why is Jesus willing to show us his "worst" as well as his best, while Satan will only show us his best? **Matthew Henry** answers,

"Satan shows the best, but hides the worst, because his best will not [counterbalance] his worst; but Christ's will abundantly."

The call of Jesus is not just a call to suffering and self-denial; it is first a call to a banquet. This is the point of the parable in Luke 14:16–24. Jesus also promises a glorious resurrection where all the losses of this life will be repaid (Luke 14:14). He also tells us that he will help us endure the hardships (Luke 22:32+). He also tells us he will give us the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). He promises that even if we are killed for the kingdom, "not a hair of your head will perish" (Luke 21:18).

Which means that when we sit down to calculate the cost of following Jesus — when we weigh the "worst" and the "best" — he is worth it. Abundantly worth it (see Romans 8:18).

Not so with Satan. Stolen bread is sweet, but afterward the mouth is full of gravel (see Proverbs 20:17). ([John Piper](#))

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A Christian medical doctor in China shares his experience when he refused to bow down or "kowtow" to an image of Mao because of his love for Jesus. After severe beatings did not succeed in influencing him, the authorities resorted to a more subtle strategy by getting his whole family to stand around him and weep. Here is the story in his own words:

I had seven children as well as my wife all surrounding me and weeping. Crying bitterly, my wife said to me, "If you don't kowtow you will surely die and then what will we do?" For three days they stood around me weeping until my wife's eyes were dreadfully swollen. "After you have died, what will happen to these children? Please, for the sake of your family, just kowtow." They cried and cried. I really did not know what to do. I felt that I had no more strength so I prayed, "Lord I have no strength left, what must I do?" On the third day, the Lord's word [Luke 14:26] came, Hallelujah! There is no word of the Lord that is without power. The Lord through His Word filled me with the life and power of God. I said to my wife, "Stop crying. It's no use your crying. **I am the Lord's disciple. For the Lord's sake I am ready to die!**" Then the day came when the authorities called me and said, "You had better consider your situation carefully. If you want to live, you must kowtow otherwise it will mean certain death for you. Tonight we will make you eat the "steel bean" (bullet). You will be executed! This is

your very last opportunity!" And so he sent me back to think it over. There was, however, no need for me to think it over. I was ready for the bullet. But the night passed without my being called. Next day I saw that outside folk were running hither and thither and I wondered whatever had happened to cause such alarm. Later I was to learn that immediately after I had left the office, black swellings appeared on the prison warden's legs and it was frightfully painful. Because he was the chief, all the doctors in the hospital were rushed to his side to give him aid. But within twenty-four hours he was dead.

The doctor was later released from prison and returned to his family and medical practice. ([Chip Ingram](#))

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### **Oswald Chambers - The Conditions of Discipleship**

If any man come to Me, and hate not . . . he cannot be My disciple. (Luke 14:26, 27, 33)

If the closest relationships of life clash with the claims of Jesus Christ, He says it must be instant obedience to Himself. Discipleship means personal, passionate devotion to a Person, Our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a difference between devotion to a Person and devotion to principles or to a cause. Our Lord never proclaimed a cause; He proclaimed personal devotion to Himself. To be a disciple is to be a devoted love-slave of the Lord Jesus. Many of us who call ourselves Christians are not devoted to Jesus Christ. No man on earth has this passionate love to the Lord Jesus unless the Holy Ghost has imparted it to him. We may admire Him, we may respect Him and reverence Him, but we cannot love Him. The only Lover of the Lord Jesus is the Holy Ghost, and He sheds abroad the very love of God in our hearts. Whenever the Holy Ghost sees a chance of glorifying Jesus, He will take your heart, your nerves, your whole personality, and simply make you blaze and glow with devotion to Jesus Christ.

The Christian life is stamped by 'moral spontaneous originality,' consequently the disciple is open to the same charge that Jesus Christ was, viz., that of inconsistency. But Jesus Christ was always consistent to God, and the Christian must be consistent to the life of the Son of God in him, not consistent to hard and fast creeds. Men pour them selves into creeds, and God has to blast them out of their prejudices before they can become devoted to Jesus Christ.

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### **Consumed with Christ By David Wilkerson**

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:26

The Greek word for **hate** means "to love less by comparison." Jesus is calling us to have a love for Him that is so all-inclusive, fervent and absolute that all our earthly affections cannot come close. If we had that red-hot, all-consuming, intense and joyous love for Christ, we would not need outlines, diagrams and instructions telling us how to pray; we would pray because our hearts would be on fire with love for Him. We would not grow bored trying to fill up an hour praying ambiguously for needs all over the world; Christ would be the object of our prayers, and our prayer time would be precious. We would spend hours behind closed doors, expressing the overflowing admiration and sweet love that flood our hearts for Him. Reading His Word would never be a burden; we wouldn't need formulas on how to finish the Bible in a year.

If we loved Jesus passionately, we would be drawn magnetically to His Word to learn more about Him. And we would not become bogged down with endless genealogies and end-time speculations. We would want only to know Him better-to see more of His beauty and glory so that we could become more like Him. Think about it: Do we know what it is like to come into His sweet presence and ask nothing? To reach out to Him only because we are grateful that He loves us so completely? We have become selfish and self-centered in our prayers: "GIVE US, MEET US, HELP US, BLESS US, USE US, PROTECT US" All this may be scriptural, but the focus remains on us. We go to His Word for answers to our problems, for guidance and comfort, and this also is right and commendable. But where is the love-motivated soul who searches the Scriptures diligently, who wants only to discover more and more about his beloved Lord?

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### **One Passion**

If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. —Luke 14:26

Nechayev, a 19th-century disciple of Karl Marx who had a role in the assassination of Czar Alexander II, wrote: "The revolutionary man . . . has no personal interests, no business affairs, no emotions, no attachments, no property, and no name. Everything in him is wholly absorbed in the single thought and the single passion for revolution." Although his motives and goals were wrong, Nechayev's statement shows the singlemindedness of commitment.

Jesus wanted true commitment from His disciples. In Luke 14, we read that large crowds joined Him as He traveled toward

Jerusalem (v.25). Perhaps these casual followers considered themselves to be His true disciples, but Jesus taught that following Him was more than just knowing facts about Him. He explained what it really meant to be His disciple when He defined the cost of discipleship: Nothing, not love for father or mother or even one's own life, was to take precedence over loyalty to Jesus (vv.26-33). His disciples (then and now) must acknowledge that if God is to be primary in their lives, possessions and even social relationships have to be secondary.

Jesus calls His followers to be absorbed in a single, exclusive thought and passion—Him. By Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Set us afire, Lord, stir us we pray!  
While the world perishes, we go our way  
Purposeless, passionless, day after day;  
Set us afire, Lord, stir us we pray!  
—Cushman

Our love for Jesus is the key to spiritual passion.

### Luke 14:27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

KJV Luke 14:27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

NET Luke 14:27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

CSB Luke 14:27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

ESV Luke 14:27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

NIV Luke 14:27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

NLT Luke 14:27 And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.

NRS Luke 14:27 Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

- **Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me** Lk 9:23-25; Mt 10:38; 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-37; 10:21; 15:21; Jn 19:17; 2 Ti 3:12
- **cannot be My disciple** Mt 13:21; Acts 14:22; 2 Ti 1:12
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-27 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!

### Related Passages:

Lk 9:23-25+ And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and **take up his cross daily and follow Me.** 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?

Mt 16:24-26+ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and **take up his cross and follow Me.** 25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Mark 8:34-37+ And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 35 "For **whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.** 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

**Whoever does not carry ([bastazo](#)) his own cross ([stauros](#)) and come after (follow) Me cannot be My disciple ([mathetes](#))** - The **cross** does not symbolize our "problems" but our death (death to self and for some martyrdom)! As you study this verse, try to imagine yourself as present in the huge crowd that was following Jesus. They had witnessed miracle after miracle and were filled with enthusiasm for Him. Then Jesus drops a bomb by mentioning the Cross! They must have been utterly shocked by His call to carry their own cross! Clearly Jesus was separating the wheat from the chaff, superficial professors from committed followers (cf Ps 1:1-6+). And He says the same thing today by His ministers who proclaim truth without compromise (cf Acts 20:27+). And that is why it is so critical that the "Hard Sayings of Jesus" be preached to the enthusiastic multitude. Jesus does not desire for any man or woman to find themselves before Him one day proclaiming "Lord, Lord," and then hear "I never knew you. **Depart** from me, you who practice (present tense - a sin-oriented, Hell bent, lifestyle as described in the false teaching of "[carnal Christianity!](#)) lawlessness." (Mt 7:21-23+) Jesus is not calling us to wear a **cross** around our neck! A dictionary of English idioms defines "bearing one's cross" this way - "To cope with a burden or challenging situation. *I'm sure it's not easy to live with such a serious illness, but she bears her cross with such humor and grace.*" We have all heard Christians describe burdensome circumstances in their life as their "cross." But this is **NOT** what Jesus is referring to when He calls for those who profess to be His disciples to carry their own cross. The audience He was addressing knew full well that the cross was an instrument of torturous death. The Romans knew this mode of death was so horrible that they would only inflict it on those who were not Roman citizens. To carry one's cross was to die to self and self-interests! The heart of Jesus' teaching on discipleship is the issue of our heart -- are we willing to deny self (even to the point of death -- see [illustration](#) below). "The believer's own cross is whatever it costs him in self-denial and opposition from others to follow the Lord Jesus." (Crawford)

The image of a man carrying his own cross is of a condemned man on his way to the place of execution, shouldering the cross-bar of his own cross and walking through the mocking crowds, just as Jesus did on the way to Calvary. Thus it is a graphic picture of one who is dead to his own will. He is ready to accept whatever costs are involved in following Jesus. So the Cross ultimately speaks of death. For a Christian this represents both a point in time (Ro 6:4-6, Ga 2:20) and also a process in which daily we are called to deny and die, putting to death the old habits and corrupting lusts of deceit and putting on the garments of resurrection power (Php 3:10)

Was Jesus calling for His disciples to experience literal death? For some this has been the case but the more difficult death (in my opinion) is daily death to self. Whether literal or figurative death is death and by its very meaning speaks of separation, either physically or figuratively (spiritually). The important point is that the true disciple of Christ must be willing to die that he might truly live. It was James Denney who wrote that, "The man who has nothing to die for has nothing to live for; he does not know what life is." The disciple, however, has everything to live for, because he has chosen what and who he will die for. His life has been placed at the full disposal of the Lord Jesus. Jesus is calling us to a radical and costly identification with Him and will not force the cross upon us. We must daily choose to take it up out of devotion to the Lord Himself (Lk 9:23-note) It requires a personal decision.

Following Jesus costs more than anything—except not following Him.

**Darrell Bock** - The figure of cross-bearing denotes a willingness to bear the pain of persecution as a result of following Jesus. It is another way to express willingness to "hate one's soul" in self-sacrifice. The picture is similar to Luke 9:23–24, with its portrait of daily cross-bearing (Plummer 1896: 364), as well as Matt. 16:24 = Mark 8:34; Acts 14:22; and Heb. 13:13 (Ibid)

**Guzik** - The one carrying a cross essentially walked down death row to their place of execution. They knew there was no turning back, and it was a total, complete commitment, with your life was completely yielded. You knew your life didn't belong to you any more. This is total commitment; Jesus gave Himself for us totally, and expects us to give ourselves to Him totally. We can understate the demands of Jesus when we preach the gospel to others. We can give them the impression that coming to Jesus is only believing some facts instead of yielding a life. ([Commentary](#))

**Geldenhuys** - The general idea that these words of Jesus about **bearing the cross** refer to passive submission to all kinds of afflictions, like disappointments, pain, sickness and grief that come upon man in life, is totally wrong ... only a person who for the sake of His service surrenders all self-seeking and abandons all striving after his own interests can be His disciple." ([NICNT-Luke](#))

"Take up your cross," the Savior said,  
"If you would My disciple be;  
Take up your cross with willing heart  
And humbly follow after Me."  
—Everest

The words of the song [I Have Decided to Follow Jesus](#) are a good "paraphrase" of Jesus' words...

The Cross before me  
The world behind me

No turning back  
No turning back

Though none go with me  
Still I will follow  
Though none go with me  
Still I will follow

Though none go with me  
Still I will follow  
No turning back  
No turning back!

[Read the story behind "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"](#) for an illustration of counting the cost. Note while that some object to the hymn's focus on the human decision to follow Jesus, it is clear that only those enabled by the Spirit can make such a decision (God's sovereign provision) and yet they must personally make that decision (Man's responsibility). This is a mystery (Dt 29:29a), which we cannot fully understand in this life (cf 1 Cor 13:12).

We need to take A W Tozer's words to heart when he said that "The man on the cross is facing in only one direction. He is not going back, and he has no further plans of his own."

Paul testifies to his obedience to Jesus' call to deny self "But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which **the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world** (Gal 6:14+)

**Tozer** adds "We must do something about the cross and one of two things only we can do—flee it or die upon it."

**John Phillips** writes "The words must have struck a most discordant note in the ears of that jostling human crowd. A cross? The cross was the very symbol of Roman oppression and cruelty. It was a gallows, an instrument of unbelievable suffering and shame. Nothing about a cross was glamorous. It was the very symbol of the Curse. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," declared God's law (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13). The Lord's disciples all reacted against the mention of the cross (Matt. 16:21-25), so we can imagine the astonishment of the crowd. They saw nothing in this message for them. They thought that the procession was marching to Zion to crown Him. The notion that He was heading toward Calvary and a cross never occurred to them in their wildest dreams. (See [Exploring the Gospel of Luke: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Keener** - A condemned criminal would "carry the cross" (i.e., the horizontal beam of the cross, [the patibulum](#)) out to the site of the upright stake where he would be crucified, usually amid a jeering mob. No one would choose this fate for oneself, but Jesus calls true disciples to choose it and thus to hate their own lives by comparison with their devotion to him (Lk 14:26). (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

**Wiersbe** - What does it mean to "carry the cross"? It means daily identification with Christ in shame, suffering, and surrender to God's will. It means death to self, to our own plans and ambitions, and a willingness to serve Him as He directs (John 12:23-28). A "cross" is something we willingly accept from God as part of His will for our lives. The Christian who calle (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#)) (Bible Exposition Commentary)

As an aside it is somewhat ironic that even Jesus' own disciples failed to carry His' cross, so that the Romans had to draft a bystander, Simon of Cyrene, to carry it (Lk 23:26)!

"Take up thy cross and follow Me,"  
I hear the blessed Savior call;  
How can I make a lesser sacrifice  
When Jesus gave His all?  
—Ackley

Because Jesus bore the cross for us,  
we should be willing to take it up for Him.

**MacArthur** - The call to salvation is a call to self-denial (cf. Luke 17:33 = "Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it."); it marks the end of sinners being the reigning authorities in their lives and calls for them instead to submit as slaves to Jesus' authority as Lord, King, and Master. That selflessness extends to the point of death ().

**F F Bruce** - Denying oneself is not a matter of giving up something, whether for Lent or for the whole of life: it is a decisive saying "No" to oneself, to one's hopes and plans and ambitions, to one's likes and dislikes, to one's nearest and dearest, for the sake of



Christ.

**Vance Havner** -- What our Lord said about cross-bearing and obedience is not in fine type. It is in bold print on the face of the contract.

**Billy Graham** in "The Offense of the Cross" -When Jesus said, "If you are going to follow me, you have to take up a cross," it was the same as saying, "Come and bring your electric chair with you. Take up the gas chamber and follow me." He did not have a beautiful gold cross in mind—the cross on a church steeple or on the front of your Bible. Jesus had in mind a place of execution.

**A.W. Tozer** - The old cross slew men; the new cross entertains them. The old cross condemned; the new cross amuses. The old cross destroyed confidence in the flesh; the new cross encourages it.

Follow Me!

**Jesus' call to the first disciples was "Follow Me!"** (Mt 4:19, 8:22, 9:9, 16:24, 19:21, Mk. 1:17; 2:14; 8:34; 10:21; Lk. 5:27; 9:23; 9:59; 18:22; Jn. 1:43; 10:27; 12:26; 13:36; 21:19; 21:22) And what was His destination? Death on the Cross of Calvary. When we follow Him, we too are denying self daily and taking up our cross to follow in His steps.

**Steven Cole** explains that "The cross was not an implement of irritation or inconvenience. The cross was an implement of slow, tortuous death. Jesus here is looking at the process of daily death to selfish desires and of the willingness to bear reproach for His name's sake. Since our Savior suffered the rejection and agony of the cross, if we follow after Him, we must be prepared for the same treatment. If people revile us for being Christians, we must bless them in return (Ro 12:14). We should never do anything to provoke persecution, but if we suffer for the sake of righteousness, we must entrust our souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right (1Pe 4:19). Again, this is a process in which we all must grow. If we blow it, we must confess it to the Lord and seek to be obedient the next time we have opportunity to suffer for Him. But if we aren't involved in the process of carrying our own cross in death to self, we are not on the path of the disciple of Jesus Christ. [The Cost of Discipleship](#)

**Gilbrant** - No one could hear these words without an awareness that in order to **follow** Jesus he must be ready to surrender all selfish and self-seeking interests and be willing to accept any and all sacrifices that might come. Christians today have the responsibility of holding up the cross of Jesus to the world because it is through that Cross that men are saved. But the world can best see the cross of Christ when it sees His disciples not only willing to preach Christ, but also to live a life of total commitment to Him. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Gregg Allen** on what it means to **bear our cross** - Our culture considers that there is no greater right than your right to 'self'. Isn't that our unalienable right by law? - the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Aren't we told in all the popular self-help literature that we can't really love other people until we first love our selves? Well, Jesus once again shocks us when He says, "And whoever does not bear His cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." There could be no greater gesture to show you have forsaken your right to 'self' than to take up your own cross and bear it as you follow after Jesus. If that requirement was truly understood, it alone would be enough to turn many would-be followers away - never to return to Him again. When people hear that phrase today - to 'bear your cross' - I suspect they usually misunderstand it. We have that old saying, "Oh well, I guess that's just the cross I must bear"; and this is based on a distortion of what Jesus' words were really meant to convey. People think that "taking up" or "bearing" their "cross" means putting up with some obnoxious relative or neighbor, or working at an unpleasant job or task, or living with an illness or affliction of some kind. When we patiently "tolerate" these things, we say we're 'bearing our cross.' Those things may have to be, and we may have to tolerate them to some degree; but that's not what Jesus means by calling us to bear our cross and follow Him. You see, we have grown to give the "cross" a religious or sentimental or symbolic significance in our day. But for those who first heard these words from Jesus, the cross was not a symbol at all. Rather, it was a gruesome reality that they saw very often in life. It was a form of execution invented by the Romans - a form of execution that was very public; and that was among the most cruel, most demoralizing, and most humiliating the human mind could imagine. To crucify a man was to expose him - naked and battered - for public ridicule and shame. It was to pin him - bleeding and in writhing agony - to beams of wood, suspended by his arms, until the life was slowly drained out of him. It was something so terrible that it was reserved for the vilest of criminals and scoundrels - the scum of the earth. It was designed, in part, to have a deterring impact on future criminals - and I have no doubt that it was very effective to anyone who saw it. To be forced to bear one's own cross, then, was to be made to embrace its shame and humiliation. To carry it to the place of execution was to carry the instrument of one's own dying. To bear the cross was the polar opposite of embracing the right to 'self'. Jesus is here telling us that neither you or I can be His disciple - that is, that we're simply not able to be - if we are unwilling to take up our own cross and die to 'self'. We can know for sure that this is what He means; because in a similar passage, He puts the matter this way: *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels"* (Luke 9:23-26-note). And

so, there it is. To bear one's own cross and follow Jesus means to deny 'self'. It means putting to a humiliating death one's own agenda, one's own independence, one's own plans and schemes and pursuits, one's own rights and expectations. It means crucifying not just the bad aspects of 'self', but all of 'self'. And I note that, in the original language of Jesus' words, He uses the form of the verb that indicates a regular, ongoing, progressive, daily practice. It's not something we do once for all time in life and consider the matter to be settled. Rather, we must be taking up our cross again and again, always and repeatedly denying self, and continually - in that attitude of self-denial - following Him. And if we will not do this, then we cannot be His disciple. ([Luke 14:25-35 Who Cannot Be Jesus' Disciple](#))

**Gotquestions** on what is our "**cross**" - Many people interpret "cross" as some burden they must carry in their lives: a strained relationship, a thankless job, a physical illness. With self-pitying pride, they say, "That's my cross I have to carry."...How different from the typical Gospel presentation! How many people would respond to an altar call that went, "Come follow Jesus, and you may face the loss of friends, family, reputation, career, and possibly even your life"? The number of false converts would likely decrease! Such a call is what Jesus meant when He said, "Take up your cross and follow Me." If you wonder if you are ready to take up your cross, consider these questions:

- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing some of your closest friends?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means alienation from your family?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means the loss of your reputation?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing your job?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing your life?

In some places of the world, these consequences are reality. But notice the questions are phrased, "Are you willing?" Following Jesus doesn't necessarily mean all these things will happen to you, but are you willing to take up your cross? If there comes a point in your life where you are faced with a choice—Jesus or the comforts of this life—which will you choose? Commitment to Christ means taking up your cross daily, giving up your hopes, dreams, possessions, even your very life if need be for the cause of Christ. Only if you willingly take up your cross may you be called His disciple (Luke 14:27). The reward is worth the price. Jesus followed His call of death to self ("Take up your cross and follow Me") with the gift of life in Christ: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:25-26). ([What did Jesus mean when He said, "Take up your cross and follow Me"?](#))

**Hughes** rightly reminds us that "**Discipleship is a series of deaths—perpetual dying**. Disciples follow Christ on a path of self-denial. Disciples embrace suffering as a part of life. As Paul prayed, "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Philippians 3:10, 11)." (See [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#)) (Bolding added)

**Gene Brooks** - Roman prisoners were forced to carry the horizontal cross beam (*the patibulum*) to the place of execution (Luke 23:26). The image reflects not only self-denial, but humiliation and sacrificial death. Count the cost. But choose to follow Jesus to the end.... In order to be a true disciple, one must be willing to identify with Christ even though He was rejected. The Cross for Christ was the test of His obedience to the will of the Father and the sign of His rejection by Israel. One must be willing to identify with the rejected One to be willing to assume what is involved in that identification in order to be Christ's disciple. ([The Cost of Being a Disciple](#))

**C S Lewis** gave a poignant, convicting description of discipleship declaring that what Jesus was saying was "Give me all of you!!! I don't want so much of your time, so much of your talents and money, and so much of your work. **I want YOU!!! ALL OF YOU!!** I have not come to torment or frustrate the natural man or woman, but to **KILL IT! No half measures will do.** I don't want to only prune a branch here and a branch there; rather I want the whole tree out! Hand it over to me, the whole outfit, all of your desires, all of your wants and wishes and dreams. Turn them ALL over to me, give yourself to me and I will make of you a new self---in my image. Give me yourself and in exchange I will give you Myself. My will, shall become your will. My heart, shall become your heart." ([C S Lewis Quotes](#)) (Bolding added)

I do not ask for easy paths  
Along life's winding roads,  
But for the promised grace and strength  
To carry all its loads.  
—Meadows

**Mike Andrus** explains that "The true disciple must yield his personal safety and preferences. The common interpretation of bearing one's cross is that the cross represents the sacrifices and inconveniences in life. I'm bearing my cross when I give a tithe that I could find many other good uses for, when someone sneers at the fish symbol on my car, when I attend worship, an ABF, and a small group all in the same week. Actually this is a pathetic misrepresentation of the cross Jesus speaks of. **What would His listeners**

**have thought of when they heard the word “cross”?** They would have thought of the most cruel and ignominious death known to man. When they saw a man carrying his cross behind some Roman soldiers, they knew it was a **one-way trip**. The taking up of the cross is the **voluntary yielding of personal safety and preferences, even the possibility of martyrdom No wonder true discipleship has never been a mass movement**. In 1948 Whittaker Chambers, a former Communist, went before a New York Grand Jury to witness against the Communistic involvements of one of our high government officials, Alger Hiss. One of the jurors leaned forward and asked him, “Mr. Chambers, what does it mean to be a Communist?” Chambers struggled for a way to explain what it meant to those for whom Communism was virtually incomprehensible. Finally he told them that when he was a Communist he had three heroes. The first was a Polish political prisoner in Warsaw. He insisted on cleaning the latrines of the other prisoners because he felt that the most developed member of any community should take upon himself the lowliest tasks as an example to the rest. “That,” said Chambers, “is one thing it meant to be a Communist.” His second hero was a German Jew who was captured and court-martialed during a revolt in Bavaria. When the judge told him, “You are under sentence of death,” he answered, “We Communists are always under sentence of death.” “That,” said Chambers, “is another thing that it meant to be a Communist.” His third hero was a Russian who was exiled to a Siberian prison camp where political prisoners were routinely flogged. He sought some means of protesting this inhumane persecution. Finally, in desperation he drenched himself in kerosene, set himself on fire and burned himself to death as a protest against this outrage which he deplored. “That,” repeated Chambers, “is also what it meant to be a Communist.” What, may I ask, does it mean to us to be a Christian? Does it mean any more than participatory democracy, a nice home in the suburbs, a parochial school for our kids, and a church to provide fellowship and hear a decent sermon? God is asking us for a level of commitment that could conceivably end in physical death. ([Luke 14:25-35 Come at All Cost, But Count the Cost](#))

**Kent Hughes** - Discipleship requires everything. There are no exceptions. No one has ever become a disciple of Christ and lived a life of ease! You can search the writings of the apostolic church and you will find no exception. You can check every writing and personal vignette during the first 400 years of the church and you will find no disciple lounging on a bed of constant comfort. The same is true of the Dark Ages and the Renaissance and the Reformation and the 500 years of intervening history. Discipleship calls for sacrifice. (See [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#))

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**Carry** (bear)([941](#))(**bastazo** from **basis** = foot) generally means to take up and hold (Jn 10:31, 20:15, Acts 21:35) or to bear (Mt 3:11, Mk 14:13, Lk 22:10). The meaning common in classic Greek of “to pick up” (Jn 10:31), carry (Jn 19:17), endure (borne - Mt 20:12), remove (Mt 3:11), and the common Koine sense of “to steal” (Jn 12:6). Luke 14:27; John 19:17 refer to carrying the cross. In Acts 9:15 “to bear My Name” means to announce it to “Gentiles and kings and sons.”

Notice that Jn 19:17 describes Jesus as “bearing His own cross” which is clearly a unique event which applies only to Jesus. In other words, in none of the passages that Jesus calls for disciples to bear their own cross (Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34; 10:21; Lk 9:23; 14:27), is it suggested that we can bear His cross.

Metaphorically **bastazo** means to bear, support, endure, i.e., labors, sufferings (Mt. 20:12, burden or weight, implied in Rev. 2:3). The punishment incurred by being foolish (Gal. 5:10). To bear patiently (Ro 15:1; Gal. 6:2; Rev. 2:2). Metaphorically in the sense of to receive, understand (Jn 16:12).

**Friberg** - (1) take up, lift up, pick up (Jn 10.31); (2) carry, bear (Mk 14.13); figuratively, of anything burdensome or difficult bear, endure, put up with ( Mt 20.12); (3) bear away, remove (Jn 20.15); figuratively, of healing disease (Mt 8.17 - “took [bore] our infirmities”) = not in sense of promising to remove all sickness, but in bearing the curse of sin He healed our “sin sickness” so to speak, far more eternally deadly than any physical sickness! see 1 Pe 2:24-note); (4) steal, pilfer, carry off (Jn 12.6); (5) figuratively, of serving as a source of supply support, provide for (Ro 11.18). (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Vine on Bastazo** - signifies “to support as a burden.” It is used with the meaning (a) “to take up,” as in picking up anything, stones, John 10:31; (b) “to carry” something, Matt. 3:11; Mark 14:13; Luke 7:14; Luke 22:10; Acts 3:2; Acts 21:35; Rev. 17:7; “to carry” on one’s person, Luke 10:4; Gal. 6:17; in one’s body, Luke 11:27; “to bear” a name in testimony, Acts 9:15; metaphorically, of a root “bearing” branches, Rom. 11:18; (c) “to bear” a burden, whether physically, as of the cross, John 19:17, or metaphorically in respect of sufferings endured in the cause of Christ, Luke 14:27; Rev. 2:3; it is said of physical endurance, Matt. 20:12; of sufferings “borne” on behalf of others, Matt. 8:17; Rom. 15:1; Gal. 6:2; of spiritual truths not able to be “borne,” John 16:12; of the refusal to endure evil men, Rev. 2:2; of religious regulations imposed on others, Acts 15:10; of the burden of the sentence of God to be executed in due time, Gal. 5:10; of the effect at the judgment seat of Christ, to be “borne” by the believer for failure in the matter of discharging the obligations of discipleship, Gal. 6:5; (d) to “bear” by way of carrying off, John 12:6; John 20:15. ([Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**Gilbrant** - The basic and most frequent translation of this word is to “bear” or “carry.” The exact sense of the word is determined by the context and the object to be carried or borne. In classical Greek it exhibits considerable flexibility. It is used of the action of “lifting up” or “raising,” both literally of things and metaphorically, i.e., “to exalt.” In the sense of “to carry,” the word can take on the meaning of “to hold,” literally in the hands or figuratively in the mind. Similarly in the sense of “to bear” it can mean “to endure” or “to yield”

(bear crops). Sometimes the action is descriptive of something being “carried off” or “taken away” in theft. Finally, it is used of the physical “touch” or “embrace.” These various meanings continued into Koine Greek. Numerous citations carry the sense of to “pilfer” or “steal.” Bastazō also exhibits the meaning of “to take off” or “remove” and acquires the new meaning of “to wait” or “hold out.” (See Moulton-Milligan.) ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Bastazo** - 27x in 27 verses - bear(8), bearers(1), bearing(1), bore(1), borne(1), carried(2), carried...away(1), carried away(1), carries(1), carry(2), carrying(2), endured(1), picked(1), pilfer(1), remove(1), supports(1), tolerate(1). Matt. 3:11; Matt. 8:17; Matt. 20:12; Mk. 14:13; Lk. 7:14; Lk. 10:4; Lk. 11:27; Lk. 14:27; Lk. 22:10; Jn. 10:31; Jn. 12:6; Jn. 16:12; Jn. 19:17; Jn. 20:15; Acts 3:2; Acts 9:15; Acts 15:10; Acts 21:35; Rom. 11:18; Rom. 15:1; Gal. 5:10; Gal. 6:2; Gal. 6:5; Gal. 6:17; Rev. 2:2; Rev. 2:3; Rev. 17:7

**Bastazo** - only 3 uses in the Septuagint - Judges 16:30, Ru 2:16, 2 Ki 18:14

**Cross** (4716)(**stauros** from **histemi** = to stand) was an an upright stake, especially a pointed one. Thayer adds the **stauros** was a well-known instrument of most cruel and ignominious punishment, borrowed by the Greeks and Romans from the Phoenicians; to it were affixed among the Romans, down to the time of Constantine the Great, the guiltiest criminals, particularly the basest slaves, robbers, the authors and abettors of insurrections, and occasionally in the provinces, at the arbitrary pleasure of the governors, upright and peaceable men also, and even Roman citizens themselves.

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the meaning of the cross?](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He said, “Take up your cross and follow Me”?](#)
- [Luke 14:27 What it Means to Follow Christ](#)- David Platt

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#### [When I survey the wondrous cross](#)

On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of CHRIST, my GOD;  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small:  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.  
-Isaac Watts

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**Cross Bearing** - “Anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” Matthew 10:38

Right now it’s summer! When I’m wearing flip-flops to the grocery store and running the air conditioner in my car. It’s hard to remember the frigid days of January, and still harder to imagine a climate colder than Grand Rapids, Michigan in the dead of winter. But of course there are many places that are colder, more remote, and far more harsh—such as Siberia!

During the height of the Communist rule in the former Soviet Union, Pastor Ivan Minailo was exiled to prison in Siberia. His crime? He refused to betray Jesus and his five small congregations by becoming a stealth informant for the secret police. As he and nine hundred other “criminals” were marched to a remote prison camp, Ivan’s feet became severely frost-bitten and swollen to the point where he almost needed to have them amputated, yet he willingly carried his cross through the snows of Siberia.

As Ivan demonstrated, our willingness to pay the price of a cross is the pivotal issue when it comes to our devotion to Jesus. Jesus put this in cement when He said, “Anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:38). I guess that means, if we refuse to bear the cross we are given, then we can’t really call ourselves followers of Christ.

Since the stakes are so high, let me take a minute to clarify what it means to bear a cross for Christ. Cross-bearing is when I am willingly inclined to endure suffering that comes as a result of following Christ. It requires a willing heart. As it did for Ivan, our experience on earth will bring us to crossroads where we must choose: Christ or comfort, Jesus or ease, and even, sometimes, worship or wealth. Followers of Jesus make the hard choices because of who Jesus is—the Son of God, eternally worthy of our whole existence.

Sometimes I wonder why Jesus drew such a hard line in the sand when it came to cross-bearing. I mean, why couldn't the Christian life just be a bit more of a cakewalk? And then I think it's because He knew that living to please our Father in heaven would be a rough assignment in a world that is under the control of the archenemy of God. During His ministry on earth, Jesus endured a lot of things—painful rejection, cruel and unfair criticism, marginalization, physical torture, the betrayal of a dear friend, and finally crucifixion—all to be faithful to His Father. Spiritually speaking, this world is a tough and sometimes hostile place to live if you're following Christ.

Of course, cross-bearing does not exclude us from the grace of good times and the enjoyment of things He has provided for us. Thank God for the grace of seasons where our crosses are rather light. But cross-bearing does mean that, like Ivan and millions of others, when push comes to shove we choose the “Jesus way” even if it means loss and suffering.

So here's the rest of the story: Ivan suffered under the brutal elements of Siberia and the cruel taskmasters of the prison camp for 10 years before he was released. But regardless of his suffering, he sought to use the season of difficulty to lift Jesus up. As he worked in villages as a prisoner, he led people to Jesus and, get this, today there are churches throughout Siberia that were established by the witness of prison laborers who exalted Jesus in the midst of their suffering.

I wonder—is Jesus worth everything and anything to you? What will you decide the next time you have to choose between carrying your cross and laying it down for a more comfortable existence? Here's the bottom line: Authentic followers of Jesus are glad to pick up a cross to prove to our leader that He is more important to us than anything else in our lives!

YOUR JOURNEY...

Cross-bearing is an individual experience. How does Luke 14:27 support this? Why is this important?

Track down a copy of Fox's Book of Martyrs. Read a few of the accounts. Is there any cost too great for following Christ?

Why is it significant that we willingly bear the cross we are given? How did Jesus lay down His life for us? Read Matthew 10:38; Luke 14:27; Mark 8:31-37; and John 12:25. Then spend some time journaling on this topic. ([Joe Stowell - Get More Strength](#))

Day by day, to fight the battle,  
Day by day, Thy will to do,  
Day by day, the cross to carry,  
Seeking only to be true.  
—Fisher

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## Cafeteria Christianity

Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. —Mark 8:34

In his book *Thinking in the Future Tense*, Edward B. Lindaman refers to “the cafeteria culture of our age.” It's the tendency to shy away from life's unpleasant disciplines and seek only what brings immediate pleasure.

Christians are not exempt from this tendency. Some persuasive preachers promote an “abundant life” of success and prosperity through positive thinking, more faith, or giving money to get God's blessing in return.

The Bible, of course, teaches us to think positively (Phil. 4:8) and to give liberally (2 Cor. 8:2). But much “prosperity preaching” lacks the nourishing truths of Christ's sacrifice for sin and His demand for godly living. Our God is not only loving, good, and generous; He is also righteous, holy, and demanding. He hates sin and will not compromise with evil.

It's wonderful to hear about the blessings Christ offers, but we also need to experience repentance and self-denial. The picking and choosing of a cafeteria-style Christianity is no substitute for a well-rounded diet, which includes the tough truths of taking up Christ's cross and following Him (Mark 8:34). That kind of nourishment stimulates the growth of spiritual muscle and Christlike character. And I need all of that I can get, don't you? By Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

From subtle love of softening things,



From easy choices, weakenings;  
Not thus are spirits fortified,  
Not this way went the Crucified.  
—Amy Carmichael

To be conformed to Christ,  
let God's Spirit form Christ in you.

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### **"Consumer Christianity"**

If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. —Luke 9:23

In his book *The Empty Church*, historian Thomas C. Reeves says: "Christianity in modern America . . . tends to be easy, upbeat, convenient, and compatible. It does not require self-sacrifice, discipline, humility, an otherworldly outlook, a zeal for souls, a fear as well as love of God. There is little guilt and no punishment, and the payoff in heaven is virtually certain. What we now have might best be labeled 'Consumer Christianity.' The cost is low and customer satisfaction seems guaranteed."

If we were only customers of Almighty God, we could be selective in our faith and reject anything we didn't like. But that's not an idea we get from Jesus. He pointed us to a cross, not to a spiritual check-out counter. He said: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it" (Luke 9:23-24). Christ died on a cross for our sins, not for our satisfaction. And He calls us to trust in Him, then follow Him with a life of self-denial.

In a world where the customer is always right, it takes radical obedience to God to keep from buying into "Consumer Christianity." By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When Jesus said to follow Him  
Regardless of the cost,  
He promised He would surely give  
Much more than would be lost. —Sper

Following Jesus is not always easy, but it's always right.

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### **True Self-Denial**

If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. —Luke 9:23

Lent is a period of 40 days prior to Easter (excluding Sundays). For many people it commemorates Jesus' fasting in the wilderness. They "give up something" for Lent every year, like sweets or TV. This can yield spiritual benefits, but denying yourself things and denying yourself aren't the same. In Luke 9:23, Jesus taught the latter.

This verse can be broken down into three parts. In the statement "If anyone desires to come after Me," the word desires indicates that this is for sincere disciples only. In the phrase "let him deny himself," the words let and denyhimself imply a willingness to renounce one's selfish will and ways. And in the statement "take up his cross daily," the word daily emphasizes a continual dying to self-will.

It's easier to give things than to give ourselves. Yet Jesus gave Himself, and so must we. To those who deny themselves in obedient service, He has promised, "Whoever loses his life for My sake will save it" (v.24). And to His question, "What profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed?" we are called to answer, "There is no profit!" We show that we believe this when we deny ourselves and follow Christ. By Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

To follow Christ we must let go  
Of all that we hold dear;  
And as we do deny ourselves,  
Our gains become more clear.  
—Sper

**By living for ourselves we die;  
by dying to ourselves we live.**

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## Taking Shortcuts

Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23

Sipping her tea, Nancy gazed out her friend's window and sighed. Spring rains and sunshine had coaxed a riotous expanse of color from a well-groomed flowerbed of lilies, phlox, irises, and evening primrose.

"I want that look," she said wistfully, "without all the work."

The work of following Christ is difficult, but the reward is a full, joyful life now and forever.

Some shortcuts are fine—even practical. Others short-circuit our spirit and deaden our lives. We want romance without the difficulties and messiness of committing to someone so different from ourselves. We want "greatness" without the risks and failures necessary in the adventure of real life. We desire to please God, but not when it inconveniences us.

Jesus made clear to His followers that there is no shortcut that avoids the hard choice of surrendering our lives to Him. He warned a prospective disciple, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). To follow Christ requires a radical altering of our loyalties.

When we turn in faith to Jesus, the work just begins. But it is oh-so-worth-it, for He also told us that no one who sacrifices "for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age . . . and in the age to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29–30). The work of following Christ is difficult, but He's given us His Spirit and the reward is a full, joyful life now and forever.

Father, I will find the strength to do the work You have for me to do, only as I rely on Your Holy Spirit. Help me, please, to be sensitive to that today. By Tim Gustafson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Most things worth doing are difficult.**

**Luke 14:28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?"**

KJV Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

NET Luke 14:28 For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't sit down first and compute the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?

CSB Luke 14:28 "For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?"

ESV Luke 14:28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

NIV Luke 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"

NLT Luke 14:28 "But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?"

NRS Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it?

- **For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower** Ge 11:4-9; Pr 24:27
- **does not first sit down and calculate the cost** Lk 14:33; Joshua 24:19-24; Mt 8:20; 10:22; 20:22,23; Acts 21:13; 1 Th 3:4,5; 2 Pe 1:13,14
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [What does it mean to 'count the cost' \(Luke 14:28\)?](#)
- [Luke 14:28-33 Building a Tower and Making War - The Cost of Regeneration](#) - Edward C Mitchell - from [The Parables of the](#)

## [NT Spiritually Unfolded](#)

- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 3](#) - Steven Lawson

## **COUNT THE COST BEFORE COMMITTING (1)**

**For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate (psephizo) the cost to see if he has enough to complete (apartismos) it - For** is a term of explanation indicating Jesus is explaining that given the cost of discipleship, it behooves one to carefully consider the cost to himself or herself. He gives two illustrations of the importance of counting the cost and the foolishness of failing to do so. First likened the life of discipleship to a building project and then to warfare. He begins with a rhetorical question which reflects common sense - no one would begin to build a tower (or house, etc) if he did not have the funds to complete it. And so he does not proceed with the project. **Calculate the cost** implies that one is not to rush into this without some serious pondering of the cost! Just as the builder's success was contingent on carefully calculations, so too the disciples success (and perseverance) would be dependent on giving serious thought to what lay ahead if one is to follow in the Master's steps. Peter's words expand on this thought "For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you **to follow in His steps**" (1 Pe 2:20-21+)

**Robert Stein** - The following similitudes illustrate the need to consider carefully what it means to become a Christian. (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**Morris** - Jesus does not want disciples who do not realize what they have let themselves in for. Counting the cost is important. He uses twin parables (a device he employs often) to drive the point home ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow).

**MacArthur** - This could have been a watchtower for protection from his enemies, or a storage tower for his goods. Either one would have been a visible construction project, and everyone in the community would have known about it. Preserving one's honor and avoiding bringing shame on oneself and one's family were elevated matters in the ancient Near East. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**John Stott**: The Christian landscape is strewn with the wreckage of derelict, half-built towers—the ruins of those who began to build and were unable to finish. For thousands of people still ignore Christ's warning and undertake to follow him without first pausing to reflect on the cost of doing so. The result is the great scandal of Christendom today, so-called "nominal Christianity." In countries to which Christian civilization has spread, large numbers of people have covered themselves with a decent, but thin, veneer of Christianity. They have allowed themselves to become somewhat involved; enough to be respectable but not enough to be uncomfortable. Their religion is a great, soft cushion. It protects them from the hard unpleasantness of life, while changing its place and shape to suit their convenience. No wonder the cynics speak of hypocrites in the church and dismiss religion as escapism. (Borrow [Basic Christianity](#))

**Norman Crawford** - In much modern evangelism people are told that the Lord wants them to give up nothing, just to receive Christ and have the blessings of salvation added to their worldly pleasures and amusements. These supposed conversions do not last because there has been no Spirit-wrought conviction about being utterly lost, no awakening and, therefore, no repentance. The true terms of discipleship are kept hidden until "a decision to accept Jesus into the heart" is made. The Lord Jesus told people to sit down and carefully count the cost. This is the opposite of the high pressure method employed in so many campaigns. Often profession is made in conditions similar to those in which a person is coerced into buying some piece of merchandise that is neither needed nor wanted. Good salesmanship is no asset in soul-winning. The message of the Lord is to count the cost first of all. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**Gene Brooks** - The builder did not begin until he had considered the cost (Luke 14:28-30). Just a few years earlier, A.D. 27, a poorly built amphitheater had collapsed, with about 50,000 casualties, so the image was powerful for Jesus' hearers. ([The Cost of Being a Disciple](#))

**Steven Cole** makes the important observation that **sit down and calculate the cost** refers "to careful, detailed, rational thinking in which you consider all aspects of what you're getting into before you make the commitment. Such careful thinking is opposed to an impulsive decision made in a moment of intense emotion, without much thought about the consequences. Our evangelistic methods today are big on emotion and little on reason. We get people into a stadium to hear testimonies from famous athletes or movie stars about how Christ changed their lives. Then they hear a rousing speaker promise how Christ can meet the person's every need.

Then the invitation is given and counselors are primed to get out of their seats and walk forward so that people on the verge of a decision think that others are going forward. The choir or band is playing a song of invitation. Going forward feels like the right thing to do. In a swell of emotion, the person gets out of his seat and “decides for Christ.” But did the person get saved? By God’s grace, some do. But even the well-known evangelists admit that the long-term “stick with it” rate for those who make a decision is only about 10-15 percent. All too often, their decision was based more on emotion than on careful thought about what it means to follow Christ. Here, Jesus says to the crowds who were interested enough to be going along with Him, “Consider the cost of following Me.” ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

**POSB** (Borrow [Luke Commentary](#)) - The point is clear: before a person begins to follow Christ, Christ wants that person to think about it. He wants the person to be sure, absolutely sure. Can he afford to follow through; does he have what it takes to build the tower (life)? Why? Because a false profession damages the Kingdom of God. A false profession causes ...

- the world to mock and charge true believers with being hypocritical
- prospective believers to turn sour
- believers to be hampered and hindered in their ministry
- some believers to become discouraged

**Bob Utley** on Luke 14:28–32 This speaks of the need to recognize the cost of “*followship!*” No quick decisions! The Gospel is absolutely free, but it costs everything that we are and have (cf. Mt. 13:44–46). In light of this, western modern Christianity is a weak manifestation of “*what’s in it for me*” cultural religion! Modern western Christians have turned biblical faith into a weekly event, a place we park our car for a few hours instead of a 24 hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week relationship of service to Christ. We only give the leftovers of our busy lives and plans to Him. We worship and praise Him with peripherals and non-essentials. This is why we have such large, beautiful church buildings and elaborate organizations and programs and **NO SPIRITUAL POWER, NO CHANGED LIVES, NO WHATEVER-IT-TAKES ATTITUDES!!** God forgive us for cultural, peripheral, [easy believism!](#) ([Luke 14](#) )

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**Calculate** ([5585](#))(**psephizo** from **psephos** = small stone or pebble used by the Greeks and Egyptians in their calculations) means to count with pebbles, to compute, calculate, reckon. Psephizo in classical Greek in the middle voice meant to give one's vote, vote for, decree. **Calculate the cost** was used both for counting votes and for adding up numbers in business ledgers. Many large cities have structures that were begun in times of prosperity, only to lie half finished bearing witness to inadequate resources.

**Gilbrant - psephizo** refers to the process of counting or calculating. In a powerful presentation concerning the high cost of discipleship, Jesus challenged His listeners to consider the implications of following Jesus. Any decision to follow Jesus that does not consider the costs may result in the humiliating discovery that the cost is too great to continue. This humiliation will come not only in this life but in the judgment to come. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

The only other use of **psephizo** is by John in the Revelation referring to the Antichrist

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding **calculate** the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six (Rev 13:18-[note](#))

**Complete** ([535](#))(**apartismos** from from **apó** = an intensifier + **artizō** = to perfect, finish) is a noun describing the act of completion or finishing something. Found only here in the Scripture.

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**J C Ryle on Count the Cost** - We learn secondly, from this passage, that those who are thinking of following Christ should be warned to “count the cost.” This is a lesson which was intended for the multitudes who followed our Lord without thought and consideration, and was enforced by examples drawn from building and from war. It is a lesson which will be found useful in every age of the church.

It costs something to be a true Christian. Let that never be forgotten. To be a mere nominal Christian, and go to church, is cheap and easy work. But to hear Christ’s voice, and follow Christ, and believe in Christ, and confess Christ, requires much self-denial. It will cost us our sins, and our self-righteousness, and our ease, and our worldliness. All—all must be given up. We must fight an enemy who comes against us with twenty thousand followers. We must build a tower in troublous times. Our Lord Jesus Christ would have us thoroughly understand this. He bids us “count the cost.”

Now, why did our Lord use this language? Did He wish to discourage men from becoming His disciples? Did He mean to make the gate of life appear more narrow than it is? It is not difficult to find an answer to these questions. Our Lord spoke as He did to prevent men following Him lightly and inconsiderately, from mere animal feeling or temporary excitement, who in time of temptation would fall away. He knew that nothing does so much harm to the cause of true religion as backsliding, and that nothing causes so much backsliding as enlisting disciples without letting them know what they take in hand. He had no desire to swell the number of His

followers by admitting soldiers who would fail in the hour of need. For this reason He raises a warning voice. He bids all who think of taking service with Him count the cost before they begin.

Well would it be for the Church and the world if the ministers of Christ would always remember their Master's conduct in this passage. Often,—far too often,—people are built up in self-deception, and encouraged to think they are converted when in reality they are not converted at all. Feelings are supposed to be faith. Convictions are supposed to be grace. These things ought not so to be. By all means let us encourage the first beginnings of religion in a soul. But never let us urge people forward without telling them what true Christianity entails. Never let us hide from them the battle and the toil. Let us say to them "come with us,"—but let us also say, "count the cost."

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### **Paying the Price**

Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost? (Luke 14:28)

We know now that God shut the lions' mouths, but Daniel didn't know in advance that it would happen! He simply counted the cost and kept his commitment to God. So did a lot of others. In Hebrews eleven, it went both ways for committed believers—some were taken out, others were taken through, but all of them "obtained a good report" (Hebrews 11:39). To follow Jesus means to discover what you were born to be, pay the price required, and spend the rest of your life pursuing it to the point of excellence! Once you catch a glimpse of "the high calling," you'll get up earlier, stay up later, and say "no" more often, because you understand God's will for you. Is that how you live?

Sure, you'll make mistakes. Les Brown says, "When life knocks you down, fall on your back, for if you can look up, with God's help you can get up." Winston Churchill said, "Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm." Think about that! Successful people are just the ones who do what the rest of us only talk about, but never get around to doing. God doesn't measure you by others; He measures you by what you could have been if you'd paid the price.

ASK HIM TODAY FOR THE STRENGTH AND THE WILLINGNESS TO MAKE THAT COMMITMENT. (Bob Gass - A Fresh Word for Today)

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### **Oswald Chambers - Building For Eternity**

Which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it... —Luke 14:28

Our Lord refers not to a cost we have to count, but to a cost which He has counted. The cost was those thirty years in Nazareth, those three years of popularity, scandal and hatred; the deep unfathomable agony in Gethsemane, and the onslaught at Calvary—the pivot upon which the whole of Time and Eternity turns. Jesus Christ has counted the cost. Men are not going to laugh at Him at last and say—"This man began to build, and was not able to finish."

The conditions of discipleship laid down by Our Lord in vv. 26, 27 and 33 mean that the men and women He is going to use in His mighty building enterprises are those in whom He has done everything. "If any man come to Me, and hate not ..., he cannot be My disciple." Our Lord implies that the only men and women He will use in His building enterprises are those who love Him personally, passionately and devotedly beyond any of the closest ties on earth. The conditions are stern, but they are glorious.

All that we build is going to be inspected by God. Is God going to detect in His searching fire that we have built on the foundation of Jesus some enterprise of our own? These are days of tremendous enterprises, days when we are trying to work for God, and therein is the snare. Profoundly speaking, we can never work for God. Jesus takes us over for His enterprises, His building schemes entirely, and no soul has any right to claim where he shall be put.

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### **Counting The Cost**

Which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost. —Luke 14:28

Several years ago I read an article about the importance of counting the cost before making a major purchase. The advice is particularly appropriate for those of us who overspent this past Christmas season.

The writer illustrated his point by adding up the actual cost of the gifts listed in the popular song "Twelve Days of Christmas." The result was a lot less romantic than the song itself. All the gifts given in the name of love have their price.

A pear tree was figured at \$14, one partridge—\$15, two turtle doves— \$10, three French hens—\$36, four calling birds—\$140, five golden rings—\$1,000, six geese a-laying— \$1,260, and so on. The total tab for all 12 days came to \$10,314.92. (And that was not



figured at today's prices.)

Counting the cost is also important in our commitment to Christ. He made this clear in Luke 14, when He talked about what it takes to be His disciple—loving Him more than family relationships, our possessions, or even our own life.

Giving your life in service to Christ and others can be very rewarding. But let's remember what Jesus said. Being His disciple has its price, and we must carefully count the cost. By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When called to do a work for Christ,  
We can't ignore the cost;  
For if we fail to think it through,  
Our efforts may be lost. —JDB

Following Jesus costs more than anything—except not following Him.

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**John MacArthur - Discipleship is Serious - Luke 14:28** -You can pay nothing to earn salvation; yet living for Christ is a serious matter of discipleship. To be a Christian means to rely on Christ's power rather than your own and to be willing to forsake your way for His. Being a Christian can mean facing persecution, ridicule, and tribulation. Jesus forewarned the disciples, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20). But with His warning about the cost of discipleship, the Lord promised that your heart would rejoice "and your joy no one will take from you" (John 16:22). And He also told His followers to "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (16:33). You won't escape the difficulties of discipleship, but Jesus will enable you to handle them.

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### Saying Yes To Jesus

Read: Matthew 21:28-32

Which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost. —Luke 14:28

An agnostic professor tells his students that as an 8-year-old child he used to give a Christian testimony that moved people to tears of joy. Now, however, he has rejected his former belief in Jesus. His influence has led many young men and women to renounce the faith they once professed.

Why does this happen? Part of the answer is in Matthew 21. In Jesus' parable, a father asked his two sons to go and work in his field. One said he would but didn't. Jesus directed this to the religious leaders who gave the appearance of saying yes to God, but their hearts were far from Him.

Some who grow up in Christian homes may say yes to Jesus without truly understanding what they are doing. Later when their faith is challenged, they turn away from the faith to which they had given lip-service. In contrast, others may initially say no to Christ because they realize that to repent and believe means their lives will belong to the Lord, and they don't like the demands of following Christ. But eventually they do repent and believe and obey.

Putting your faith in Jesus is life's most important decision. Make sure, therefore, of your own allegiance to Him. Be careful also to instruct others so they understand that saving faith must be a life-changing reality in their hearts. By Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When we say yes to Jesus as Lord,  
We pledge to take Him at His Word;  
If we're sincere He'll give us the grace  
To follow till we see His face. —DJD

Faith in Christ is not just a one-time choice but a lifetime challenge.

**Luke 14:29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,**

KJV Luke 14:29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

NET Luke 14:29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish the tower, all who see it will begin to make fun of him.

CSB Luke 14:29 Otherwise, after he has laid the foundation and cannot finish it, all the onlookers will begin to make fun of him,

ESV Luke 14:29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him,

NIV Luke 14:29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him,

NLT Luke 14:29 Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you.

NRS Luke 14:29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him,

- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
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## THE UNFINISHED TOWER

Click the picture of the unfinished facade, an ambitious extension project to the [Siena Cathedra](#) which was abandoned in 1348.

**Otherwise** (hina - usually introduces a result) **when he has laid a foundation ([themelios](#)) and is not able to finish all who observe ([theoreo](#)) it begin to ridicule ([empaizo](#)) him**- Recall the tower is something visible so it would be obvious when he was not able to finish. As Bock says " A graphic picture of the result (hina) of not counting the cost is that the project will not be completed.... (cf Lk 18:32; 22:63; 23:11, 36) Honor was very important in the Near East and failure to finish the tower would bring dishonor. He would have been the laughingstock of the village. "Such is the danger for a disciple who does not assess what it means to follow Jesus. The failure is not God's, but the disciple's—because of lack of commitment, resolve, and reflection."

**Keener** - Several years earlier (A.D. 27) a poorly built amphitheater had collapsed, with an estimated fifty thousand casualties. The failings of inadequate or half-finished structures were well-known. The crucial point here, however, is the builder's shame in a society obsessed with honor. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

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**Foundation** (2310) ([themelios](#) from **théma** = that which is laid down in turn from **títhemi** = to place [see study of related word themelíoo]) means something laid or put down, that on which a structure is built or a stone used in the construction of a foundation. It was used literally of buildings foundation (foundation stone Rev 21:14).

**Themelios** - 15v - **foundation(11), foundation stone(1), foundation stones(2), foundations(2)**. Lk. 6:48; Lk. 6:49; Lk. 14:29; Acts 16:26; Rom. 15:20; 1 Co. 3:10; 1 Co. 3:11; 1 Co. 3:12; Eph. 2:20; 1 Tim. 6:19; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:14; Rev. 21:19

**Observe**, (2334)([theoreo](#) from [theaomai](#) = to look at closely or attentively or contemplatively - even with a sense of wonder; cp **theoros** = a spectator) (Gives us English = theater, theorize) usually refers to physical sight but can also refer to perception and understanding. It means to gaze, to look with interest and purpose, to carefully examine with emphasis on or attention to details. To behold intensely or attentively.

**Ridicule** (mock) (1702)([empaizo](#) from **empaizo** = to play with, deride, mock, scoff) describes those who make fun of another, scoffing at him. The idea of deride means to laugh at contemptuously or to subject to usually bitter contemptuous ridicule.

**Luke 14:30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'**

NET Luke 14:30 They will say, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish!'

CSB Luke 14:30 saying, 'This man started to build and wasn't able to finish.'

ESV Luke 14:30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

NIV Luke 14:30 saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

NLT Luke 14:30 They would say, 'There's the person who started that building and couldn't afford to finish it!'

NRS Luke 14:30 saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

- Mt 7:27; 27:3-8; Acts 1:18,19; 1 Cor 3:11-14; Heb 6:4-8,11; 10:38; 2 Pe 2:19-22; 2 Jn 1:8
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
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**Saying saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'** In context they are not simply stating a fact but in fact are speaking derisively. **NET** has "make fun of him, saying." **Man** (NIV = this fellow) - A derogatory address. This phrase was often used in Luke in a derogatory, contemptuous sense. For example, see "this one" and expressions like it in Luke 5:21; 7:39; 13:32; 23:4, 14, 22, 35. The verb **finish** (1615)(**ekteleo**) means to bring to an end or to completion, to perform a task completely. **BDAG** adds "with implication of a job well done." **Ekteleo** is used only in Lk 14:29,30 (once in Lxx =2 Chr 4:5.)

**Gary Inrig** - Discipleship is not a casual or an occasional activity. Enthusiasm for it is important, but that will be insufficient to sustain a man plodding under the burden of the cross. Discipleship is an exciting adventure, but it is also a draining and demanding lifestyle. Warfare looks thrilling in the movies; it looks very different from the trenches. "Count the cost—it is no small matter to build a life for Me." ([The Parables : Understanding What Jesus Meant](#) - Borrow)

**Crawford** writes that "These two words (**apartismos** and **ekteleo**) intensify the meaning of not only having sufficient means to make a start, but to be certain that there will be ability to completely finish what has been started. Many are able to follow the Lord along a flower-strewn pathway which seems at first to be popular, with many happy companions, but when asked to walk alone amid the cruel rocks of adversity or the spears of persecution, they soon discover that they are unable to continue. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

Two men who come to mind in the New Testament are **Judas** and **Demas**. The tragic tale of Judas is well known to most, ending in betrayal of Jesus (Mt 26:24, 25, 49, 50) followed by remorse (but not repentance - Mt 27:3-4) and suicide (Mt 27:5, Acts 1:18, 19). Here is the chronology of **Demas**, one of Paul's traveling partners:

Philemon 1:24 ~60-63A.D. - "as do Mark, Aristarchus, **Demas**, Luke, my fellow workers ([sunergos](#))."

Col 4:14-note - About 5 yr before 2 Timothy was written - "Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also **Demas**."

2 Ti 4:10-note ~67A.D. - "for **Demas**, having loved ([agapao](#)) this present world (cf warning in 1 Jn 2:15-note), has deserted ([egkatalaipo](#) = forsaken, left in a lurch!) me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia."

**Comment:** Hebrews 3:14 says "For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end." There is strong evidence that Demas did not hold fast until the end which would suggest that had truly "become (a partaker) of Christ." In fairness, ultimately we will have to wait to heaven to know for certain. John MacArthur writes "His kind are described by our Lord in Mt 13:20, 21; cf. Jn 8:31 ("If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;")." See Vance Havner's [Demas, Charmed by the World](#).

The point Jesus is making is that in order to avoid humiliation and embarrassment in the community, one would think very carefully before he began his building project. He would want to be certain he had sufficient funds and fortitude to finish what he began.

**Robert Stein** - The point of the similitude was not made explicit because it was self-evident. Do not promise to follow Jesus unless you understand the "cost" and are willing to "pay" it. This does not imply that salvation must be earned. Rather the point being made is that God's grace can only be received by those who, in repenting, place him above everything else. (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**Mike Andrus** - We lived briefly in Hollywood, FL in the early 70's, and I remember a magnificent condominium built along the Intercoastal canal between Hollywood and Fort Lauderdale, probably 25 stories tall and just a few hundred yards from the Atlantic ocean. The condos were designed for absolute luxury, with rentals that in today's dollars would be \$5,000-\$10,000 a month. But the builder ran out of money. There stood the shell, with half the building finished and huge signs plastered all over it, "Keep out." He didn't count the cost and he became a laughing stock. I know people like that—seminary buddies who went through school with flying colors but today are selling insurance because they failed to count the cost of full-time ministry, missionaries who return home after one term because life in another culture was too rough (by the way, don't criticize them until you've walked in their shoes—at least they tried), laymen who quit giving or quit serving because love for this present world became too dominant in their lives. Part of the problem is that the church and its preachers have spent a lot of time covering up the cost—giving people the notion that Christianity is a free ride now and eternal bliss later. Well, it is eternal bliss later, but Jesus never promised a smooth ride with no bumps here and now. Furthermore, I don't think that's what most people want to be told—they'd rather get the straight scoop. To me there's only one thing worse than going into a steak house and seeing prices of \$25, \$30, or even \$35. And that's going into a steakhouse where the prices aren't even on the menu. I'm too bashful to ask and too cowardly to leave. I think most people are like me in that they want to see the cost up front. If the quality is good, they're willing to pay the price. ([Luke 14:25-35 Come at All Cost. But Count the Cost](#))

**Life Application Bible Commentary** – What are those "costs" to believers? Christians may face loss of social status or wealth. They may have to give up control over their money, time, or career. They may be hated, separated from their family, and even put to death. Following Christ does not mean living trouble-free. All people must carefully count the cost of becoming Christ's disciple so that they will know what they are getting into and won't be tempted to turn back when the going gets tough. (Scroll to page 74 in [Luke Application Study Notes](#))

**Luke 14:31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?"**

KJV Luke 14:31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

NET Luke 14:31 Or what king, going out to confront another king in battle, will not sit down first and determine whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?

CSB Luke 14:31 "Or what king, going to war against another king, will not first sit down and decide if he is able with 10,000 to oppose the one who comes against him with 20,000?"

ESV Luke 14:31 Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?

NIV Luke 14:31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?"

NLT Luke 14:31 "Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counselors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him?"

NRS Luke 14:31 Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand?"

- 1 Ki 20:11; 2 Ki 18:20-22; Pr 20:18; 25:8
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 3](#) - Steven Lawson

## **CONSIDER THE COST BEFORE COMMITTING (2)**

**Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?** - The question is

rhetorical. Jesus uses the question to introduce a second illustration of the importance of carefully reflecting before casually reacting! Hampton Keathley III refers to this as the "Saddam Hussein" principle (obviously a principle he failed to consider before beginning his own military endeavors!). As Plummer says "It is folly to begin without much consideration." The clear implication is that it is not easy for an army of 10,000 to defeat an army of 20,000. Put yourself in the position of this king. Would he dare make this decision without careful contemplation? Of course not, because to do so would be to risk defeat and even loss of his kingdom. He had to make a choice and do it fairly quickly (while the enemy was still far away).

If it is foolish to begin without counting the cost,  
it is disastrous to delay one's choice without considering the consequences.

-- Gary Inrig

**Inrig** - The second parable poses a very different problem. If it is foolish to begin without counting the cost, it is disastrous to delay one's choice without considering the consequences. Not only do we need to count the cost of discipleship, we need to consider the consequences of refusing discipleship. One way or another, choice is inevitable. ([The Parables : Understanding What Jesus Meant - Borrow](#))

**Keener** - Herod Antipas had recently lost a war with a neighboring Roman vassal, so the image of foolhardy war should be meaningful to Jesus' hearers. Jesus' point (as in 14:28-30) is that one must recognize the cost when one enlists as a disciple of Jesus (cf. Prov 20:18; 24:6). (IVP Background Commentary)

**Steven Cole** explains that the phrase **first sit down and consider** refers "to careful, detailed, rational thinking in which you consider all aspects of what you're getting into before you make the commitment. Such careful thinking is opposed to an impulsive decision made in a moment of intense emotion, without much thought about the consequences." ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

**Gene Brooks** - The king did not go headlong into battle without counting the cost (Luke 14:31-32; Pr 20:18; 24:6). Herod Antipas had recently lost a war with a neighboring Roman vassal, so the image of foolhardy war would be meaningful as well to Jesus' hearers. They must consider the cost in identifying with Him. Otherwise, when persecution came they would forsake Christ. ([The Cost of Being a Disciple](#))

Jesus' teaching recalls Solomon's wisdom in the Proverbs

Proverbs 20:18 Prepare plans by consultation, and make war by wise guidance.

Proverbs 24:6 For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory.

**Mike Andrus** - This parable tells us that before going to battle, an intelligent military leader will always assess his strength and take inventory of his resources. If he recognizes that he doesn't have the troops or the firepower or the willpower to win the battle, he will negotiate terms of peace. Otherwise he will end up like Saddam Hussein. Again the cost must be counted in advance if one wants to avoid a disaster. ([Luke 14:25-35 Come at All Cost, But Count the Cost](#))

**Lockyer** - The motto of Von Moltke, the great military strategist was, "First weigh, then venture," which is the policy both builder and king must pursue. With the man building the tower, the cost is reckoned in money; with the king, the cost covers the men required to conquer his foes.

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**Consider** (1011) (**bouleuo** from **boule** = counsel, will) means to take counsel, to deliberate, to resolve in counsel. It is only found in the middle voice (reflexive) and conveys the meaning of to consult, determine, deliberate with oneself or with one another in counsel. In Ge 50:20 Joseph declares "you meant (Lxx = took counsel for) evil against me, but God meant (Lxx = took counsel for) it for good...." Pr 15:22 says "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors (Lxx = **bouleuo**) they succeed."

**Bouleuo** - 5x in 5v - consider(1), planned(1), planned together(1), purpose(2), resolved(1). Lk. 14:31; Jn. 11:53; Jn. 12:10; Acts 27:39; 2 Co. 1:17

**Bouleuo** - 86x in 82v in the Septuagint - Ge. 50:20; 2 Sam. 16:23; 2 Sam. 17:7; 2 Sam. 17:21; 1 Ki. 12:6; 1 Ki. 12:28; 2 Ki. 6:8; 1 Chr. 13:1; 2 Chr. 10:6; 2 Chr. 10:9; 2 Chr. 20:21; 2 Chr. 25:17; 2 Chr. 30:2; 2 Chr. 30:23; 2 Chr. 32:3; Ezr. 4:5; Neh. 5:7; Neh. 6:7; Est. 1:1; Est. 3:6; Ps. 31:13; Ps. 62:4; Ps. 71:10; Ps. 83:3; Ps. 83:5; Prov. 15:22; Isa. 3:9; Isa. 7:5; Isa. 8:10; Isa. 14:24; Isa. 14:26; Isa. 14:27; Isa. 16:3; Isa. 19:12; Isa. 19:17; Isa. 23:8; Isa. 23:9; Isa. 28:29; Isa. 31:6; Isa. 32:7; Isa. 32:8; Isa. 45:20; Isa. 46:10; Isa. 46:11; Isa. 51:13; Jer. 49:20; Jer. 49:30; Jer. 50:45; Ezek. 11:2; Dan. 6:3; Dan. 6:4; Dan. 7:26; Mic. 6:5; Hab. 2:10

**Encounter** (5221) (**hupantao** from **hupo** = by, below + **antao** = to meet face to face with; **antao** is from **anti** = opposite) means to go to meet and element of hostility or opposition as and here clearly reflects a hostile meeting for battle which is a good picture of



what we see in Acts 16:16+! Compare another "hostile meeting" mentioned in all three synoptic Gospels - Mt 8:28, Mk 5:2, Lk 8:27+.

**Luke 14:32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace."**

KJV Luke 14:32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

NET Luke 14:32 If he cannot succeed, he will send a representative while the other is still a long way off and ask for terms of peace.

CSB Luke 14:32 If not, while the other is still far off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

ESV Luke 14:32 And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

NIV Luke 14:32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.

NLT Luke 14:32 And if he can't, he will send a delegation to discuss terms of peace while the enemy is still far away.

NRS Luke 14:32 If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace.

- Lk 12:58; 1 Ki 20:31-34; 2 Kings 10:4,5; Job 40:9; Mt 5:25; Acts 12:20; James 4:6-10
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 3](#) - Steven Lawson

**Or else, while the other is still far away, He sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace-** The king has thought through the odds of an army of 10,000 defeating an army of 20,000 and makes the choice to not wait to see if he will be defeated. And so he sends emissaries out to seek peace. And notice that he does not wait until the 20,000 have encircled his 10,000 but seeks peace **while the other is still far away.**

**Bock** explains that "The wisdom of such assessment (in Lk 14:31) is seen in the king's response to being outnumbered. Rather than going to war, he asks for terms of peace." (Ibid)

**Morris** explains that "The two parables are similar but they make slightly different points. The builder of the tower is free to build or not as he chooses, but the king is being invaded (the other comes against him). He must do something. Cf. A. M. Hunter, 'In the first parable Jesus says, "Sit down and reckon whether you can afford to follow me." In the second he says, "Sit down and reckon whether you can afford to refuse my demands."' Both ways of looking at it are important. The lesson is plain. Jesus does not want followers who rush into discipleship without thinking of what is involved." ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow)

**Hughes** emphasizes that "Virtually every accomplishment in life requires counting the cost. Do you want to be a great violinist? [Jascha Jeifitz](#) at age seventy-five had logged some 102,000 hours of practice! If you want to be an artist, remember that da Vinci's anatomically perfect sketches came only after incredible effort—on one occasion he drew a thousand hands! Do you want to be an Olympic champion lifter and set a world record? Your training lifts added together just might equal the weight of the Sears Tower!" (See [Luke That You May Know the Truth](#))

**Guzik** - In the parable of the tower, Jesus says "sit down and see if you can afford to follow Me." In the parable of the king, Jesus says "sit down and see if you can afford to refuse My demands." ([Commentary](#))

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**Life Application Bible Commentary – EASY DECISION?** If you made a decision sometime in the past to trust Christ for salvation but since then you haven't paid much attention to your devotion and discipleship, you may be one of those followers who hasn't counted the cost. A decision to trust Christ means that God Almighty is now your Lord and Savior. You had better listen to him, read his Word, follow his teaching. To "walk the aisle" and then drift along is no decision at all. (ED: WHAT THIS COMMENT IS SAYING

BY "NO DECISION" IS IN FACT YOU HAVE MADE A DECISION! YOU ARE ON THE HIGHWAY TO HELL FOR THEIR IS NO MIDDLE GROUND WITH JESUS!). If you have trusted Christ, show you mean it by doing what God commands.

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**POSB** - The point of the two parables is clear: a man must pay the ultimate price. He must forsake all, renounce and give up all that he is and has; or else "he cannot be my disciple." When a man counts the cost of following Christ, he needs to think about two things.

**(1) It will cost him all he IS.**

The man must be willing to center his life around Christ and His mission to reach a world lost and full of desperate needs. It will cost the man ...

- his heart: total devotion and commitment
- his mind: being permeated and controlled by Christ
- his eyes: watching what he looks at
- his ears: watching what he listens to
- his hands: watching what he touches and picks up
- his feet: watching where he goes
- his mouth: watching what he eats and drinks and says
- his desires: watching, controlling, and changing his urges and desires
- his energy: committing his strength, initiative, and will to Christ
- his effort and work: dedicating and centering all in Christ, using his efforts and work in the cause of Christ

**(2) It will cost him all he HAS.**

The man must be willing to give everything he has to Christ, without watering down the cost. It is this point that will cause so many to be lost and doomed (see outline and notes—Lu. 18:18–30; Mt. 10:16–22). To really follow Christ will cost ...

- family: being put after Christ
- friends: being put after Christ and centered around Christ
- home: all the comforts and extravagances
- job: being centered around Christ and being used to earn enough to give to those who do not have (Ep. 4:28)
- cars: not being extravagant, so as to have more to give to a needful world
- investments: using for God's cause
- money: taking care of personal necessities and then using the rest for God's cause

Whatever a person has, it will cost him. He must surrender it to Christ, which is to say, he must be willing to use it in the Lord's mission, the mission of helping a world lost and reeling under the weight of enormous needs.

When a man counts the cost of following Christ, he must think about the consequences of both fighting against Christ and surrendering to Christ. If the man chooses to reject Christ, to struggle against Him, the man will ...

- never experience abundant life, deep satisfaction (Jn. 10:10)
- never know God, His love and care, on a daily basis
- never have an eternal sense of purpose, meaning, and significance
- never know nor have the assurance of eternal life
- never be free from the uncertainty of life
- never be free from the dread and fear of death
- never be free of some sense of judgment and of what lies ahead
- never be freed from a sense of false security

The consequences of surrendering to Christ are, of course, the very opposite of the above. (Borrow [Luke Commentary](#))

**Luke 14:33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.**

KJV Luke 14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

NET Luke 14:33 In the same way therefore not one of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his own possessions.

CSB Luke 14:33 In the same way, therefore, every one of you who does not say good-bye to all his possessions cannot be My disciple.

ESV Luke 14:33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

NIV Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

NLT Luke 14:33 So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.

NRS Luke 14:33 So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

YLT Luke 14:33 'So, then, every one of you who doth not take leave of all that he himself hath, is not able to be my disciple.

GWN Luke 14:33 In the same way, none of you can be my disciples unless you give up everything.

NKJ Luke 14:33 "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

NAB Luke 14:33 In the same way, everyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.

- Lk 14:26; 5:11,28; 18:22,23,28-30; Acts 5:1-5; 8:19-22; Phil 3:7,8; 2 Ti 4:10; 1 Jn 2:15,16
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
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- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 3](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Watch this 11 minute video on discipleship by Steven Lawson](#) (Woe!)

## **SAY "GOOD-BYE" TO ALL YOUR POSSESSIONS!**

**So then** - A conclusion based on the two illustrations Jesus has just given of counting the cost. Now Jesus introduces another cost of discipleship.

**None of you can be My disciple** ([mathetes](#)) **who does not give up** ([apotasso](#) - "say good-bye" to) **all his own possessions** ([huparcho](#) in present tense - continually at his disposal ~ possessions) - **None...all** - **None** and **all** leave no room for exceptions to Jesus' instruction. **Give up** is in the [present tense](#), which signifies that the disciple of Jesus is called to live a lifestyle of giving up "ALL his stuff!" Giving up things does not earn us "points" with God, but is simply a reflection of the Spirit enabled ability to daily make the choice to place Jesus on the throne of our heart, at the same time resisting all other so-called gods (idols) that daily seek to usurp His place in our devotion. **Inrig** says "Discipleship involves a daily act of signing away ownership." **MacArthur** adds that "There are no exceptions or exemptions to these absolute, unqualified requirements." To **give up** or say good-bye to all one's possessions does not mean the disciple cannot possess anything, but it does mean that the disciple must understand that all possessions are from God, and are for His use.

**THOUGHT** - I shared Jesus with a dear doctor friend of mine and he was intrigued, but finally said "I can't accept the terms! I love to go hunting with my bird dogs and this means I would have to give them up." That was 20 years ago. I still pray for his eternal soul (pray for Bill R. to come to his senses - thank you).

This instruction brings to mind the "rich young ruler" in Luke 18 and it seems for him, Jesus was calling for him to literally give it up...

A ruler questioned Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 19 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. 20 "You know the commandments, 'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'" 21 And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." 22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 23 But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. (Lk 18:18-23+)

**COMMENT** - The "Rich young ruler" remained rich in time for a short time, but forfeited true riches in eternity.

One wonders if he had heard of Jesus' teaching in Lk 14:33, but regardless, he was unwilling to "count the cost" to be a believer, a disciple of Jesus. And as a result, his soul was lost eternally and he will forever be haunted by Jesus' question (and sadly will know the answer!) - "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36)

Who would be willing to give up **EVERYTHING**? It is the individual who recognizes that Jesus is worth **EVERYTHING**! This person is willing to make an unreserved commitment, holding nothing back. Does this describe you dear reader?

**MacArthur** explains that "Jesus is not advocating socialism, or getting rid of everything and living a life of poverty. His point is that those who would be His disciples must recognize that they are stewards of everything and owners of nothing. And if the Lord asked them to give up all they would be willing, because loving obedience is their highest duty and joy." (See [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) )

**Darrell Bock** - A disciple's attachments are potentially the most destructive thing for discipleship....The will to renounce all possessions and to ally oneself totally to Jesus is the essence of discipleship. Jesus is first. He is the one object of focus. Persevering with Jesus means being attached to him, not to possessions....If Jesus offers what he says he offers, then there can be no greater possession than following him....Jesus is not a minimalist when it comes to commitment. It is not how little one can give that is the question, but how much God deserves. (See [Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary](#) )

**David Guzik** - We have a difficult challenge in understanding and communicating the gospel here; there are two extremes to avoid. We can *never* give people the impression that they have to clean up their lives before they come to Jesus; that is like washing up before you take a bath.. But also, we can *never* give people the impression that Jesus won't want to clean up their lives with their cooperation after they come to Him. It is as if we have an apartment and give the ownership of that apartment to Jesus. We don't have to remodel the apartment before we give it to Jesus; but once we do, He comes in and starts tearing down walls and fixing up things. Being a disciple means that you help Jesus in that work instead of resisting it, or changing things back to the old way. ([Commentary](#) )

Notice that Jesus is saying we are to "give up," not "give away." Disciples give authority over their relationships, their possessions, and their resources to Christ. All that I have is to be used consistently with His mission and direction. My house becomes His house; my car, His car; my savings, His savings. This renunciation is a costly act for those of us who love the "stuff" of life.

**Apotasso** is used in Lk 9:61+ "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to **say good-bye** ([apotasso](#)) to those at home." The idea is to say farewell and here in Lk 14:33 it pictures one in "saying farewell" and turning his back on everything he had formerly held dear! Jesus' words cut us all to the quick for we live in a materialistic world that constantly tempts us to accumulate more and more. So if you are like me, it helps to pause for a moment and ponder today in the light of eternity (Vertical Vision). [Below is a song by Graham Kendrick](#) and sung by Robin Mark that helps me renew my commitment to follow Jesus no matter the cost...take a moment and ponder these words (based on Php 3:8-10) as you ponder eternity with Jesus!

When money or the things it can buy makes us hesitant  
about doing what we feel the Lord is calling us to do,  
we are the disciples of things, not of Christ.  
-- R Kent Hughes

**All his own possessions** - Note that Jesus says ALL not some! Jesus is giving great advice to all us in wealthy America. He knows that the problem with possessions is that too often they end up possessing us! And Jesus will tolerate no pretenders on the throne of our heart declaring that

"(Absolutely) No one can serve ([douleuo](#)) two masters; for either he will hate ([miseo](#) - same verb in Lk 14:26) the one and love ([agapao](#)) the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You (ABSOLUTELY) cannot serve ([douleuo](#)) God and wealth (mammon = [mammonas](#)). (Mt 6:24-note)

Similar teachings are found in Lk 12:33; 18:22; cf. also Lk 11:41. Recall what some of the disciples did as they began to follow Jesus:

When they had brought their boats to land, **they left everything and followed Him.** (Luke 5:11-note)

**Comment:** The pattern of the first disciples has not changed.

**Leon Morris** - The lesson is plain. Jesus does not want followers who rush into discipleship without thinking of what is involved. And He is clear about the price. The man who comes to Him must renounce all that he has.... **These words condemn all half-heartedness. Jesus is not, of course, discouraging discipleship. He is warning against an ill-considered, fainthearted attachment in order that men may know the real thing.** He wants men to count the cost and reckon all lost for His sake so that

they can enter the exhilaration of full-blooded discipleship. (TNTC) (Bolding added)

**Life Application Bible Commentary** – For some, this may be literal, such as the rich young man in Lk 18:18-23 and many of Jesus' early followers; for others it may be a willingness to hold loosely to material possessions....**Jesus painted no rosy picture of a high-paying job with all the benefits. He said that the way would be rough and would be a way of self-sacrifice.** Oddly enough, however, this is the only way to true fulfillment and satisfaction (**ED: THE CHRISTIAN PARADOX!**). Unfortunately, too many refuse to count the cost or, having counted, decide it is too high. They do not count the cost to God—the life of his Son—or the immense treasures awaiting all **disciples** in the kingdom. Jesus does not ask anyone to give anything up without having given it up himself. Jesus' promise is: "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Matthew 19:29NIV). (See [Luke](#))

**Gene Brooks** - Jesus does not say "sell" or "give away," but renounce. As disciples of Jesus, we surrender to Him the title deed to all we possess. From now on we live as those conscious that we are stewards of our Lord, and that all we have belongs ultimately to Him.

**Kent Hughes** - When money or the things it can buy makes us hesitant about doing what we feel the Lord is calling us to do, we are the disciples of things, not of Christ. Would-be disciples need to think about it, then say, "Lord, all I have is yours." One test of discipleship is what we are doing with our money. Regardless of our income, if we are not giving regularly and generously, we are not living as Christ's disciples. We cannot follow the Lord if he does not have our hearts, and as Jesus said, your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Does he have your treasure? Then he has your heart. Does such a life of sacrifice sound monochromatic and bland? Far from it! Such a life brims with gusto and zest. (Ibid)

**Mike Andrus** - Jesus does not ask for much—only all that you have—your possessions, your time, your talents, your career, your desires, your ideals, your plans. He may not take them from you, but He does demand that you surrender title to them. He does not ask that you give them away but rather that you give them up. Obviously, the demands of discipleship are great, and the cost is significant. ([Luke 14:25-35 Come at All Cost. But Count the Cost](#))

**Kenneth Boa** - Everything—family, friends, career, self—must be given over to him without reservation. Whatever we hold back will become a rival to Jesus as a substitute source of our allegiance.

**J C Ryle**- The man who does well for himself is the man who gives up everything for Christ's sake. He makes the best of bargains; he carries the cross for a few years in this world, and in the world to come has everlasting life. He obtains the best of possessions; he carries his riches with him beyond the grave. He is rich in grace here, and he is rich in glory hereafter. And, best of all, what he obtains by faith in Christ he never loses. It is "that good part which is never taken away."

Robin Mark has a "theme song" for Luke 14:33 - By God's amazing grace may it be every disciple's song...

#### **[All I Once Held Dear](#)**

**All I once held dear  
Built my life upon  
All this world reveres  
And wants to own  
All I once thought gain  
I have counted loss  
Spent and worthless now  
Compared to this**

#### **REFRAIN**

Knowing You Jesus, knowing You  
There is no greater thing  
You're my all You're the best  
You're my joy my righteousness  
And I love You Lord

Now my heart's desire  
Is to know You more  
To be found in You  
And known as Yours  
To possess by faith



What I could not earn  
All surpassing gift of righteousness

Knowing You Jesus, knowing You  
There is no greater thing  
You're my all You're the best  
You're my joy my righteousness  
And I love You Lord

Oh to know the power of Your risen life  
And to know You in Your sufferings  
To become like You  
In Your death my Lord  
So with You to live and never die

Knowing You Jesus, knowing You  
There is no greater thing  
You're my all You're the best  
You're my joy my righteousness  
And I love You Lord  
And I love You Lord

You're my all - spoken  
You're my all You're the best  
You're my joy my righteousness  
And I love You Lord

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**Give up** (657) (**apotasso** from **apo** = from + **tasso** = to place in order) means to assign to different place, to allot. However in the NT it is only found in the middle voice and has the meaning of to part from, to take leave of, to say good-bye. Figuratively, **apotasso** means to dismiss, forsake, renounce or give up as Jesus says in Lk 14:33 of one's possessions. This meaning carries the notion of putting something aside (perhaps in its correct priority) to prevent it from being a hindrance or gaining excessive control. It is interesting that Jesus did not say the disciple must be "willing" to "renounce" everything; He said that person must give it up! In the majority of the NT uses **apotasso** means separating oneself from others, places, or things and so bidding them farewell or saying good-bye (Mark 6:46; Acts 18:18, 21; 2 Cor. 2:13).

**Apotasso - 6v - bidding...farewell(1), give(1), say good-bye(1), taking...leave(1), taking leave(1), took leave(1).** Mk. 6:46; Lk. 9:61; Lk. 14:33; Acts 18:18; Acts 18:21; 2 Co. 2:13

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**ILLUSTRATION** - When I think of this, I always tend to think of a story I once heard about how animal catchers used to catch wild monkeys for zoos. (I don't know if this is true or not; but I suppose that if I ever have to catch a monkey, this would be a good way to do it.) (**Ed:** [See blog on this subject](#)) I was told that they would set an empty glass bottle (**Ed:** Actually a coconut with a hole) in an open field with a peanut dropped into it. Then they'd hide in the bushes and wait. After a while, a monkey would sneak up to the bottle, squeeze its paw down into the narrow neck of the bottle and grab the peanut. Once it had grabbed a hold of the peanut, it couldn't withdraw its peanut-filled paw from the bottle. Then, all that the catchers had to do was walk out and take the monkey into captivity - bottle and all. They could walk, not run; because no matter what might be about to happen to him, the greedy little monkey would refuse to let go of the peanut. **Would-be followers of Jesus are often like that monkey.** They hear about Jesus, and they even begin to follow; but they also won't let go of the grip they have on the possessions of this life - the income, the home, the cars, the life-style, the security. They would like to follow Jesus dragging their 'pop-bottle' of this world's riches in tow if Jesus would accept that. But when Jesus suddenly turns to them and says, "Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple;" they find that the cost is higher than they are willing to pay; and they can't go any further.

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**Hampton Keathley III** summarizes the principles in Luke 14:25-33:

- Loving Christ above all other relationships is the priority of discipleship.
- The cross becomes the focal point of identification with Christ. His death is key. Gal 6:14
- Discipleship is not a free expedition.

- I need to recognize the true owner of all my possessions.
  - The failure in my stewardship from God will cost me my effectiveness for God. (See [Counting the Cost](#))
- 

**A Proper Perspective** - Jesus' words are neither complicated nor vague. He simply says, "If you are going to call yourself one of My disciples, you must release your grip on materialism." To keep all this in proper perspective, think of it this way. He is not saying that we cannot possess anything, but things must not be allowed to possess us. To use His words, we must "give up" our possessions. Corrie ten Boom, that saintly lady who endured such brutality from the Nazis in Ravensbruck during World War II, once said that **she had learned to hold everything loosely in her hand**. She said she discovered, in her years of walking with Him, that when she grasped things tightly, it would hurt when the Lord would have to pry her fingers loose. **Disciples hold all "things" loosely. Do you? Can you think of anything that has a tap root to your heart? Let go!** Give it up to Him! Yes, it may be painful. . . but how essential! - Charles Swindoll in *Strengthening Your Grip*. (Bolding Added)

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## The Last Few Pounds

Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. —Luke 14:33

Whatever weight-loss plan you choose, you're bound to lose pounds—at least for a while. But most dieters reach a plateau before they reach their goal, and many get discouraged when the thrill leaves before all the weight does. Many give up and go back to their old ways of eating.

Something similar happens in our Christian lives. When we begin our walk with Jesus, we easily shed many of the sins that have weighed us down. We give dramatic testimonies about being freed from addictive behaviors. Then the attention shifts to another new believer, and we discover that "little" sins like jealousy, resentment, and anger don't drop away as readily as the "big" ones. Some of us get so discouraged that we lose sight of our commitment to Christ and go back to some of our old ways of living.

When Jesus talked about the cost of being His disciple (Luke 14:25-35), He wanted those who heard Him to realize that believing in Him and following Him involves more than starting something that is exciting. It means sticking with something that is difficult.

So whether we're talking about weight loss or spiritual gain, the message is the same: What matters most is not how we start but how we finish. By Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Onward and upward your course plan today,  
Seeking new heights as you walk Jesus' way;  
Heed not past failures, but strive for the prize,  
Aiming for goals fit for His holy eyes. —Brandt

Perseverance makes the difference between failure and success.

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**Steven Cole** - I believe that Jesus is getting at the fact that there are two possible lords that we can serve and the two are exclusive: God or Mammon. Most of us think that we can combine them, with God taking the lead: "I'll serve God mostly, but I'd also like to serve money." But Jesus says that won't work: "You *cannot* serve God and Mammon" (Lu 16:13, emphasis mine). In other words, you can't just add Jesus to your already materialistic lifestyle as a way of rounding out your spiritual needs. To be a Christian means that you have been bought with a price and you are not your own (1Co 6:19-20). Nothing you own is your own. You become the slave of Jesus Christ and He owns everything.

I like the way Juan Carlos Ortiz tells the story of the pearl of great price. A man sees this pearl and says to the merchant, "I want this pearl. How much is it?"

The seller says, "It's very expensive." "How much?" "A lot!" "Well, do you think I could buy it?" the man asks.

"Oh, yes," says the merchant, "everyone can buy it."

"But I thought you said it was very expensive." "I did." "Well, how much?" "Everything you have," says the seller.

"All right, I'll buy it." "Okay, what do you have?"

"Well, I have \$10,000 in the bank." "Good, \$10,000. What else?" "That's all I have." "Nothing more?" "Well, I have a few dollars more in my pocket." "How much?" "Let's see ... \$100." "That's mine, too," says the seller.

"What else do you have?" "That's all, nothing else." "Where do you live?" the seller asks. "In my house. Yes, I own a home." The

seller writes down, "house." "It's mine."

"Where do you expect me to sleep—in my camper?" "Oh, you have a camper, do you? That, too. What else?" "Am I supposed to sleep in my car?" "Oh, you have a car?" "Yes, I own two of them." "They're mine now."

"Look, you've taken my money, my house, my camper, and my cars. Where is my family going to live?" "So, you have a family?" "Yes, I have a wife and three kids." "They're mine now."

Suddenly the seller exclaims, "Oh, I almost forgot! *You* yourself, too! Everything becomes mine—wife, children, house, money, cars, and you, too." Then he goes on, "Now, listen, I will allow you to use all these things for the time being. But don't forget that they're all mine, just as you are. And whenever I need any of them, you must give them up, because I am now the owner." (Adapted from *The Disciple* [Creation House], pp. 34-35.)

That's what Jesus means when He says that we must give up all our possessions in order to be His disciple. He isn't just Lord of a tenth; He is Lord of all. We are just managers of it for Him. Of course, in return we gain all the riches of heaven for all eternity. But, still, we need to sit down and determine if we're willing to follow Jesus as Lord of everything from our families, to our possessions, to our very lives.

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**C T Studd's Example** -C. T. Studd was the most outstanding cricket player in England at the end of the nineteenth century. By 1882, he was considered one of the best cricket players in the world and, probably, the best known athlete of his day in England. However, in 1884, after his brother George became seriously ill, Studd was confronted by the question: "What is all the fame and flattery worth when a man must face eternity?" His brother's illness had a profound impact on him. Consequently, and against the wishes of his family, he decided to forsake fame to serve the Lord through missionary work in China. Along with six other students from Cambridge (together they became known as "the Cambridge Seven"), Studd served as a pioneer missionary under Hudson Taylor with the China Inland Mission.

On his twenty-fifth birthday, Studd inherited \$145,000, a vast fortune in that day. He had already determined it would all go into the work of the Lord. He sent out huge checks to several ministries and gave the rest to his new wife, Priscilla. Priscilla, who also viewed herself as a disciple of Jesus, refused. She said, "Charlie, what did the Lord tell the rich young man to do?" "Sell all." "Well then, we will start clear with the Lord at our wedding." They proceeded to give all of the rest of the money away for the Lord's work.

After ten years in China, Studd and his family began a ministry in India, hoping the climate would be better for his asthma. The Lord used them greatly as people were converted to Jesus every single week. After nearly a decade in India, they returned to England because of his wife's health. There, Studd heard about the urgent need for missionaries in the wild, unexplored interior of Africa. He was fifty years old and had become something of a Christian celebrity in England. Yet, after discussing it with his now nearly invalid wife, Priscilla, they agreed that he should go to Africa without her. She would stay home and recruit others to join him.

Studd left his family in England, compelled to go where no Christian had ever been before. He went into the fiercest place on earth in order to take the gospel to those who needed to hear. **One of the last messages he gave in England was on counting the cost**

But shall we, can it be possible that such as we shall march up the Golden Street with such as these? (Ed: Those in the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11) It shall be for such as are found worthy! Then there is a chance for us yet! Glory! Hallelujah! Hearts begin to burn! The glory of the deeds of these heroes of old seems to scorch hearts and souls. What noble and utter sacrifices they made! How God honored and blessed them, and made them a blessing to others then, in their lifetime, yes, and no here tonight! **What was the spirit which caused these mortals so to triumph and to die?** The Holy Spirit of God, one of Whose chief characteristics is courage, a bravery, a lust for sacrifice for God, and a joy in it which crucifies all human weakness and the natural desires of the flesh. This is our need tonight! Will God give to us as He gave to them: Yes! What are the conditions? They are ever the same, Sell out! Gods price is one. There is no discount. He gives all to such as give all. All! All! **Present imperative** eath to all the world, to all the flesh, to the devil, and to perhaps the worst enemy of all yourself.

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A young man put his hand to the plow, as he pastored a church. His salary was small and his burdens were big. The world did its best to woo him. When the devil couldn't allure him, he attacked him. He used the saints as well as the sinners. Disheartened and discouraged, this gifted and gracious man boarded a train for California. He was going back, broken in heart and in funds, but the Lord wanted him and wooed him. He counted the cost, cut the connections, and Herbert Buffum confirmed his consecration by saying, "I'm going through whatever the price may be." Finding a piece of paper he wrote:

*I'm going through, yes, I'm going through.*

*I'll pay the price whatever others do;*

*I'll take the road with the Lord's despised few;  
I'm going through, Jesus, I'm going through.*

Herbert ended up writing 10,000 Gospel songs, with 1000 being published. When he died, the Los Angeles Times called him "The King of Gospel Song Writers." On his grave the epitaph reads: **I have fought a good fight.** He was determined to put the Lord first in his life. Unfortunately, this man was not. (Mattoon [Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Herbert Lockyer** - The application of the parable is not hard to find. An unfinished life is a more tragic spectacle than a cement foundation without a building. Too many are like [John Bunyan's Pliable](#) who turned back, and who, like the builder in the parable, failed to count the cost before he started to lay the foundation, and was ridiculed for his shameful failure. Paul had to rebuke those in the Galatian Church who began in the Spirit and ended up in the flesh. "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" Failure to adequately count the cost of following Christ results in an unfinished life.

**That which costs nothing is worth nothing.**

**The discipleship to which Christ calls us means a life in which His claims must have the pre-eminence.**

**If He is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all.**

But if we count the cost of a full surrender to His royal claims we may count, also, on all the grace, aid and succor our complete identification with Him will necessitate. In all this costliness of devotion to the divine will and purpose, Jesus left us an example that we should follow His steps. He never asks of us what He has not done Himself. He has every right to ask us to leave our father—He left His own Father, and the Father's house, when He came from Heaven to earth. His earthly mother, Mary, had a secondary place in His concern. Did He not rebuke her with the question, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" He knew all about the shame, contempt, humiliation, and anguish associated with a life lived in the will of God.

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Dearest lord, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost. —Ignatius of Loyola,

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### **Count the Cost by James Smith - Luke 14:28**

Man is not a mere creature of circumstances, like a plant. Christ expects us to act as reasonable men, and to sit down and count the cost before starting any very serious undertaking. This "tower" referred to stands for beauty, safety and prospect, and is applicable to all "character builders" (v. 27). We cannot count the cost until we have first the vision of some great possibility before us. No wise man desires his life to end like the tower of Babel, in shame and confusion. To live the Christian life is indeed a great and solemn undertaking. Many begin this tower and seem not able to finish, bringing themselves into ridicule, and the tower into a laughing stock. Count the cost.

**I.—THE COST OF BEING A CHRISTIAN.** It is costly. It costs some more than others. Natural temperament, early training and environment may influence greatly. Whatever the price, it must be paid. We must count on—

1. GIVING UP ALL SIN. Christ gave Himself for us that He might "redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14). Sin is the worst of all investments. Every scheme in which it has a place is rotten. The wicked must forsake his ways.
2. SURRENDERING THE WILL. "What wilt Thou have me to do?" must be the attitude of the soul. We must count what it will cost the self life to put Christ first in everything, and to seek first His Kingdom.
3. SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD. We are to go after Him bearing His cross (v. 27). By His cross the world is to be crucified unto us, and we to the world (Gal. 6:14). When we find our all in Christ it is easy to give up all for Him. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
4. OPPOSITION BY THE WORLD. The world that hated Him will hate you also. Noah by his work of faith condemned the world (Heb. 11:7), and no doubt the world condemned him. Abel had to suffer because his works were righteous. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.
5. TEMPTATION BY THE DEVIL. The ungodly are not tempted as the Christians are. Through the lust of the eye and the pride of life he still offers his subtle illusions. But Christ is able to deliver and succour the tempted.
6. SELF-DENIAL. "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself." The Christian life is a life of faith in the Son of God, and so must be a life of self-denial. "Not I, but Christ." Christ counted the cost when He came forth to live the life of the Father among sinful men. As the Father sent Me, so have I sent you." But consider also—

**II.—THE COST OF NOT BEING A CHRISTIAN.** If the soul's wealth of capacity and power is invested in the things of this world, utter and eternal bankruptcy will surely follow. Can you afford this? The business of a Christless life is an awfully expensive one. He

shall suffer loss. What a loss! The loss of—

- 1 The Forgiving Love of God the Father.
- 2 The Saving Power of Christ the Son.
- 3 The Comforting Presence of the Holy Spirit.
- 4 The Assuring Promises of His Holy Word.
- 5 The Joy of Service in His prevailing Name.
- 6 The Blessed Hope of seeing Him, and being like Him.
- 7 The Glories and Rewards of His Everlasting Kingdom and Presence.

Count the Cost. What did it cost the prodigal to come? His rags and his wretchedness

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**RADICAL LIVING** - Johnny Li, a former colleague and current missionary trainer in China shares about his meeting with two young pastors there: As I entered the house, I surprised to observe the humble existence of these two mighty men of God. They were the leaders of house churches in their provinces, which had grown the past nine years to more than 200,000 Christians. They were both in their late twenties and even though they have been in the ministry since they were nineteen their enthusiasm reflected beautifully. Everybody knew about the work of the Lord through these faithful servants. I also knew that they both spent several years in prison in extremely harsh conditions, but nothing prepared me for this humble home and modest lifestyle. There were no furniture items, no ornaments, and no beds in the small house. Their clothes were hanging on the wall due to a lack of cupboards. The only furniture was a table and a chair to sit on. There was a blanket on the ground that was obviously used as the bed. Together we sat down and I started questioning them about their activities and work that was bearing much fruit. "How often do you travel to neighbouring villages?" I asked. "As often as possible," they replied. "Where do you obtain your finances to do so?" "We sell what we have," they replied and supplied me with an explanation to the question about the empty house which I dared not ask. "We sold the chairs and we sold the cupboard," they continued. "And that supplied much-needed funds for our outreach." "What happens when you have nothing more to sell?" One pastor looked sadly down to the ground and answered softly, "We find something else to sell." "But what?" I kept on pressuring them. "You have already sold everything and have nothing left to sell. How will you raise money now?" Then came the startling answer. "We sell our blood on the black market. We get about five dollars but the need is so great that we have to do something to tell the people around us about Jesus." "How can you do this" I asked. "How can you justify selling your blood to send out missionaries?" Without hesitation they answered, "We have no choice! The need is so great!"

**Luke 14:34 "Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?"**

KJV Luke 14:34 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

NET Luke 14:34 "Salt is good, but if salt loses its flavor, how can its flavor be restored?"

CSB Luke 14:34 "Now, salt is good, but if salt should lose its taste, how will it be made salty?"

ESV Luke 14:34 "Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?"

NIV Luke 14:34 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?"

NLT Luke 14:34 "Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavor, how do you make it salty again?"

NRS Luke 14:34 "Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?"

- **salt is good** Salt Common salt, or muriate of soda, consists of soda in combination with muriatic acid, and is for the most part an artificial preparation from sea water, though found in some countries in a solid and massive state. See particularly Le 2:13.
- **but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned** Mt 5:13; Mark 9:49,50; Col 4:6; Heb 2:4-8
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 3](#) - Steven Lawson

**WANTED: SALTY DISCIPLES**

Therefore, salt ([halas](#)) is good ([kalos](#)); but if even salt ([halas](#)) has become tasteless ([moraino](#)), with what will it be seasoned ([artuo](#)) - In Jesus' day salt was very useful as not only seasoning but also as a preservative. See [more detailed discussion of salt below](#). Since most of us think of refined table salt (which is 97% sodium chloride) when we read Jesus' words, we cannot fathom how the salt could possibly become tasteless. What we do not realize in America, is that not all "salt" is the same. Some salt has less sodium chloride than our common table salt. In Jesus' day most of the salt came from marshes southwest of the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea's mineral composition differs from that of ocean water, which is approximately 85% sodium chloride (NaCl) whereas Dead Sea salt is only 12-18% sodium chloride. The point is that the impure salt derived from the Dead Sea was susceptible to deterioration and could lose its flavor, leaving **useless** crystals fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. Useless salt was simply thrown away. **What will it be seasoned** is a rhetorical question expecting a negative answer. It cannot be seasoned. Its value is lost.

**Guzik** - Salt is only useful when it has the nature of salt. A Christian is only useful when he has the nature of Christ. Salt that loses its "saltiness" can't be of use to Jesus. God looks for believers with "tang" that He can use. ([Commentary](#))

For an interesting discussion of **salt** see **Pliny the Elder's** ([who is he?](#)) article in [Natural History, Book 31, chapter 41](#).

**Wiersbe** - Jesus had already told His disciples that they were "the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13). When the sinner trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour, a miracle takes place and "clay" is turned into "salt." Salt was a valued item in that day; in fact, part of a soldier's pay was given in salt (The words *salt* and [salary](#) are related [Latin for salt = **sal** which is the root of "[salary](#)"]; hence, the saying, "He's not worth his salt") Salt is a preservative, and God's people in this world are helping to retard the growth of evil and decay. Salt is also a purifying agent, an antiseptic that makes things cleaner. It may sting when it touches the wound, but it helps to kill infection. Salt gives flavor to things and, most of all, makes people thirsty. By our character and conduct, we ought to make others thirsty for the Lord Jesus Christ and the salvation that He alone can give. (Borrow [Be Courageous - Luke 14-24](#))

**Norman Crawford** - There was ample reason for the Lord to use salt in the teaching about discipleship. God made a [Covenant of Salt](#) (See also [What is a salt covenant?](#)) with David (2 Chron 13:5). The salt tells of its enduring character. Genuine discipleship will never be temporary or spasmodic. It will be lasting. **Salt** was to be used in all the sacrifices of the levitical system (Lev 2:13). It speaks of the eternal value of the cross-work of Christ. The sacrifices that became the food of the priests were seasoned with this salt, which speaks of the enjoyment and appreciation that the believing heart finds in Christ. ([What the Bible Teaches - Luke](#))

**MacArthur** - This illustration shows that Jesus does not want temporary disciples, but rather those who will commit to lifelong loyalty to Him. Only those disciples can be used by Him for good in this world. It is true that no one perfectly keeps his commitment to the Lord. There are times when it falters due to family pressures, selfishness, the allure of material possessions, or when believers wonder if they have the resolve to love and obey the Lord to the end. Moments of failure, however, do not invalidate the direction of the heart. (See [Luke 11-17 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

Jesus made a similar statement in His Sermon on the Mount -

You are the **salt** of the earth; but if the **salt** has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. (Mt 5:13-[see commentary](#))

Comment: Don't miss a the key principle in Jesus' metaphor of salt. Citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven impact society because they are different (not weird or bizarre but distinct) from the Kingdom of this World. When "salt" tries to accommodate to and/or be conformed by the Kingdom of this World, it loses its distinctiveness and potential to impact the decay and the darkness of the this world which is passing away. In the Revelation John records the triumphant cry when

"the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "The **kingdom of the world** has become the **kingdom of our Lord**, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." (Revelation 11:15-[note](#))

Until then God has left believers in the Kingdom of Darkness and Decay to dispel the darkness (as lights Mt 5:14-16) and retard decay, as peacemakers giving out the word of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:14-21), a word which in some will birth new life and to others will cause them to hate and persecute you (John 3:19-21, Mt 5:10-12-see **notes** Mt 5:10; 11; 12, Lk 6:22-note). Persecution for the sake of Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven therefore becomes a sign that one truly belongs to the glorious coming Kingdom of our Lord (cp Ro 8:16-18-notes Ro 8:16; 17; 18). Beloved, don't let this world squeeze you into it's mold (Ro 12:2-note)

**African Bible Commentary** - One should not become Jesus' disciple impulsively, but should make a carefully thought-out commitment, in full awareness of what is involved (14:33). Those who make that sort of commitment will be like salt, enabling God



to use this new community as seasoning in the world (14:34–35).

**Steven Cole** - Jesus uses a third illustration to show the cost of not following Him, that of salt that has become tasteless. The salt in Jesus' day was often corrupted with other substances. If moisture hit the salt, it would evaporate and leave behind these other impure minerals, so that the salt lost its saltiness. It was worthless for any useful purpose and had to be thrown away. ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

**NET Note** on **salt** that **loses its flavor** - The difficulty of this saying is understanding how salt could lose its flavor since its chemical properties cannot change. It is thus often assumed that Jesus was referring to chemically impure salt, perhaps a natural salt which, when exposed to the elements, had all the genuine salt leached out, leaving only the sediment or impurities behind. Others have suggested the background of the saying is the use of salt blocks by Arab bakers to line the floor of their ovens: Under the intense heat these blocks would eventually crystallize and undergo a change in chemical composition, finally being thrown out as unserviceable. A saying in the Talmud (b. Bekhorot 8b) attributed to R. Joshua ben Chananja (ca. A.D. 90), when asked the question "When salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again?" is said to have replied, "By salting it with the afterbirth of a mule." He was then asked, "Then does the mule (being sterile) bear young?" to which he replied: "Can salt lose its flavor?" The point appears to be, both are impossible. The saying, while admittedly late, suggests that culturally the loss of flavor by salt was regarded as an impossibility. Genuine salt can never lose its flavor. In this case the saying by Jesus here may be similar to Matt 19:24, where it is likewise impossible for the camel to go through the eye of a sewing needle.

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**Seasoned** (741)(**artuo** cf cognate **artios** = adequate, qualified for a function 2 Ti 3:17-note) means to make ready, to prepare (to fit), to set in order, to prepare with seasoning and so to season food as with salt to make it [savory](#). In classical Greek the primary meaning of *artuō* is "to season, to prepare, to arrange, to make savory." It is used in reference to seasoning foods with spices or of "seasoned" speech. In classical Greek the salt is used to used figuratively of the wit which characterizes one's speech. And so in Colossians 4:6-note believers are exhorted to season (*artuō*) their conversation with grace (appropriate, proper responses) so they will know how to respond to others. Believers filled with the Spirit will manifest pleasant and wise conversation, speech that is seasoned as with salt. Note also that in Col 4:6 Paul uses the perfect tense for "**seasoned**" which speaks of a past completely action with continuing effect. The idea is that believers are made ready (their speech has been seasoned by grace, the Word of truth and the Spirit of truth) and remains seasoned prepared for any **opportunity** that God's providence might bring. The **perfect tense** speaks of permanence of this effect. Not salty one day, and sweet, sappy or superfluous the next, but salty every day, vessels of honor set apart by the Master, prepared ([hetoimazo](#) in the perfect tense - prepared in the past and remaining prepared) for every good work. (2Ti 2:21-note)

**Artuo** is used only in Mk 9:50, Lk 14:34 and Col 4:6-[see commentary with numerous devotionals on our speech](#). There are no uses in the Septuagint.

And so in Mark 9:50 Jesus declares...Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you **make it salty** (*artuo*) again? **Have** ([present imperative](#) - Command to continually have) salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

**Comment:** The application is that the Christian should season himself with a Christian character that enables him to live at peace with his brethren. Notice the [present imperative](#) which calls for this to be one's lifestyle, something only possible as we are continually filled with the Holy Spirit. ([See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands](#))

**Good** (2570)(**kalos**) describes that which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit. **Kalos** is good with emphasis on that which is excellent, surpassing, precious.

**Salt** (217) (**halas**) is natural salt which purifies, cleanses, preserves from corruption. Its literal sense of "seasoning salt" is found in Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34). Figuratively (see metaphor and terms of comparison simile metaphor) **salt** appears in conjunction with believers' characters and concerning their speech (Mark 9:50; Colossians 4:6).

**Zodhiates** - (I) Natural salt which purifies, cleanses, and preserves from corruption (Luke 14:34; Sept.: Lev. 2:13; Judg. 9:45). In Matt. 5:13 and Mark 9:50 applied spiritually to the disciples of Christ who were to circulate among and purify the corrupted mass of mankind by their heavenly doctrines and holy examples. (II) Metaphorically used of wisdom and prudence (Matt. 5:13; Mark 9:50 [cf. Acts 15:9; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:3]). (Borrow [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Halas** - 8x in 4v

Matthew 5:13 "You are the **salt** of the earth; but if the **salt** has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

Mark 9:50 "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Luke 14:34 "Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?"

Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

**Tasteless** (3471)(**moraino** from **morós** = dull, sluggish, foolish > English **moron** = person of subnormal intelligence) can refer to physical sloth or dullness, but mainly is a reference to one's intellectual life. It means to cause content of certain thoughts to become devoid of meaning or even to cause them to become nonsense. Of course that is the literal meaning of moraino which is found in Ro 1:22-note and 1 Cor 1:20. **Moraino** carries the idea of 'to play the fool' or 'to become foolish' and in a sense isn't that what individuals are doing when they lose their saltiness and become **tasteless**. In essence they are playing the fool, choosing not to follow the eternal Jesus, but this passing world! How foolish! And so in the present context **moraino** is used figuratively meaning to cause something to lose its taste or to lose the purpose for which it exists (think about that latter statement as you ponder your life for we only go through one time!). For one who professed to be a disciple or "the salt of the earth," to lose his or her saltiness is equivalent to becoming **foolish**. In doing so they lose their purpose for which God created them! In secular Greek moraino was used to describe "useless" medicines or spices. Thus moraino would describe insipid or insufficiently seasoned foods.

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#### Related Resources:

- [Salt - ISBE Dictionary](#)
- See below for [Torrey's Topic](#)
- [Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible -Salt](#)
- [Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament - Salt](#)
- [Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament - Salt \(2\)](#)

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At the turn of the century, a speaker at a great student missionary convention spoke words that resonate down through the years:

Most people are not satisfied with the permanent output of their lives. Nothing can wholly satisfy the life of Christ within His followers except the adoption of Christ's purposes toward the world. Fame, pleasure and riches are but husks and actions in contrast with the boundless and abiding joy of working with God for the fulfillment of His eternal plans. The people who are putting everything into Christ's undertakings are getting out of life its simplest and most priceless rewards.

Such is the life of a disciple. Count the cost—are you careless or careful? Consider the consequences—to delay is to default.

In 1945, [Alexander Solzhenitsyn](#) was arrested on political charges and began eleven years of misery in Stalin's prisons. Describing the tortures he and other prisoners endured, he gave his prescription for survival:

So what is the answer? How can you stand your ground when you are weak and sensitive to pain, when people you love are still alive, when you are unprepared? What do you need to make you stronger than the interrogator and the whole trap? From the moment you go to prison you must put your cozy past firmly behind you. At the very threshold, you must say to yourself: "My life is over, a little early to be sure, but there's nothing to be done about it. I shall never return to freedom. I am condemned to die—now or a little later. But later on, in truth, it will be even harder, and so the sooner the better. I no longer have any property whatsoever. For me those I love have died, and for them I have died. From today on, my body is useless and alien to me. Only my spirit and my conscience remain precious and important to me." **Confronted by such a prisoner, the interrogation will tremble. Only the man who has renounced everything can win that victory.** (The Gulag Archipelago)

Undoubtedly there is power in renunciation. But that is not the Lord's secret. The power of discipleship is not the strength of what we say no to, but the power of whom we say yes to. Count the cost! Consider the consequences! Embrace the opportunity! (Gary Inrig [The Parables : Understanding What Jesus Meant](#) - Borrow)

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**J C Ryle on Counting the Cost** - We learn, lastly, from this passage, how miserable is the condition of backsliders and apostates. This is a lesson which is intimately connected with the preceding one. The necessity of "counting the cost" is enforced by a picture of the consequences of neglecting to do so. The man who has once made a profession of religion, but has afterwards gone back from it, is like salt which has "lost its savor." Such salt is comparatively useless. "It is neither fit for the land, nor fit for the dunghill:

but men cast it out.” Yet the state of that salt is a lively emblem of the state of a backslider. No wonder that our Lord said, “He that hath ears to hear let him hear.”

The truth which our Lord brings out in this place is very painful, but very useful and needful to be known. **No man, be it remembered, is in so dangerous a state as he who has once known the truth and professed to love it, and has afterwards fallen away from his profession, and gone back to the world.** You can tell such a man nothing that he does not know. You can show him no doctrine that he has not heard. He has not sinned in ignorance like many. **He has gone away from Christ with his eyes open. He has sinned against a known, and not an unknown God. His case is well nigh desperate.** All things are possible with God. Yet it is written, “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened,—if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.” (Heb. 6:4–6-[note](#))

Let us ponder these things well. The subject is one which is not sufficiently considered. Let us never be afraid of beginning to serve Christ. But let us begin seriously, thoughtfully, and with a due consideration of the step we take. And having once begun, let us pray for grace that we may persevere, and never fall away.

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## Get Into The Stew

You are the salt of the earth. —Matthew 5:13

It's common, cheap, and used around the world. It has stirred up wars, led to the establishment of trade routes, and paid the salaries of soldiers. Today it serves chiefly as a preservative and a flavoring. What is it? It's that crystalline substance we call salt.

Jesus, who was a master of using ordinary things to illustrate spiritual realities, talked about salt when He was teaching His disciples how they were to serve as agents of His kingdom. He said, “You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13).

If we think of salt as a preservative, we can assume Jesus wants us to prevent moral decay in our society. And if we think of salt's ability to enhance flavor, we can be sure He wants us to help people discover the joy of knowing and living for Him.

Salt stored away on a shelf is not fulfilling its function. In a similar way, unless we are actively at work sharing God's life-enhancing truth, we are not serving as spiritual salt. After all, the place for salt is in the “stew” of human activities. Instead of just criticizing the corruption of our culture as well as the flatness of the life so many people endure, let's get into the stew—for we are the salt of the earth. By Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Called to be salt and light in this world,  
Called to preserve and to shine,  
Called to reflect the glory of God—  
Oh, what a calling is mine! —Fitzhugh

A salty Christian makes others thirsty for Jesus, the Water of Life.

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## The Power Of Influence

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? —Matthew 5:13

On February 9, 1964, the Beatles appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show and captivated the youth of America. After hearing their music and seeing their “look,” I did what millions of young American boys did—I begged my parents to let me grow my hair. Then, along with my best friend Tommy, I started a garage band. The Beatles' performance had such an impact on us that we intentionally tried to be like them. It was a significant introduction to the power of influence.

Years later, the power of influence came to mean something far more significant to me as I began my journey as a follower of Christ. I had the desire to live under the influence of Christ, but I also wanted to be an influencer of others by pointing them to the Savior.

In part, this is what Jesus was challenging us to understand in Matthew 5:13-16. Salt and light are influential factors in a dark and corrupting world, and Christ, who is the Light of the world, calls us to be lights of influence as well. The Master who modeled perfect purity calls us to be salt that adds flavor and prevents corruption.

May we not only be influenced by Christ but also be influencers for Christ in a needy world. By Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, let me be a shining light  
In all I say and do,

That Your great love displayed in me  
May lead someone to You.  
—Sper

As the "salt of the earth," Christians will make others thirsty for the "Water of Life."

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## Salt Of The Earth

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, . . . it is then good for nothing. —Matthew 5:13

What did Jesus mean when He told His followers that they were "the salt of the earth"? (Matthew 5:13). In the ancient world, salt had many uses. For one, it preserved food. Without salt, meat and fish would quickly spoil. In a similar way, Christians who uphold God's moral standards can slow the decay of society.

Salt was also used as fertilizer. Until the mid-1900s, English farmers added salt to their fields to increase the yield. Salt helped crops to grow. Christians too can encourage the growth of what is good wherever they live.

Salt also brings out the flavor of food. By their witness, salty believers help the people around them to taste life fully as God intended.

Yet Jesus warned that salt can lose its flavor. Pure salt as we know it, made up of sodium chloride, can't lose its taste. In ancient Israel, however, farmers would dig salt from the shores of the Dead Sea. Although it was called salt and looked like salt, it was mixed with other substances. Farmers would make a pile of the salty material to use on their crops, but when the rains came, the pure salt would sometimes drain away. What was left looked like salt, but it had lost its saltiness.

**What about you? Are you a salty Christian?** By Haddon W. Robinson |([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Keep our witness bright and clear,  
So the world may see and hear  
God's salvation far and near—  
That others too may know Him. —Hess

A salty Christian makes others thirsty for Jesus, the Water of Life.

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## The Essential Ingredient

Though I have all faith . . . but have not love, I am nothing. —1 Corinthians 13:2

A third-grade science teacher asked one of her students to describe salt. "Well, um, it's . . . ," he started, then stopped. He tried again. "Salt is, you know, it's . . . ." Finally he said, "Salt is what makes French fries taste bad when you don't sprinkle it on." Many foods are like that—incomplete without a key ingredient. Imagine pizza without cheese, strudel without apples, a banana split without bananas.

The Christian life also has an essential element: love. Paul emphasized its value as he wrote his letter to the Corinthians. Right in the middle of a section about spiritual gifts, he paused to say that even if we have gifts of service, speech, and self-sacrifice but don't have love, we are nothing (1 Cor. 13:1-3). We've missed the "more excellent way" (12:31). A follower of Jesus should love his family, his friends, his fellow believers, those who don't know Christ, and even his enemies (Lk. 6:27-31). A true Christian is known by his love.

Doctrinal purity is important. Faith is a magnificent quality, as are actions of obedient service to the Lord. But without love, we're about as bland as French fries without salt.

Ask God to help you grow in love until it flows from your heart to others. That's the essential ingredient. By David C. Egner [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Lord, grant me a loving heart,  
A will to give and share,  
A whispered prayer upon my lips  
To show I really care.  
—Brandt

As Christ's love grows in us, His love flows through us.

**Luke 14:35 It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."**

KJV Luke 14:35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

NET Luke 14:35 It is of no value for the soil or for the manure pile; it is to be thrown out. The one who has ears to hear had better listen!"

CSB Luke 14:35 It isn't fit for the soil or for the manure pile; they throw it out. Anyone who has ears to hear should listen!"

ESV Luke 14:35 It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

NIV Luke 14:35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

NLT Luke 14:35 Flavorless salt is good neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. It is thrown away. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!"

NRS Luke 14:35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; they throw it away. Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

- **it is thrown out** Jn 15:6
- **He who has ears to hear, let him hear** Lk 8:8; 9:44; Mt 11:15; 13:9; Rev 2:7,11,17,29
- Luke 14 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Extreme Nature of True Discipleship, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleship](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 1](#) - Steven Lawson - Listen at your own risk! You will be challenged!
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 2](#) - Steven Lawson
- [Luke 14:25-35 The Cost of Discipleshp 3](#) - Steven Lawson

## **USELESS SALT IS THROWN OUT!**

**It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile ([kopria](#)) : It is thrown out ([ballo](#))** - Manure was used as fertilizer (Lk 13:8); some believe that salt was used to slow its fermentation. **Useless** is two words "not" (oute = absolutely not) and "useful" ([euthetos](#)). Useless salt had no intrinsic value and was thrown away. The present tense signifies this was the continual practice in Jesus' day.

**MacArthur** - On the other hand, temporary disciples are ultimately useless to the Lord. Like contaminated salt, those contaminated by worldliness will be thrown out into eternal judgment (13:28; Matt. 8:12; 13:41–42, 50; 22:12–13; 25:30; John 15:6). (See [Luke 11-17 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Ryle** - The following quotation from Maundrell deserves reading. He is describing the valley of salt, in his travels, and he says, "Along, on one side, there is a small precipice, occasioned by the continual taking away of the salt. I broke a piece of it, of which the part exposed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, had completely lost its savor. The inner part which was connected with the rock, retained its savor."... This striking and solemn saying about the "salt which has lost its savor," is found on no less than three distinct occasions in the Gospels. (See Mt. 5:13, and Mk 9:50.) The spiritual lesson of the passage is fearfully overlooked. The sinfulness of sins against light and knowledge, and the possibility of being given over to a reprobate mind, are points not sufficiently dwelt upon by preachers, or considered by hearers. Men seem to forget that there is such a thing as an unpardonable sin,—and that if salt has once lost its savor, it cannot be seasoned again....I can certainly testify, after sixteen years' ministry, that by far the most hopeless and painful deathbeds I have attended have been those of backsliders. I have seen some such persons go out of the world without hope, whose conscience really appeared dead, buried and gone, and on whom every truth and doctrine, and argument appeared alike thrown away. They seemed to have lost the power of feeling, and could only lie still and despair. I fear the true account of such persons' state of soul was the sentence of our Lord, on which I have now been dwelling.

**Gregg Allen** on **salt** that is **useless either for the soil or for the manure pile** - These words, I believe, are meant to be understood in the context of the cost of following Jesus. In saying this, Jesus is comparing those who would follow Him with salt.

**Salt** has a multitude of positive properties. It adds flavor to food that is bland. It promotes the healing to wounds. It helps preserve things from spoiling or rotting. But if the salt should ever lose its saltiness - if it becomes flat and flavorless - then it becomes absolutely useless for any of these things. You can't 'resalt' salt. It has lost all its potential. It can't be used. It's good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled on the ground. **This is the picture of a man or woman who seeks to be a follower of Jesus, but who won't pay the price of following. It's a picture of people who call themselves Jesus' 'disciples'; but who still love other people more than they love Him, and who still exalt their own concerns over His, and who still cling to the things of this world more than they cling to Him. As far as He is concerned, such would-be followers are as useless to the cause of discipleship as salt is that has lost its saltiness. They are good for nothing. They cannot - according to Jesus' own words - be His disciples.** Now that's a 'hard saying', isn't it? But then, I didn't say it. The very Jesus - whom we propose to follow - is the One who said it. Jesus Himself closes with these words: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" May we hear these words - hard as they may be! ([Sermon](#))

**Darrell Bock** comments on what it means to be **thrown out** - Salt used for fertilizer wilted weeds and improved the soil at a deeper level, but useless salt was discarded. So, too, the "saltless" disciple is no longer used by God. This remark could allude to final judgment like the "odd man out" in certain parables (Luke 12:46; Lk 19:21-26 with Mt. 25:30) or it could refer to the judgment of physical death that befalls some in the community (1 Cor 11:30). The ambiguity may well be intentional. Failure to pursue discipleship can indicate that faith is not really present, even though it was thought to be, or spiritual rebellion. In either case, the situation displeases God. It is better to obey and not be subject to this threat....To be useful, salt must stay salty. How horrible to be thrown away by God when one could have been used by him. So consider the cost and have the resolve of a disciple who fully pursues God. Luke's call is to hear the warning and respond with faithfulness. (See [Luke Baker Exegetical Commentary](#))

**He who has ears to hear, let him hear** - The hearing referred to goes beyond physical hearing and implies an inner spiritual reception of truth. In other words, if you can understand these simple, straightforward truths about discipleship, then heed the message. A man with ears needs to hear the invitation. Hearing spiritual truth is a choice which a man must make. He chooses whether to hear or not to hear the truth. Jesus' command to **hear** calls for a faith response to what Jesus has just said concerning who can be His disciple (Lk 14:25-35). A person's reception or rejection of Jesus' message is a reflection of his openness to God. Jesus knew that most of the multitude while in no need of hearing aids, nevertheless did not really "**hear**" His Words and **receive** them into their hearts. We have an old saying "in one ear and out the other!" That's can be a deadly (eternally) defect if it is Jesus' words that fail to take root in our heart! And this applies to His pulpit prophets, who are His mouthpiece to speak forth His word with authority and power. This is all the more reason you want to be attending a church where the pastor is proclaiming the full Gospel, and not skating over the HARD SAYINGS of Jesus on discipleship (salvation)!

**A W Tozer** said that "Faith comes first to the hearing ear, not to the cogitating mind."

Compare **Jesus' words on hearing** and notice it is not just **hearing** but **acting** upon what is heard that is critical...

"Therefore **everyone who hears these words of Mine** and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall." (Mt 7:24-27-[note](#))

"But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance. (Luke 8:15-note)

"But he said to him, **if they do not listen** to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded (NOTICE HERE JESUS LINKS EFFECTIVE HEARING WITH HEART PERSUASION) even if someone rises from the dead." (Lu. 16:31)

**Paul** commends the saints at Thessalonica for their "good hearing"...

For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. (1 Th 2:13-[note](#))

**James** has a similar warning about hearing God's Word...

"Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, **in humility receive** (WELCOME) **the WORD implanted, which is able to save your souls.** But **prove** ([present imperative](#)) yourselves doers of the WORD, and not merely (superficial) hearers who delude ([paralogizomai](#) in the present tense = continually delude) themselves." (James 1:21-22-note)



**Solomon** wrote that

He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise. (Pr. 15:31)

**Bridges** writes - "What a contrast to the "scorner," lately described, who "goeth not unto the wise." (Pr 15:12) The circumcised ear heareth the reproof that tends to life (Pr 6:23), and welcomes it as a probing medicine, needful for the soul's health. (Pr 15: 5, 12:18. cp. Ps. 141:5)

This refrain **TO HEAR** is repeated 6 times in the Gospels and all are in the [present imperative](#) - a command for continual hearing (and heeding). But mark it down that dead men cannot hear spiritual truth (Eph 2:1), UNLESS the Holy Spirit opens our ears (and eyes)

Matthew 11:15+ "He who has ears to hear, **let him hear.**

Matthew 13:9+ "He who has ears, **let him hear.**"

Matthew 13:43+ "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, **let him hear.**

Mark 4:9+ And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, **let him hear.**"

Luke 8:8+ "Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, **let him hear.**"

Luke 14:35 "It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear **let him hear.**"

A similar call **TO HEAR** and heed is given at the end of every message to the Churches in Revelation 2-3. - All 7 declaration are in the [aorist imperative](#) a command that can convey a sense of urgency. Do this now! Don't delay!

Revelation 2:7+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

Revelation 2:11+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

Revelation 2:17+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

Revelation 2:29+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:6+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:13+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:22+ 'He who has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.'

**Gene Brooks** - If one became a disciple without due thought and then forsook Him under persecution, such a one would be like salt with no saltiness. Worth nothing. Defection would prove that he was not a true disciple after all. He would be rejected. (Sodium chloride cannot actually lose its saltiness, but Dead Sea salt is a mixture of NaCl and other compounds. When water evaporates from the mixture, the sodium chloride crystallizes first and may be removed. The gypsum and other impurities remaining is salt which has lost its saltiness.) ([The Cost of Being a Disciple](#))

**Steven Cole** - Jesus' words here are tough and sobering! We all fall short, but we must honestly work at applying them to our hearts. Is there any relationship that comes ahead of Christ in your life? If He is first, then obviously you will be spending consistent time alone with Him in His Word, in prayer, and in devotion. You will be fellowshiping with Him every day. You won't allow any other relationship to draw you away from obedience to Him. You will confess and forsake every sin that hinders fellowship with Him. Is He the Lord of your plans, your thoughts, and of all that you do? Or, could you selfishly be clinging to *your* plans, to *your* way, instead of seeking to please Him in all things, beginning with every thought that you entertain? If you don't hate your own life and daily carry your cross, you're not His disciple. Is He Lord of your finances and possessions? Are you faithful in managing these things for *His* purposes? Do you give generously and faithfully to His work? Or, could the love of money be choking out the Word in your life? Salvation is absolutely free, but once you receive it, it costs you everything. To truly follow Christ, we must consider the cost and put Him above everything else. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." ([The Cost of Discipleship](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Here is a sad example of tasteless salt.. Gandhi says in his autobiography that in his student days he was truly

interested in the Bible. Deeply touched by reading the Gospels, he seriously considered becoming a convert, since Christianity seemed to offer the real solution to the caste system that was dividing the people of India. One Sunday he went to a nearby church. He decided to see the minister and ask for instruction in the way of salvation and enlightenment on other doctrines. But when he entered the sanctuary, the ushers refused to give him a seat and suggested that he go worship with his own people. Gandhi left and never came back. He reasoned that "If Christians have caste differences also, I might as well remain a Hindu." The partiality showed by those Christians had a devastating effect on India and the world. As we have studied, they failed to manifest the sweet aroma and saltiness of the fifth beatitude, demonstrating mercy (Mt 5:7-note) Mahatma Gandhi was also quoted as answering a missionary's question "**What is the greatest hindrance to Christianity in India?**" with the trite reply "**Christians!**"

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**ILLUSTRATION - Salty Salt.** The story has often been told about Dr. Will H. Houghton, who pastored Calvary Baptist Church in New York City and later served as president of Chicago's Moody Bible Institute till his death in 1946. When Dr. Houghton became pastor of the Baptist Tabernacle in Atlanta, a man in that city hired a private detective to follow Dr. Houghton and report on his conduct. After a few weeks, the detective was able to report to the man that Dr. Houghton's life matched his preaching. As a result, that man became a Christian! Now that's salty salt! May his tribe increase! Amen

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**Throw (906)** (**ballo** - English "ballistics") in all its applications retains the idea of impulse (the idea of force and/or effort). The primary senses are to throw or to put. **Ballo** means to throw, hurl, in contrast to striking. **Ballo** is frequent in the four Gospels and Revelation but elsewhere is used only in Acts (with 2 exceptions - Jas. 3:3; 1 Jn. 4:18).

**Ballo** means primarily to throw (Mt 3:10 = "**thrown** into the fire"; Mt 4:6 = "**throw** Yourself down"; Mt 5:13 = "**thrown** out and trampled under foot"; Mt 5:29-30 = " tear it out and throw it from you"; Mt 13:48 = " the bad they threw away."; Rev 2:10 = "the devil is about to **cast** some of you into prison"; Rev 6:13 = "the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree **casts** its unripe figs"),

To **sow, scatter** (Mk 4:26 = "kingdom of God is like a man whoc**casts** seed upon the soil")

To **cast** (Mk 15:24 "casting lots").

Of nets, to **cast** into or **let down** into the sea (Matt. 4:18; 13:47; Sept.: Isa. 19:8);

Figuratively (metaphorically) **ballo** means to **drive out** (1 Jn 4:18 = "perfect love casts out fear"; Jn 13:2 = "the devil having already **put** into the heart of Judas Iscariot"

In the passive voice **ballo** means to lie (Mt 9:2 "a paralytic **lying** on a bed"; Lk 16:20 = "Lazarus **was laid** at his gate";

**The second major sense of ballo is to PUT**, place, lay, bring (Mt 10:34 "Do not think that I came to**bring** peace"; Mk 7:33 = "**put** His fingers into his ears"; Lk 13:8 = "put in fertilizer"; Rev 2:14 = "who kept teaching Balak to **put** a stumbling block before the sons of Israel," Jn 20:27 = "reach here your hand and**put** it into My side")

To pour - Mt 9:17 = "Nor do people **put** new wine into old wineskins"; Jn 13:5 = "Then He**poured** water into the basin"; Rev 12:15-16 = "the serpent **poured** water like a river out of his mouth";

To **swing** Rev 14:19 = "So the angel swung his sickle to the earth";

To **deposit** Mt 25:27 = "Then you ought to have put my money in the bank" = To put out or place out money with the brokers. When used with different prep. and particles, the meaning is altered accordingly, but with the idea of throwing always maintained.

**Intransitive** - As a sudden and fast downward movement; of a storm - beat down, rush down break loose Acts 27:14 = "before very long there **rushed down** from the land a violent wind, called Euraquilo;"

**Friberg** - (1) **transitively**, as a powerful movement of throwing or propelling = throw, cast, with the context determining in what sense: scatter (seed), cast (lots), pour (liquid), throw (stones), throw (into hell), let (fruit) fall, etc.; (2) transitively, of putting or placing someone or something somewhere: put (money into a treasury box), put (a sword into its scabbard), place (someone into a pool), put (a burden on someone), lay down (crowns before a throne), etc.; (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - One specialized use of ballō with eis = "into," is that of **judgment or defeat of, or attack upon, the person or thing thrown**: to throw into **prison** (Mt 5:25; Luke 12:58; Acts 16:23,24,37), the **sea** (Mk 9:42; Rev 18:21), **Gehenna** (Mt 5:29; 18:9), **fire** (Mt 13:42,50; John 15:6; Rev 19:20), a **sickbed** (Rev 2:22), the **earth** (Rev 12:4,9,13), the **winepress** of God's wrath (Rev 14:19), and the **abyss** (Rev 20:3). ([Complete](#)

[Biblical Library](#))

**Gilbrant** adds “**To throw away**” is another idiom, usually in the combinations “to throw out(side)” or “to throw from (oneself)” (Mt 5:13; Luke 14:35; 1 Jn 4:18). To throw dust into the air so it fell on one’s head was a sign of mourning (Acts 22:23; Rev 18:19; for the custom, see also Joshua 7:6, which uses *epiballō*, “throw upon,” and Job 2:12). *Ballō* may also be used of wielding an object as a tool or weapon (Mt 10:34; Jn 8:59). Casting of lots would also fit in here (Mt 27:35). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Ballo** - 121x in 105v - bring(2), cast(15), casting(3), casts(3), contributors(1), laid(1), lying(3), lying sick(1), place(1), poured(4), put(22), puts(2), putting(4), rushed(1), swung(2), threw(12), throw(16), thrown(27), tossing(1).Matt. 3:10; Matt. 4:6; Matt. 4:18; Matt. 5:13; Matt. 5:25; Matt. 5:29; Matt. 5:30; Matt. 6:30; Matt. 7:6; Matt. 7:19; Matt. 8:6; Matt. 8:14; Matt. 9:2; Matt. 9:17; Matt. 10:34; Matt. 13:42; Matt. 13:47; Matt. 13:48; Matt. 13:50; Matt. 15:26; Matt. 17:27; Matt. 18:8; Matt. 18:9; Matt. 18:30; Matt. 21:21; Matt. 25:27; Matt. 26:12; Matt. 27:6; Matt. 27:35; Mk. 2:22; Mk. 4:26; Mk. 7:27; Mk. 7:30; Mk. 7:33; Mk. 9:22; Mk. 9:42; Mk. 9:45; Mk. 11:23; Mk. 12:41; Mk. 12:42; Mk. 12:43; Mk. 12:44; Mk. 15:24; Lk. 3:9; Lk. 4:9; Lk. 5:37; Lk. 12:28; Lk. 12:49; Lk. 12:58; Lk. 13:8; Lk. 13:19; Lk. 14:35; Lk. 16:20; Lk. 21:1; Lk. 21:2; Lk. 21:3; Lk. 21:4; Lk. 23:19; Lk. 23:25; Lk. 23:34; Jn. 3:24; Jn. 5:7; Jn. 8:7; Jn. 8:59; Jn. 12:6; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:5; Jn. 15:6; Jn. 18:11; Jn. 19:24; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:27; Jn. 21:6; Jn. 21:7; Acts 16:23; Acts 16:24; Acts 16:37; Acts 22:23; Acts 27:14; Jas. 3:3; 1 Jn. 4:18; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 2:14; Rev. 2:22; Rev. 2:24; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 6:13; Rev. 8:5; Rev. 8:7; Rev. 8:8; Rev. 12:4; Rev. 12:9; Rev. 12:10; Rev. 12:13; Rev. 12:15; Rev. 12:16; Rev. 14:16; Rev. 14:19; Rev. 18:19; Rev. 18:21; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:3; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 20:14; Rev. 20:15

**Ballo** - 60x in 54 verses in the Septuagint - Nu 22:38; Jdg. 6:19; Jdg. 7:12; Jdg. 8:25; Jdg. 20:16; 1 Sam. 14:42; 2 Sam. 20:22; 1 Ki. 5:17; 1 Chr. 25:8; 1 Chr. 26:13; 1 Chr. 26:14; 2 Chr. 26:15; Neh. 10:34; Neh. 11:1; Est. 3:7; Job 5:3; Job 15:29; Job 16:13; Job 38:6; Ps. 22:18 = “for my clothing they **cast** lots.”; Ps. 78:9; Ps. 147:17; Prov. 1:14 = “**Throw** in your lot with us.”; Eccl. 3:5 = “A time to **throw** stones”; Isa. 19:8; Isa. 29:3; Isa. 37:33; Jer. 17:8; Jer. 40:10; Ezek. 21:22; Ezek. 23:24; Ezek. 47:22; Ezek. 48:29; Dan. 3:21 = “were **cast** into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.”; Dan. 3:24; Hos. 14:5; Joel 3:3 = “They have also **cast** lots for My people”; Obad. 1:11; Jon. 1:7 = “let us**cast** lots so we may learn on whose account this calamity has struck us”; Mic. 2:5; Nah. 3:10; Hab. 1:10; Hab. 3:13;

**Manure pile** (KJV = [dunghill](#))([2874](#))(**kopria** from **kopros**) is a dunghill, a rubbish heap, and descriptive of dung or manure which was used for fertilizer. The related noun *kopria* is used in Lk 13:8.

**Kopria** - 12x in 12v in the Septuagint - 1 Sa 2:8; 2 Ki. 9:37 (= “the corpse of Jezebel will be as dung on the face of the field”); Neh. 2:13 (= “the Refuse Gate” in all the uses in Nehemiah); Neh. 3:13; Neh. 3:14; Neh. 12:31; Est. 4:17; Job 2:8 (= “he was sitting among the ashes” Lxx = “sat upon a dung-hill”); Ps. 113:7; Lam. 4:5; Lk. 14:35

1 Sa 2:8 (same in Ps 113:7) - “He (Jehovah) raises the poor from the dust, He lifts the needy from the ash heap (Lxx = *kopria* = “raises the needy from the dunghill”) To make them sit with nobles, And inherit a seat of honor; For the pillars of the earth are the LORD’S, And He set the world on them.

**Spurgeon's comment** - **And lifteth the needy out of the dunghill**, whereon they lay like worthless refuse, cast off and cast out, left as they thought to rot into destruction, and to be everlastingly forgotten. How great a stoop from the height of His throne to a dunghill! **How wonderful that power which occupies itself in lifting up beggars, all befouled with the filthiness in which they lay!** For He lifts them *out of* the dunghill, not disdainingly to search them out from amidst the base things of the earth that He may by their means bring to nought the great ones, and pour contempt upon all human glorying. What a **dunghill** was that upon which we lay by nature! What a mass of corruption is our original estate! What a heap of loathsomeness we have accumulated by our sinful lives! What reeking abominations surround us in the society of our fellow men! We could never have risen out of all this by our own efforts, it was a sepulchre in which we saw corruption, and were as dead men. Almighty were the arms which lifted us, which are still lifting us, and will lift us into the perfection of heaven itself. Praise ye the Lord. ([see full note](#))

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**Mike Andrus** - Only the person on a salt-free diet can probably appreciate the illustration Jesus uses here. **Salt** corrects the tastelessness of many foods. I’m a rice lover—I like it hot, cold, luke-warm, I like it with chowmein, with cream, sugar and cinnamon, or all by itself. I like rice pudding. But I don’t like rice without salt. Once in a while my wife will fix rice and forget the little dab of salt that goes in the water. You can’t eat it. Now here’s what Jesus says, “Salt is good, but if salt itself should lose its seasoning qualities, what could you use to ‘salt’ it with?” Nothing. It’s not good as a preservative, not good for seasoning, not even worth mixing with

manure to serve as a fertilizer. It can only be thrown out! What's the point? **Christians are to be the salt of the earth.** If, however, the [professing](#) believer doesn't read his Bible, doesn't pray, doesn't share his faith, doesn't put God first, doesn't make any sacrifices for his faith, and retains tight ownership of all that he has, he's **worthless**, and he's kidding himself. His **profession** isn't worth the breath it takes to verbalize it. I'm sure someone is asking,

"Should we also conclude that the less-than-committed disciple will be thrown out by God, just as the tasteless salt is? In other words, are the only truly saved people those who are whole-hearted followers of Jesus?"

I am cautious in my answer. Being thrown out can just as well refer to discipline as to eternal punishment. I believe it is possible to be a child of God without being the kind of disciple Jesus speaks of here in this passage. Some follow Him closely and some, sadly, from afar. **On the other hand, it is also possible to think we are a follower of Jesus when we are not at all.**

Once someone was talking to a great scholar about a younger man. He said, "So and so tells me that he was one of your students." The teacher answered devastatingly, "He may have attended my lectures, but he was not one of my students." I fear that God will say about many, "They may have attended my Church, but they were not my children." But perhaps the question I raised is the wrong one to be asking. Instead of, "Can I be saved without being a whole-hearted disciple?" perhaps it would be better to ask, "Why would I even consider being a half-hearted disciple? Why forfeit the joy and blessing that is promised in this life to those who give themselves wholly to Jesus, to say nothing of forfeiting the privilege of one day hearing Him say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of thy Lord.'" The half-hearted disciple, friends, enjoys neither the respect of the world nor the blessing of God on his life.

Helmut Thielike writes, "*When we are only half-Christians we often feel a kind of envy of thorough-going worldlings. They have no inhibitions about brushing aside an undesired competitor. They get over a bit of tax chiseling or a little adultery without too many bumps and bruises on their conscience. But we half-Christians have our inhibitions, scruples, and troubles in our conscience with such things. We can no longer be tough, red-blooded sinners like these others, but we also are not saints and that is why we feel so uneasy . . . The man who wants only a bit of God always finds God to be only a brake, an impediment, a pain. But he who wants God wholly learns that he is the source of power, that he gives a man freedom and verve, that following him is the most joyful thing in the world because he frees a man from all the things that tempt and torment the halfhearted.*"

Conclusion: The passage we have studied this morning is not, as you might be tempted to conclude, a suggestion to fear failure and thus back away from the claims of Christ. When the pastor says to the young couple at the marriage ceremony, "It is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God," he is not trying to discourage them from getting married. He's just challenging them to face marriage realistically. And Jesus is just challenging us to face discipleship realistically. While salvation is free, discipleship is very costly. He's reminding us that the Christian life is not a 100 yard dash—it's a marathon race. But it's worth it! Yes, friends, it's costly to follow Jesus, but it is even more costly not to. ([Luke 14:25-35](#) [Come at All Cost, But Count the Cost](#))

## MORE ON SALT

**Salt** was one of the earliest of all preservatives and was a valued commodity in the ancient world. Without any source of refrigeration, salt became the means of preserving meat from decaying, as the ancients rubbed down meat and fish to preserve it for regular use. Seafarers just a century ago would salt down their fish and meat to preserve them for the long transatlantic journeys. Salt was so important as a corruption preventative in the ancient world that wars were fought over it, and entire economies were based on it. In short, salt could literally make the difference between life and death in a time when fresh food was unavailable.

The Greek writer Plutarch said that meat is a dead body and part of a dead body, and will, if left to itself, go bad, but **salt** preserves it and keeps it fresh, and is therefore like a new soul inserted into a dead body. Dead meat left to itself went bad, but, pickled in salt, it retained its freshness. The salt seemed to put a kind of life into it. The point is that salt preserves corruption.

**Salt** was used as a figure of speech in the ancient world of sparkling conversation, speech dotted with witty or clever remarks. In Colossians 4:6 (note), salt indicates speech which gives a flavor to the discourse and recommends it to the pallet as well as speech which preserves from corruption and renders wholesome

The Greeks called **salt** "charitas" (grace) because it gave flavor to things. Our speech must not be corrupt (Ep 4:29note) and salt (God's grace) holds back corruption. A thoughtless word of criticism, a questionable remark, an angry word—any of these could tear down in a minute whatever Christian testimony others have tried to build up. No believer ought ever to say, "Now take this with a grain of salt!" Instead we need to put the salt into our speech!

When we wish to stress a person's solid worth and usefulness we often say "That person is the salt of the earth." Salt was a

valuable commodity in the dry Middle East and was used to barter. Our English word "salary" comes from the Latin *salarius* ("salt"). A person lacking integrity might have mixed white sand with the salt and then had more for trade. But salt mixed with sand lost some of its salty quality and became useless. Christians are to be the "salt of the earth".

Salt acts secretly. We know that it combats decay, though we cannot see it perform its task. Its influence is very real nonetheless.

**Spurgeon** - Our Savior was speaking of the influence of his disciples upon the fellows, and he first of all mentioned that secret but powerful influence which he describes under the figure of salt: "Ye are the salt of the earth." No sooner is a man born unto God than he begins to fellow-men with an influence which is rather felt than seen. The very existence of a believer operates upon unbelievers. He is like a handful of salt cast upon flesh; he has a savor in himself, and this penetrate those who are in contact with him. The unobserved almost unconscious influence of a holy life is most effectual to serving of society and the prevention of moral putrefaction. May there be salt in every one of us, for "salt is good." Have salt in yourselves, and then you will become a blessing to all around you.

**J Vernon McGee** has a pithy ("peppery") note on Christians as salt writing that "God's people in any age and under any condition are both salt and light in the world. The Scots translate "savour" by the more expressive word tang. I like their word much better. "If the salt has lost its tang." The problem today is that most church members have not only lost their tang as salt, but as pepper they have lost their pep also. We have very few salt and pepper Christians in our day. Now salt doesn't keep fermentation and that type of thing from taking place, but it will arrest it. You and I ought to be the salt in the earth and have an influence for good in the world. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Barclay** explains that "In the ancient world salt was highly valued. The Greeks called salt *divine* (theion). ([Daily Study Bible](#))

The domestic and medicinal value of salt both as condiment and preservative was as universal in the ancient world as it is today. Pliny declared that "salt has something of the nature of fire", and he quotes a current saying, "To the whole body nothing is better than sun and salt"

Lasting alliances or covenants were made by eating bread and salt, or salt alone (Aristotle). (Ed **See Trumbull's book = [Covenant of Salt](#)**) See also [What is a salt covenant?](#)

Cato, Virgil, and Pliny all refer to the ability of salt to improve the productivity of the soil.

**Dwight Pentecost** gives an excellent summary of some of the Biblical uses of **salt**...

Salt has been valued from time immemorial. Roman soldiers were paid in salt and, if one were derelict in his duties, he was said to be "**not worth his salt**."

Salt was used throughout ancient societies as a **sign of friendship**, (Ed note: see The Oneness of Covenant: Friend) a concept that continues to the present day. In the Arab world, if one man **partakes of the salt of another man**, that is, eats a meal with him, he is under his protection and care. If a man's worst enemy came into his tent and ate of his salt, he would be obliged to protect and to provide for him as though he were his dearest friend.

Out of that idea grew the concept of a **salt covenant**, referred to in 2 Chronicles 13:5 (cf Nu 18:19), where God speaks of a covenant of salt made with David. Before the days of a notary public who could authenticate the legality of a document, when two men entered into a business agreement, they would haggle over terms until they had settled on the agreement. Then they would **eat salt or portions of food together; eating salt bound them together** in what they called a **salt covenant**. This covenant established a contract that was not to be broken.

God prescribed **salt** as a necessary part of the **sacrifices**.

"Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt" (Lev 2:13, cf Ezekiel 43:23, 24, Ezra 9:9, 10).

God said that if they left salt out of their offering to God, it was an unacceptable offering. The offering demanded the whole, and the offering was incomplete without salt.

Job refers to salt as a necessary ingredient of food as he asked the question,

"Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?" (Job 6:6).

As early as Job's time, men recognized the importance of salt, and attached special significance to it.



## SALT PRESERVES

**Someone has said that there are some 14,000 industrial uses for salt!** And frankly, this is where we must sound a note of caution... interpretation of metaphors can be "tricky" especially if the expositor has a vivid imagination. Unfortunately, such interpretations may not be what God really intended by using a given metaphor like "salt". For example, some say salt was white and then reason that this whiteness pictures purity (and even compare it with purity of heart in Mt 5:8). Now while there may be some element of truth in such an interpretation, that is probably not the primary message Jesus intended to convey to His audience. Let's think for a moment about the context. Jesus is speaking in a time when there were no ice makers or refrigerators. There was need for a simple method of preservation of foodstuffs from decay and corruption and this was the primary function of salt. In fact the only way to preserve meat in the hot climate of Palestine was to salt it or soak it in a salt solution. This practice is still common in many remote areas of the world. It follows that the primary interpretation of the meaning of the metaphor of salt is that it speaks of a preservative agent which impedes corruption, decomposition and decay. The world, in contrast to what many "enlightened" members teach, is not evolving but devolving. The world is not going toward order but disorder. It is slowly decomposing and rotting away.

What happened when God left the world to itself after the fall of Adam? Several centuries passed until we come to Genesis 6...

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5)

Even the "salty effect" of Noah was not enough to preserve the world and impede the moral decay and spiritual rot, Peter recording that as a result God...

and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; (2Pe 2:5-note)

Even with another chance man fell into total debauchery leading to the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah which God again condemned

to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter (2Pe 2:6-note)

So history proves the point that our world continually tends toward decay not divinity. Enter the citizens of the Kingdom of heaven who are the decay retardants and preservatives of a disintegrating world. Thus even as salt arrests decay in meat or fish, the influence of Christian character can halt the downward spiral of the world and help to stem the natural degeneration that occurs in the world's rebellion against God. Christians have a moral influence on the world around them, affecting every part of society. If you are not having a moral influence on those around you then something is gravely amiss in regarding your morality, for as Alan Redpath once said...

If it is possible for your closest contacts to be neutral about Christ then there is something wrong with your Christianity.

**Sinclair Ferguson** explains the preservative effect of salt noting that...

it calls for radical and costly application. Christians whose lives exhibit the qualities of the 'blessed' will have a preserving impact upon a society that, if left to itself, will rot and deteriorate. Without the influence of the gospel, society will suffer moral decay and become putrid, unfit for the consumption of good men and women... It is all too easy for us to despair as Christians because of our frailty and insignificance, personally or numerically. However, we must never give in to Satan's lie that we can be effective only when we have large numbers and a show of strength. Jesus' illustration of salt is an encouraging reminder that the apparently cheap and insignificant can influence its environment out of all proportion to our expectation.

Sometimes this happens on a national scale. It is said, with some justification, that the only thing that saved England from a revolution as horrible and bloody as the French Revolution was the evangelical revival under the preaching and teaching of men like John Wesley and George Whitefield during the eighteenth century.

More frequently it will happen on a small scale: your companions will moderate their language; the name of Jesus will not be so easily blasphemed; those with whom you work will develop something of a conscience about the standard of their work; the conversations of men or women will be brought under control; respect for others will be more common. Your life will save others from yielding to the immoral pressures by which our



contemporary world is characterised. When you are the salt of the earth, you preserve society. ([Ferguson, Sinclair: Sermon on the Mount :Banner of Truth](#))

Christians make plenty of negative comments and vent tons of frustration over the putrefaction of our society. But our culture is simply doing what comes natural, rotting because it has **no preservative**. As hard as it is to admit, we should quit leveling the blame of decadence on pagans and start asking why the Church is not more effectively preventing decay (especially of our ethical and moral values) from accelerating and exerting an ever increasing negative influence in our society. A Christian should be in the world and yet not of the world. How can this be? Consider the fish who, though he lives in the salty sea, does not taste salty.

As **John Stott** points out, "And when society does go bad, we Christians tend to throw up our hands in pious horror and reproach the non-Christian world; but should we not rather reproach ourselves? One can hardly blame unsalted meat for going bad. It cannot do anything else. The real question to ask is: where is the salt?" ([Stott, John: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount: 1978, Intervarsity Press](#))

The impact of salty Christians has effected entire countries. Consider impact of the First Great Awakening (revival) on England at a time when the rest of Europe was embroiled in political upheavals. Even secular writers acknowledge that it was because of the impact of salty Christians like John Wesley and George Whitefield that England was spared the effects of the horribly bloody revolution that swept through France (see [French Revolution](#)) in the late 1700's. Salty believers really do prevent from corruption and decay!

**ILLUSTRATION - Phil Newton** tells an encouraging story about the "after taste" left by "salty" missionaries relating that "Pastor Paul Ndungu from Kenya, told us of a missionary couple that served for fifteen years among a particular people group in Kenya without seeing any outward response. He said they labored faithfully, serving the people, teaching the gospel, and doing all they could to set Christ before these people. But none responded until a couple of days after their departure. The missionary family's maid, two gardeners, and milkman converged upon the empty house, related how they now missed these Christians. All wept about this sense of loss, and reflected upon what they saw in them and what they had taught them. One by one they called upon the Lord, coming to faith in Christ. The church among that people group was born without a missionary but not without the salt and light influence of that Christian family that lived among these people for fifteen years, faithfully living unto the Lord. What they did not accomplish with their missiological approach they accomplished by being Christians in a decaying world. (Matthew 5:13: Problem of Tasteless Christianity)

**Barclay** writes that "The individual Christian must be the conscience of his fellows; and the church the conscience of the nation. The Christian must be such that in his presence no doubtful language will be used, no questionable stories told, no dishonorable action suggested. He must be like a cleansing antiseptic in the circle in which he moves. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

**Hughes** - This matter of being a preservative has a positive and a negative side. On the negative side, the presence of a salty Christian will retard decay simply because his or her life is a reproach to the sin of those they are around. We all know there are certain people in whose presence a filthy story is naturally told, and there are others before whom no one would think of telling such a story. The salty Christian is not self-righteous or condemning, but his or her life makes ungodly conversation seem shabby and inappropriate. I believe such Christians exert an incalculable influence on society! Their mere presence reduces crime, restrains ethical corruption, promotes honesty, quickens the conscience, and elevates the general moral atmosphere. The presence of such people in the military, in business, in education, in a fraternity or sorority will amazingly elevate the level of living. And their absence will allow unbelievable depths of depravity. Believers, salty believers, are the world's preservative. The question we must ask ourselves is, what happens when we get to know people without Christ? Does it make a difference in their lives? Are we salt? (Hughes, R. K. [Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#))

**ILLUSTRATION:** Two illustrations of the leavening effect of salty "salt"...

(1) **Andrew Murray** lived an exceptionally holy life. Among those on whom his influence was the greatest were his children and grandchildren. Five of his six sons became ministers of the gospel and four of his daughters became minister's wives. Ten grandsons became ministers and thirteen grandchildren became missionaries.

(2) **Woodrow Wilson** told the story of being in a barbershop one time. "I was sitting in a barber chair when I became aware that a powerful personality had entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself to have his hair cut and sat in the chair next to me. Every word the man uttered, though it was not in the least didactic, showed a personal interest in the man who was serving him. And before I got through with what was being done to me I was aware I had attended an evangelistic service, because **Mr. D. L. Moody** was in that chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he had left and noted the singular affect that his visit had brought upon the barber shop. They talked in undertones. They did not know his name, but they knew something had elevated their thoughts, and I felt that I left that place as I should have left a place of worship." ([Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**John A. Huffman, Jr** describing the body of Christ said "This sanctuary can be a salt shaker. You can come in here once a week, have a lot of fellowship with all the other salt and think your job is accomplished. Instead, God wants to pick up this sanctuary and shake you out all over this city. He has brought you together as His salt only to scatter you. He wants you to be an influence for Jesus."

Salt sitting in a salt shaker will never exert its preservative effect until it is shaken into the decaying world. As **A T Pierson** said "We are not responsible for conversion, but we are responsible for contact."

**Jesus calls His loyal subjects to be pungent people who penetrate every level of society.**

Are you sitting or shaking?

Be careful not to lose your saltiness.

## SALT FLAVORS

It's amazing what a pinch of salt can do to bring out the flavor of food. A big bowl of popcorn is absolutely bland without salt. Christianity is to life what salt is to unsalted popcorn!. Christianity gives flavor and seasoning to life. But too much salt can be distasteful.

Even a little salt will make itself known as history as proven. One of those shining examples was a man named William Wilberforce, a small, even somewhat distorted man who took up a career in politics eventually gaining election to the House of Commons in England. He subsequently became a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven in 1784, at age 25 proved his saltiness by taking an active stand against the slave trade despite repeated defeats in parliament. William Wilberforce died on 29th July, 1833. One month later, Parliament passed the Slavery Abolition Act that gave all slaves in the British Empire their freedom. He was a little salt that made his present felt. It has been documented that 0.04 ounces of table salt dissolved in 530 quarts of water can be tasted!

**Sinclair Ferguson** - 'Seasoning' society is not a matter of being Scrooge-like personalities whose presence brings a pall of depression and whose entrance marks the exit of joy. On the contrary, the presence of God's people should 'increase the flavour' of life in many different ways. After all, we come to our friends, neighbours, co-workers, or fellow students as those who have been – and still are – in the presence of Jesus Christ, who has given us abundant life (John 10:10). Everything about us should express the attractiveness as well as the holiness of our Lord. ([Sermon on the Mount :Banner of Truth](#))

**Barclay** reasons that "Food, without salt, can be revoltingly insipid. The Christian, then, must be the man who brings flavour into life. The Christianity which acts like a shadow of gloom and a wet blanket is no true Christianity. The Christian is the man who, by his courage, his hope, his cheerfulness and his kindness brings a new flavour into life. ([Daily Study Bible online](#))

What's the effect of Christians who fail to express the fullness of joy found in an abundant life? We never know who is observing our life! [Oliver Wendell Holmes](#) once said "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not acted and looked so much like undertakers."

Paul picks up the theme of **saints as salt** in society writing to the Corinthian saints (who lived in a metropolis that desperately need their "salt")...

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ (the picture of this Greek word is that of a victorious general, home from the wars, leading a triumphal procession through the streets of Rome. The captives and spoils of war would precede him, and he would follow in a chariot, a slave holding over his head a jeweled crown. Then would come the victorious army), and **manifests** (cause to become visible = external manifestation to senses open to all = make visible that which has been hidden primary reference is to what is visible to sensory perception) **through us the sweet aroma** of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are **a fragrance of Christ to God** among those who are being saved (present tense salvation = sanctification - see Three Tenses of Salvation) Christians are those who are being saved) and among those who are **perishing** (destruction but not annihilation and basically has to do with that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose); to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? (1Cor 2:14-16-note)

**Paul's** point is that we are to live the Christ life (cf Col 3:4-note). Not everyone will respond favorably to our life as we have seen in (Mt 5:10-12).

## SALT STIMULATES THIRST

As we have often heard, you can lead a horse to water and yet not make him drink. However add a little salt to his hay and you will

"encourage" him to drink. Is your witness making unbelievers thirsty?

At a missionary meeting some young people were discussing the text, "Ye are the salt of the earth." One suggestion after another was made as to the meaning of salt in this verse. "Salt imparts a desirable flavor," said one. "Salt preserves from decay," another suggested. Then at last a Chinese Christian girl spoke out and shared an experience none of the others had shared. She said, "Salt creates thirst." There was a sudden hush in the room. Everyone was thinking, "Have I ever made anyone thirsty for the Lord Jesus Christ?"

Here are a couple of resources (each a 20-30 page booklet) you might want to read to give you some thoughts on how to be salty salt..

- [How Can I Break The Silence? - Strategies for sharing faith in Christ](#)
- [How Can I Share My Faith Without An Argument? - Letting God do the work of evangelism](#)

Paul explains that **citizen's of the Kingdom of heaven** need to have salty speech exhorting believers to...

Let your **speech** always (not just most of the time but at all times, whether addressing a group or speaking to your neighbor) be **with grace** (speaking what is spiritual, wholesome, fitting, kind, sensitive, purposeful, complementary, gentle, truthful, loving, thoughtful), **seasoned, as it were, with salt** (it has a pungent effect as salt when rubbed in a wound, it prevents corruption and has a purifying influence on filthy conversations, it adds flavor and is not empty or insipid but thought provoking and relevant), so that you may know how you should respond to each person (know how to say the right thing at the right time to the right person). (Col 4:6-note)

That Paul intended our speech to have a preservative effect we note the parallel passage in Ephesians...

**Let** no unwholesome (rotten, corrupt, putrid) word **proceed** ([present imperative with a negative](#) - Make this your lifestyle, your habitual practice [[HUSBANDS - ARE YOU LISTENING?](#)]) Only way to accomplish this is being continually filled with the Holy Spirit Eph 5:18-note, and in fact notice that "rotten" speech will actually **GRIEVE** the Spirit in Eph 4:30+) from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification (building up) according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. (Eph 4:29+)

**Ferguson** adds a very important qualification regarding salty speech noting that...

Speech is like salt: too little, and we do not taste the flavour of the food; too much, and we are left with the unpleasant taste of the salt. Like salt, our lives and our speech are to bring out the 'flavour' of Jesus Christ. Too much of ourselves – too much of our talk – will likewise leave an unpleasant taste. Be like Christ, then, lest others are not able to tell the difference between the salt and the meat, between the poverty of our witness and the goodness of the Lord Jesus they are invited to taste (Ps. 34:8 - [See Spurgeon's comment](#)). ([Ferguson, Sinclair: Sermon on the Mount :Banner of Truth](#))

**Oswald Chambers** comments that...

Some modern teachers seem to think our Lord said "*Ye are the sugar of the earth*," meaning that gentleness and winsomeness without curative-ness is the ideal of the Christian. Our Lord's illustration of a Christian is salt, and salt is the most concentrated thing known. Salt **preserves** wholesomeness and **prevents** decay. It is a disadvantage to be salt. Think of the action of salt on a wound, and you will realise this. If you get salt into a wound, it hurts, and when God's children are amongst those who are "raw" towards God, their presence hurts. The man who is wrong with God is like an open wound, and when "salt" gets in it causes annoyance and distress and he is spiteful and bitter. The disciples of Jesus in the present dispensation preserve society from corruption; the "salt" causes excessive irritation which spells persecution for the saint.

How are we to maintain the healthy, salty tang of saintliness? By remaining rightly related to God through Jesus Christ. In the present dispensation, Jesus says, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: ... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Men are called on to live out His teaching in an age that will not recognise Him, and that spells limitation and very often persecution. This is the day of the humiliation of the saints; in the next dispensation it will be the glorification of the saints, and the Kingdom of God will be outside as well as inside men. (Chambers, O. Studies in the sermon on the mount. Hants UK: Marshall, Morgan & Scott)

**Phil Newton** issues a poignant challenge by way of a modern day prophet Dr Gresham Machen writing tha "Gresham Machen, in the last century, exhorts us, "Let us stop soothing ourselves with columns of statistics and face the spiritual facts; let us recall this

paper currency and get back to a standard of gold" [[God Transcendent](#) a collection of 20 of his sermons with the final four sermons preached in the last four Sunday's of Dr Machen's life! "The Bible and the Cross" was preached 5 days before he died Jan 1, 1937!]. Though written half a century ago, Machen spoke like a prophet to our present day that values the showy, glitzy statistics of how many nickels and noses we have in our churches, but gives precious little attention to holiness in character and walk. Have we forgotten that it was a Rome that claimed grand statistics as a "Christian empire" that fell to the barbarians? While the show and numbers meant so much to the church in that day, the saltiness in society was lost so that the barbarians easily conquered them. Professing Christians failed to live like Christians, and their whole society crumbled. "You are the salt of the earth" is a truth to cherish, a reality to live in day after day, and a necessity for a civil, peaceable society.

### **William Barclay on Salt -**

When Jesus said this, he provided men with an expression which has become the greatest compliment that can be paid to any man. When we wish to stress someone's solid worth and usefulness, we say of him, "People like that are the salt of the earth."

In the ancient world salt was highly valued. The Greeks called salt divine (theion, Greek #2303). In a phrase, which in Latin is a kind of jingle, the Romans said, "There is nothing more useful than sun and salt." (Nil utilius sole et sale.) In the time of Jesus salt was connected in people's minds with three special qualities.

(i) Salt was connected with purity. No doubt its glistening whiteness made the connection easy. The Romans said that salt was the purest of all things, because it came from the purest of all things, the sun and the sea. Salt was indeed the most primitive of all offerings to the gods, and to the end of the day the Jewish sacrifices were offered with salt. So then, if the Christian is to be the salt of the earth he must be an example of purity.

One of the characteristics of the world in which we live is the lowering of standards. Standards of honesty, standards of diligence in work, standards of conscientiousness, moral standards, all tend to be lowered. The Christian must be the person who holds aloft the standard of absolute purity in speech, in conduct, and even in thought. A certain writer dedicated a book to J. Y. Simpson "who makes the best seem easily credible." No Christian can depart from the standards of strict honesty. No Christian can think lightly of the lowering of moral standards in a world where the streets of every great city provide their deliberate enticements to sin. No Christian can allow himself the tarnished and suggestive jests which are so often part of social conversation. The Christian cannot withdraw from the world, but he must, as James said, keep himself "unstained from the world" (James 1:27).

(ii) In the ancient world salt was the commonest of all preservatives. It was used to keep things from going bad, and to hold putrefaction at bay. Plutarch has a strange way of putting that. He says that meat is a dead body and part of a dead body, and will, if left to itself, go bad; but salt preserves it and keeps it fresh, and is therefore like a new soul inserted into a dead body.

So then salt preserves from corruption. If the Christian is to be the salt of the earth, he must have a certain antiseptic influence on life.

We all know that there are certain people in whose company it is easy to be good; and that also there are certain people in whose company it is easy for standards to be relaxed. There are certain people in whose presence a soiled story would be readily told, and there are other people to whom no one would dream of telling such a tale. The Christian must be the cleansing antiseptic in any society in which he happens to be; he must be the person who by his presence defeats corruption and makes it easier for others to be good.

(iii) But the greatest and the most obvious quality of salt is that salt lends flavour to things. Food without salt is a sadly insipid and even a sickening thing. Christianity is to life what salt is to food. Christianity lends flavour to life.

The tragedy is that so often people have connected Christianity with precisely the opposite. They have connected Christianity with that which takes the flavour out of life. Swinburne had it:

"Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilaeen; the world has grown gray from Thy breath."

Even after Constantine had made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, there came to the throne another Emperor called Julian, who wished to put the clock back and to bring back the old gods. His complaint, as Ibsen puts it, was:

"Have you looked at these Christians closely? Hollow-eyed, pale-cheeked, flat-breasted all; they brood their lives away, unspurred by ambition: the sun shines for them, but they do not see it: the earth offers them its fulness, but they desire it not; all their desire is to renounce and to suffer that they may come to die."

As Julian saw it, Christianity took the vividness out of life.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers." Robert Louis Stevenson once entered in his diary, as if he was recording an extraordinary phenomenon, "I have been to Church to-day, and am not depressed."

Men need to discover the lost radiance of the Christian faith. In a worried world, the Christian should be the only man who remains serene. In a depressed world, the Christian should be the only man who remains full of the joy of life. There should be a sheer sparkle about the Christian but too often he dresses like a mourner at a funeral, and talks like a specter at a feast. Wherever he is, if he is to be the salt of the earth, the Christian must be the diffuser of joy.

Jesus went on to say that, if the salt had become insipid, it was fit only to be thrown out and trodden on by men. This is difficult, because salt does not lose its flavour and its saltiness. E. F. F. Bishop in his book *Jesus of Palestine* cites a very likely explanation given by Miss F. E. Newton. In Palestine the ordinary oven is out of doors and is built of stone on a base of tiles. In such ovens "in order to retain the heat a thick bed of salt is laid under the tiled floor. After a certain length of time the salt perishes. The tiles are taken up, the salt removed and thrown on the road outside the door of the oven ... It has lost its power to heat the tiles and it is thrown out." That may well be the picture here.

But the essential point remains whatever the picture, and it is a point which the New Testament makes and remakes again and again--uselessness invites disaster. If a Christian is not fulfilling his purpose as a Christian, then he is on the way to disaster. We are meant to be the salt of the earth, and if we do not bring to life the purity, the antiseptic power, the radiance that we ought, then we invite disaster.

It remains to be noted that sometimes the early Church made a very strange use of this text. In the synagogue, among the Jews, there was a custom that, if a Jew became an apostate and then returned to the faith, before he was received back into the synagogue, he must in penitence lie across the door of the synagogue and invite people to trample upon him as they entered. In certain places the Christian Church took over that custom, and a Christian who had been ejected by discipline from the Church, was compelled, before he was received back, to lie at the door of the Church and to invite people as they entered, "Trample upon me who am the salt which has lost its savour." ([William Barclay's Daily Study Bible - Matthew 5](#))

## Torrey's Topic "Salt"

**Characterized as good and useful** Mark 9:50

### Used For

- Seasoning food Job 6:6
- Seasoning sacrifices Leviticus 2:13; Ezekiel 43:24
- Ratifying covenants Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5
- Strengthening new-born infants Ezekiel 16:4

**Partaking of another's a bond of friendship** Ezra 4:14

**Lost its savour when exposed to the air** Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:50

### OFTEN FOUND

- In pits Joshua 11:8; Zephaniah 2:9
- In springs James 3:12
- Near the Dead Sea Numbers 34:12; Deuteronomy 3:17

**Places where it abounded barren and unfruitful** Jeremiah 17:6; Ezekiel 47:11

**The valley of, celebrated for victories** 2Samuel 8:13; 2Kings 14:7; 1Chronicles 18:12

### MIRACLES CONNECTED WITH

- Lot's wife turned into a pillar of Genesis 19:26
- Elisha healed the bad water with 2Kings 2:21

**Places sown with, to denote perpetual desolation** Judges 9:45

**Liberal afforded to the Jews after the captivity** Ezra 6:9; 7:22

## ILLUSTRATIVE

- Of saints Matthew 5:13
- Of grace in the heart Mark 9:50
- Of wisdom in speech Colossians 4:6
- (Without savour,) of graceless professors Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:50
- (Pits of,) of desolation Zephaniah 2:9
- (Salted with fire,) of preparation of the wicked for Destruction Mark 9:49

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**Warren Wiersbe** in his preface to "[Be Holy](#)", an exposition of Leviticus writes "Whatever else the professing Christian church may be known for today—great crowds, expensive buildings, big budgets, political clout—it's not distinguished for its holiness. Bible-believing evangelical Christians make up a sizable minority in the United States, but our presence isn't making much of an impact on society. The salt seems to have lost its saltiness, and the light is so well hidden that the marketplace is quite dark. ([Wiersbe, W. W. Be Holy. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books](#))

**Phil Newton** illustrates becoming tasteless relating that he knew of "two men, one a theologian and another a pastor that was arrested in two different parts of the country for perverted, immoral behavior. That is the extreme, I grant you, yet it is not something that we can take lightly or think we are immune to in our own lives. Our propensity for sin is great; so we must constantly be anchored in the cross of Christ and His gospel. They have lost their saltiness in the world. But many more do that without ever being arrested for a crime. Complaining Christians are tasteless Christians. Those that are lazy, undisciplined, arrogant, prideful, critical, mean-spirited have lost their pungent influence upon the world about them. How about your pungency? Are you salty where God has put you? Or have you so given in to the world that you are in danger of becoming tasteless to a world that desperately needs your saltiness in Christ? (Problem of Tasteless Christianity)

**Wiersbe** summarizes salt and light noting that "Salt speaks of inward character that influences a decaying world; light speaks of the outward testimony of good works that points to God. Our task is to keep our lives pure that we might "salt" this earth and hold back corruption so that the Gospel can get out. Our good works must accompany our dedicated lives as we let our lights shine. ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

**S. Lewis Johnson** quipped that "Often the only version of the Bible the world reads is that of the believer's life, and, if that is true, in the light of the weakness of the church's testimony today surely the world could use a revised version!"

**Vance Havner** reminds us that...

We are the salt of the earth, not the sugar, and our ministry is truly to cleanse and not just to change the taste.

Too many Christians live their Christian lives inside their heads; it never gets out through hands and feet and lips.

Salt must be brought into close contact with whatever it is meant to affect if it is to do any good. Christians are the salt of the earth. We must be willing to be rubbed into the decaying carcass of an unregenerate society. Most of us are content to sit on Sunday in our little salt-shakers, far removed from a needy and lost humanity. A box of garden seeds looks very attractive with its pretty colored packages but those seeds must be emptied from the pretty packages into the dirty earth to die and come up again if we are to have anything to eat. Christians look pretty enough in church on Sunday morning but "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. ." (John 12:24).

**George Barna** alludes to another potential source of **tasteless salt** noting that four out of ten people who call themselves evangelical Christians don't believe there is such a thing as absolute truth. **Barna** concludes "That's the heart of the problem we're struggling with. Think about the implications for evangelism, personal spiritual growth, and having a church that really is the salt and the light. It's pretty frightening."

**Vance Havner** has some **salty words** on how to be **salty Christians** (keeping in mind that the primary function of salt in Jesus' day was preservation and which undoubtedly was His main meaning, although it does not preclude some of these other nuances of significance - the danger with metaphors is that we take them further than God intended, so keep that in mind as you read this and



any commentary on the meaning of "salty Christians")...

It might have seemed ridiculous to a casual bystander for Jesus to say to a handful of ordinary men, "You are the salt of the earth and I am sending you out to **permeate** and **infiltrate** and **season** the whole world." Yet that little band, that **pinch of salt**, started something that has survived the centuries and changed the history of mankind.

Our Lord used the simplest figures of speech. Nothing is plainer, more universal and old-fashioned than salt. It is such a common commodity that we take it for granted, but if suddenly no salt could be had, what a difference that would make! What would life be without salt! A little boy said, "Salt is what tastes bad when you don't have it." Christians are the salt of the earth and we ought to make a difference.

**1. Salt has a seasoning influence.** There ought to be a flavor, a tang, a relish, and a zest about us Christians. Someone has said that our main trouble today is not that our doctrine is false, but that our experience is flat.

**2. Salt preserves.** Civilization has been saved from destruction by the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit in Christians. Salt prevents decay and restrains corruption. One godly person in a group will restrain evil conversation.

**3. Salt purifies and cleanses.** The best gargle for a sore throat is plain salt water. The church of Jesus Christ has had a purifying influence wherever it has gone. You may think that your community is in a bad state, but take out the church and you would not want to live there.

**4. Salt heals.** Lives are changed, souls saved, homes rescued from disaster, broken hearts mended, sorrows eased, burdens lifted, sick bodies and minds made well because of the antiseptic and therapeutic power of the Holy Spirit working through God's people, the salt of the earth.

**5. Salt creates thirst.** God's people should develop in the hearts of men a desire to know God. We ought so to live that others would want the peace and joy they see in us. Does anybody want to be a Christian like you? The best argument for Christianity is a Christian.

**6. Salt irritates.** When the salt of God's truth is rubbed into this diseased old world, sick souls may smart. When the light is turned on, some will wince. The devil hates the Gospel and fights back... We are not the sugar of the earth-nor the vinegar-but we are salt and we will not be welcomed by a generation full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores.

We need to get into the salt business and we must start with a few. This is God's program today. It sounds old-fashioned, but salt is old-fashioned, sin is old-fashioned and so is the Gospel. We have been tickling palates with **fancy flavors, spicy relishes, and clever recipes** borrowed from the world. Too many **pulpit gourmets** and **theological epicures** with menus from Hollywood are trying to please the jaded appetites of a fed up humanity. We need old-fashioned salt, and if we do not start producing more of it in our churches, we shall be good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

Albert George Butzer said "Some Christians are not only like salt that has lost its savor, but like pepper that has lost its pep."

### Does God Ever Restore One's Saltiness?

**Kent Hughes** addresses the question "How will it be made salty again?" asking "**Can a church be re-salted?**" The Lord brought this question up when he asked, "How can it be made salty again?" As we have said, salt cannot lose its saltiness, and therefore it cannot again be made salty. I believe Jesus is talking about salt that is so adulterated it has lost its preservative powers. In the context of His times Christ is saying that if salt has lost its savor, there is no natural hope for it. **Is there any hope for us if we have become desalted?** The answer is no - not in ourselves anyway. However, Jesus extends the metaphor into the supernatural, and here we must say that the answer is yes! Jesus is not saying that if a Christian loses his pungency, he cannot get it back, even by going to the source from which it came. Nothing but our own sin can keep us from being resalted. I once met a man who, in his sixties, was re-salted. He told me about how his life had become bland and insipid, and then he was confronted again with the necessity of a vital life for Jesus Christ and committed his life to him. For the next ten years of his life he was incredibly salty in the world. The effect of his life is literally known by thousands. So one can be re-salted! (Hughes, R. K. [Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#)) (Bolding added)

In Genesis 20:1-18, **Abraham** illustrates one who for a time lost his savor when he went to Gerar (capital of the Philistine colony on the seacoast) and lied to the pagan king Abimelech about Sarah, telling the king she was his wife. Abraham became **tasteless salt** for a time -- how could he talk to the pagan King about His God of truth when he himself was living a lie? And yet even while still in

Gerar, Abraham was apparently "re-salted" supernaturally as evidenced by his interceding with God for Abimelech's life (see Ge 20:7). Surely this indicates that Abraham had confessed his sin and God had restored him (cf Ps 66:18, 19). Also see the testimony of the pagan king in Ge 21:22 "God is with you in all that you do". This further supports that God had restored His erring saint to saltiness.

In **Mark 9:50** Jesus tells His disciples who in context had been bickering over which one was the greatest (Mk 9:34, cf their attempt to hinder another believer Mk 9:38)...

"Salt is good (kalos = beautiful, attractive); but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? (the idea is "you" cannot but it leaves open the possibility that God can supernaturally) Have (continually be having = present imperative) salt in yourselves, and be (continually be = present imperative) at peace with one another."

So Jesus does leave open the possibility that although man can in no way "re-salt" savorless salt, God can just as He did in the case of Abraham's life and in the life of every believer who is willing to walk in the light as He Himself is in the light. That believer will find that the blood of Jesus God's Son will continually cleanse him from all sin. (1John 1:7) Thus cleansed and "re-salted", he can function as salt in society.

Notice also the phrase **"be at peace with one another"** in (Mark 9:50). In context this suggests that one of the conditions of continually having saltiness is that we are continually at peace with our brethren!

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**Dave Roper** - Jesus had told the disciples earlier that they were the **salt** of the earth (Mt 5:13). They understood that he spoke of them. They were of no use to him unless they had the true quality of salt, the bite, the aseptic quality of salt, with its ability to arrest the spread of corruption. Today the Lord is still looking for disciples who have this salty quality that he can spread throughout the world.

Now I sense that each of us has a hunger to be put to use. We want to be a part of this enterprise; we want to be men and women of quality that the Lord can use. I feel that these words are for us, At first sight they do appear harsh, but I think that these are like the words of a surgeon who tells his patient that he is forced to engage in radical surgery to heal his body. The surgeon knows he must cut deeply into the flesh, or the cure will be superficial and the man will never be whole again. The patient's response is to yield himself to the surgeon's hands. The surgeon insists on this right if he is to do his work properly.

God wants to heal, and put to use. An unyielded Spirit will keep us from wholeness and excitement of cooperation with God. We will be caught in some eddy and we will watch the mainstream of God's purposes pass us right by. But, as Paul says, If we present our bodies a living sacrifice, if we will make ourselves available to him -- our family, our time, our possessions, all that we have -- God will fill and use us.

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### **Needed: A Big Thaw**

You are the salt of the earth . . . . You are the light of the world. —Matthew 5:13-14

Several years ago, a fire destroyed a building that contained tons of ice. Author Carl Franke said that although the building had contained thousands of gallons of potential extinguisher, the water was not in usable form. The building was full of frozen assets!

Unfortunately, many individuals and churches have a similar problem. In spite of being blessed with tons of resources for witness and service, God's chosen people are often God's "frozen people."

Jesus said that we are salt and light, but He warned against losing our saltiness and hiding our light (Mt. 5:13-20). Here are two safeguards to prevent this from happening:

1. Salt as a seasoning is useless unless it's in contact with food and mixed into it. Jesus calls us to "flavor" society in His name through close involvement with people.
2. Light is meant to be visible. Secret believers need to come out of hiding and be known as disciples. Their profession of faith must become self-evident through their good works. D. L. Moody said, "Lighthouses don't fire cannons to call attention to their shining. They just shine."

We are to season society and light up our world for Christ. It's time to thaw out the frozen assets in our lives. By Joanie Yoder [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, help us be a shining light  
So others then may see

Your mercy and Your love displayed

In what we strive to be.

—Sper

Our purpose on earth is not to get used to the dark, but to shine as lights.

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### **A Big Man Playing Small**

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. —Colossians 3:17

A journalism professor disguised himself as a homeless person and spent a few nights on the streets of a large city. He reported that the shelters provided him with sandwiches and soft drinks, but that nobody—not even at a church-run shelter—offered a word of spiritual counsel.

Columnist William Raspberry says that when the church fails to offer spiritual help, it is “playing away from its strength.” It’s like a 7-foot basketball player who attempts long jumpshots, or when he’s near the basket keeps bringing the ball down to chest level before shooting. Coaches refer to a tall player who wastes his height advantage as “a big man playing small.”

We are like that basketball player when we focus solely on meeting physical needs but fail to give out the life-transforming salvation message that God has entrusted to us. It’s commendable to be kind and generous in providing for others. But if we fail to point them to the answer for their deepest need, if we do not introduce them to Jesus Christ, we are “playing away from our strength.” We are doing what any unbeliever could do, and not doing what only we can do. We are like salt that has lost its saltiness (Matthew 5:13), like a light hidden under a basket (vv.14-16), like “a big man playing small.” —HVL ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thinking It Over

- How can acts of compassion open doors to witness?
- Do others think of you not only as a nice person,
- but also as a follower of Jesus Christ?

Good deeds are no substitute for the Good News.

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### **Your Life's Handwriting**

You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men. —2 Corinthians 3:2

Some people believe that our hand-writing reveals our character. Experts in the field of graphology watch for things like the slant of letters, the way they are formed, where the “t” is crossed, and how the “i” is dotted. Based on these distinctions, conclusions are drawn about one’s personality. We are told that the style of our writing shows whether we are outgoing or withdrawn, individualistic or of a conforming nature.

While some may question the reliability of this practice, it reminds me of what the apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:2. He told us that Christians are epistles “known and read by all men.” The way we compose the letters of our conduct indicates the kind of persons we really are.

If we are trying to please the Lord Jesus Christ, the handwriting of our lives will reveal a love for others and a responsiveness to their needs. We will also express an individuality and a willingness to stand alone for righteousness’ sake if duty demands it. Each day we will try to adjust our behavior to the will of our heavenly Father.

Allow the Savior to live through you by relying on His power. Then let the handwriting of your life tell others you belong to Him. By Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day,  
By the deeds that you do, by the words that you say;  
People read what you write, whether faithless or true—  
Say, what is the gospel according to you?  
—Anon.

The Christian's life is the world's Bible.

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## In The Driver's Seat

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. —Matthew 5:16

I love the story of the stressed-out woman who was tailgating a man as they drove on a busy boulevard. When he slowed to a stop at a yellow light, the woman hit the horn, cussing and screaming in frustration and gesturing angrily. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a police officer who ordered her to exit the car with her hands up. He took her to the police station and placed her in a holding cell.

An hour later, the officer returned and said, "I'm sorry, Ma'am. This has been a big mistake. When I pulled up behind you, I noticed your 'What Would Jesus Do?' license plate holder and your 'Follow Me to Sunday School' bumper sticker. I assumed the car was stolen!"

Satan doesn't care so much if you're a Christian as long as you don't act like one. If he can get you to live by his signals, he can damage and disarm you every time and dishonor the name of Christ in the process.

Instead, Jesus calls believers to be "salt" and to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

With Jesus in the driver's seat of our lives, we can show off the love and glory of God. By Joe Stowell [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Called to be salt and light in this world,  
Called to preserve and to shine,  
Called to reflect the glory of God—  
Oh, what a calling is mine!  
—Fitzhugh

Don't let Satan manage the details of your life.

## GREEK WORDS UNIQUE TO LUKE IN CHAPTER 14

1. "watch" (paratēreō) Luke 14:1 (4); also in Mark 3:2; Gal 4:10
2. "dropsy" (hudrōpikos) Luke 14:2 (1)
3. "will pull out" (anaspaō) Luke 14:5 (2)
4. "chief rooms" (prōtoklisia) Luke 14:7, 8 (3); also in Matt 23:6; Mark 12:39
5. "go up" (prosanabainō) Luke 14:10 (1)
6. "bid thee again" (antikaleō) Luke 14:12 (1)
7. "maimed" (anapēros) Luke 14:13, 21 (2)
8. "feast" (dochē) Luke 14:13, 29 (3)
9. "yoke" (zeugos) Luke 14:19 (2)
10. "to finish" (apartismos) Luke 14:28 (1)
11. "to finish" (ekteleō) Luke 14:29, 30 (2)
12. "to make" (war) (sumballō) Luke 14:31 (6)
13. "embassage" (presbeia) Luke 14:32 (2)
14. "dunghill" (kopria) Luke 14:35 (1)