

## The Discipler's Commentary

Answer Outline for the Discipler

Luke 14

14:1-24 takes place at a dinner held by a leader of the Pharisees

- *The discipler will want to explain that this Pharisee is perhaps meeting Jesus for the first time.*
- *This Pharisee is a leader; therefore, he is of high prestige and someone the other Pharisees would want to get close to.*

14:1-6 – Jesus heals a man with “dropsy” on the Sabbath; He points out the Pharisees’ lack of caring (hypocrisy)

- *The discipler will want to explain what “dropsy” is, and that it is a chronic condition (something that has been going on a long time and normally will continue for quite some time).*
- *Help the disciple understand how the Pharisees interpreted “work” on the Sabbath.*
- *Explain to the disciple that Jesus is testing the Pharisees in regard to the legitimacy of their Sabbath laws.*
- *Explain to the disciple the uncomfortable position Jesus has put the Pharisees in, whether they answer “Yes” to His question, or “No.”*
- *Ask the disciple about the issue of “bondage” here; that is, from bondage in Egypt to bondage to the Law.*
- *Ask the disciple if he or she can think of any nonsense laws the church has put on Christians that have resulted in bondage.*

14:7-11 – Jesus chastises the guests for seeking positions of honor

- *Explain to the disciple how formal dinners were arranged—not in chairs, but laying on cushions. Explain that the person closest to the host would have been recognized as the more favored, the position of honor.*
- *See if the disciple can explain what Jesus means when He gives this teaching. See if the disciple can discern whether it is better to seek to be exalted, or to be exalted by another.*
- *Make sure the disciple understands what Jesus is teaching in regard to the whole concepts of “self-esteem,” “selfies,” and the culture of narcissism in which most Christians live.*
- *Ask the disciple if he or she is guilty of acting like the Pharisees who were “picking out the places of honor.” Ask them what their motive was, and why it was so important to be recognized as important. What is it they are lacking in their personality that causes them to act this way. The teaching moment should be this: if a person is to be exalted, it should be God who is doing it. And even at that, every believer should be more concerned about exalting Christ than exalting oneself.*

14:12-14 – Jesus chastises the leader of the Pharisees for not reaching out to the lower class

- *Inform the disciple that the context for Jesus’ next teaching is that the leader of the Pharisees was probably a fairly wealthy individual, and those whom he invited to dinner were wealthy as well.*
- *Ask the disciple if he or she thinks Jesus is being rude to His host? (The disciple may need to be reminded of why the leader of the Pharisees asked Jesus to dinner in the first place. It certainly wasn’t because he was being kind to Jesus or looking after His needs. The leader of the Pharisees has evil, ulterior motives. Most likely, because the novice Pharisees were not able to stump Jesus, he himself will be the one who will put Jesus in His place.)*

- The poor are those who do not have basic needs; they also represent the spiritually poor (poor in spirit)

- *Ask the disciple why it would have been better if the leader of the Pharisees had invited the poor instead of his wealthy friends.*
- *Ask the disciple what his or her attitude is toward the poor in society. Are they getting what they deserve, or have they dug their own pit? Inform the disciple that his or her attitude toward the poor will determine how they respond to the poor. Ask the disciple how they plan to respond to this teaching.*
- *See if the disciple can determine what is the comparison to being materially poor and spiritually poor? See if the disciple can think back to any passages in Luke that might answer the question. (E.g., Luke 6:20-26.)*

- The *crippled* are those who cannot walk; they also represent the spiritually paralyzed
  - Have the disciple describe someone who is “crippled.” What is it that they cannot do? What ramifications does that have to their quality of life?
  - Ask how being crippled represents a spiritual condition? Have the disciple review Luke 5:17-26 and how that healing by Jesus relates to the problem of sin.
  - See if the disciple can guess why it would be so difficult for a Pharisee to invite someone crippled to dinner (or lame, or blind, or poor). What was the prevailing view from the Pharisees’ point of view of why these individuals were in the condition they were in?
  
- The *lame* are those who can walk but have a limp; they also represent the spiritually hurting
  - Ask the disciple how a lame person differs from someone who is crippled. Ask how that would affect their ability to worship inside the temple compound. Ask how the Pharisees would tend to view those who were lame.
  - See if the disciple can figure out what the lame person represents spiritually. See if the disciple can make a connection between someone who is lame and someone who is spiritually oppressed by the oppressive Sabbath laws devised by man.
  - Most importantly, see if the disciple can relate this teaching to any current events and current attitudes in the church today.
  
- The *blind* are those who depend on others to lead them around; also, the spiritually blind
  - See if the disciple can figure out how a physically blind person represents someone who is spiritually blind. This particular physical disability is used often to describe all the hazards associated with spiritual blindness. Of course, the disciple must be asked what it means to be spiritually blind.
  - Ask what is the most important thing that a person can do to help someone who is physically blind. Then ask what is the most important thing a person can do to help someone who is spiritually blind.
  - At the end of this section, see if the disciple can determine what was the main point Jesus was making. Does it hinge on the question of “To whom do we offer our help, our resources, our time and our hospitality?”

14:15-24 – Jesus gives a parable that prophesies how the Jews will reject Him and Gentiles will receive Him

- This parable may need some explaining to the disciple, depending on how much they know about the inclusion of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God. How Jews looked down on Gentiles may need to be reviewed.
- See if the disciple can pick up on the irony of this parable, and what one of the guest had to say that prompted Jesus’ giving this parable.
- What are some excuses people come up with today not to come to Jesus (the banquet)?
- There is an important lesson here concerning the contrast of those who think they are righteous (the Pharisees) and those who know they are unrighteous (the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind, according to the teaching of the Pharisees). Who is most likely to believe they have a need? Who is most likely to feel that they do not deserve to experience God’s love? Who is most likely to respond to the invitation to have sins forgiven and eternal life rewarded? Of course, it will be those who have the greater need.

14:25-35 takes place after the dinner; He warns the crowd that is following Him...

- Have the disciple re-read this section and see if he or she can discern the difference between being a “follower” and a “disciple.”
- to count the cost
  - Ask the disciple what it means to count the costs, and what that implies for the person who truly desires to be a disciple and not a follower.
- to not be polluted by possessions
  - See if the disciple can determine why the accumulation of possessions—even legitimate ones—can interfere with doing the work of a true disciple.