

Luke 14:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Jesus shifts to teaching: 'And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them.' Jesus observed the guests' behavior—'when he marked' (ἐπέχων, epechōn, paying attention to) 'how they chose out the chief rooms' (πῶς τὰς πρωτοκλισίας ἐξελέγοντο, pōs tas prōtoklisias exelegonto). The term 'chief rooms' (πρωτοκλισίας, prōtoklisias) means places of honor, couches closest to the host. Their maneuvering for status revealed pride and self-importance. Jesus uses this social ambition to teach kingdom values—humility, not self-promotion; service, not status-seeking. The parable that follows (vv. 8-11) illustrates these principles.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern meals followed strict protocols of honor and precedence. Seating arrangements communicated social hierarchy—proximity to the host indicated importance. Guests jockeying for honorable positions was common and expected. However, Jewish wisdom literature warned against presumption (Proverbs 25:6-7). Jesus draws on this tradition while radically expanding it—kingdom citizens shouldn't merely avoid presumption but actively embrace lowliness. This teaching threatened the entire social order built on hierarchy, honor, and status. Early Christianity's countercultural humility attracted the marginalized while alarming the elite.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' observation of social dynamics demonstrate His attention to everyday behavior as revelation of heart condition?
2. What contemporary forms of jockeying for position and status exist in churches?
3. How should kingdom values reshape Christian attitudes toward honor, recognition, and advancement?

Interlinear Text

λέγων	δὲ	πρὸς	τοὺς	κεκλημένους	παραβολήν
he put forth	And	to	G3588	those which were bidden	a parable
G3004	G1161	G4314		G2564	G3850
ἐπέχων	πῶς	τὰς	πρωτοκλισίας	ἐξελέγοντο	λέγων
when he marked	how	G3588	the chief rooms	they chose out	he put forth
G1907	G4459		G4411	G1586	G3004
πρὸς	αὐτούς				
to	them				
G4314	G846				

Additional Cross-References

Luke 11:43 (Parallel theme): Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

Matthew 23:6 (Parallel theme): And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

Philippians 2:3 (Parallel theme): Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Luke 20:46 (Parallel theme): Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

3 John 1:9 (Parallel theme): I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

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