PARABLES OF JESUS

THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING FEAST AND THE GREAT BANQUET, LUKE 14:1-14

A. Jesus demonstrated His authority while dining at the home of a Pharisee (1-6)
   1. The Pharisees and lawyers watched Jesus carefully at a dinner party on the Sabbath (1), ***One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully.***

      a. The Pharisees had already rejected Jesus and were looking for ways to accuse Him.
      b. This dinner was on a Sabbath and the religious leaders hoped to catch Him concerning Sabbath rules.
      c. The host was probably a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council for the nation of Israel.

   2. A sick man was near Jesus (2), ***And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy.***

      a. A sick man was possibly placed a sick man near Jesus to see if Jesus would heal the man on the Sabbath.
      b. R. H. Pousma, *Dropsy is a condition that causes the body to swell up due to the accumulation of fluid in the body tissue or the body cavities.*
      c. I. Howard Marshall, *The rabbis regarded this disease as the result of immorality.*

   3. Jesus addressed the issue of what is lawful on the Sabbath
      a. He asked those present whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath (3), ***And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"***

         1) Jesus responded to what He knew was a trap by asking them to explain their understanding of what the Mosaic Law allowed.
         2) He had already taught that the Law allowed for more than the religious leaders permitted.

      b. They did not respond but Jesus answered His own question by healing the man (4), ***But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away.***

         1) Tom Constable, *He could have waited a day, but He performed the miracle on the Sabbath to launch the teaching that followed.*
         2) He sent the man away because the focus was not on the miracle but the legality of the healing taking place on the Sabbath.
         3) Jesus is condemned for doing good on the Sabbath when these rulers didn't do good on the other days, either.

   4. Jesus validated His Sabbath healing (5-6)
      a. He compared what He did with what was permitted by the traditional teaching of the lawyers (5), ***And he said to them, "Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?"***

         1) Jesus revealed the religious leaders' hypocrisy by declaring that they would rescue their possessions on a Sabbath but not a man.
         2) Jesus just demonstrated His authority over the Sabbath by rescuing His possession since Jesus is possessor of heaven and earth.

      b. The Pharisees and the lawyers had no response (6), ***And they could not reply to these things.***

         1) The Pharisees could not deny Jesus' logic.
         2) Thomas Constable, *This incident set the stage for the discussion that followed... Above all else it established Jesus' authority to teach the lessons that followed immediately.*

B. The Parable of the Wedding Feast (7-11)
   1. The setting of the parable was a wedding feast where people were trying to get the best seats (7), ***Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them,***

      a. At this time, Jesus gave the parable to correct the pride of the Pharisees.
      b. Jesus taught this lesson on the importance of humility when one relates to others and to God.
      c. The setting was a dinner party where people wanted the seats of honor for themselves.

2. Jesus dealt with how invited guests determined where they should sit (8-10)
   a. He told them not to choose a place a honor for themselves (8-9), ***When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, 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.***

      1) The places of honor were seats closest to the host.
      2) Guest would try to take those places for themselves since such a position would imply personal importance.
      3) Jesus said that such behavior would lead to embarrassment when the host moves you so a more distinguished person could sit near the host.

   b. He told them to choose the lowest place so the host could honor them (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.***

      1) The appropriate thing to do is to choose the lowest place and allow the host to honor you by moving you to place of honor.
      2) The point of this parable is transferrable to the future messianic banquet in the kingdom of God.

3. Jesus gives a principle on humility (11), ***For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.***

   a. One who exalts himself will be humbled but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.
   b. The host should determine who is honored, not the guest.
   c. Dwight Pentecost, *True honor is not the honor that one claims for oneself, but rather it is the honor that is conferred on one by others.*
   e. Christians must pursue humility because our faith is based solely on grace not on our works.

C. The Parable of the Great Banquet (12-24)
   1. Jesus encouraged His host on who to invite to a dinner (12-14)
      a. Don't invite only those who can repay the kindness (12), ***He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.***

         1) The former parable was to dinner guests but now it is to the host.
         2) Jesus tells the host to invite those who he would normally not consider.
         3) Jesus addressed this as a spiritual issue in Luke 6:32-36, *If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. 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 is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*

      b. Invite those who can't repay the kindness because that will bring blessing (13-14), ***But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.***

         1) Those we normally invite are able to repay our gratitude.
         2) When we invite those unable to repay, God will repay us with His blessing.
         3) *resurrection of the just*
            a) This refers to the first resurrection which would include those who have been justified.
            b) Revelation 20:6, *Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

   2. The biblical purpose for hospitality is to serve others, not to serve oneself.

CONCLUSION

A. Jesus has all authority, including the Sabbath and physical illness.
B. Humility is a result of grace but pride is a result of works.
C. Hospitality should be based on serving the needy not pampering the wealthy.