

Luke 14:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Jesus describes the consequence: '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.' The host arrives and publicly redirects you: 'Give this man place' (δὸς τούτῳ τόπον, dos toutō topon). The result is shame—'thou begin with shame' (τότε ἄρξῃ μετὰ αἰσχύνῃς, tote arxē meta aischynēs) 'to take the lowest room' (τὸν ἔσχατον τόπον κατέχειν, ton eschaton topon katechein). Public demotion multiplies humiliation. What began as self-promotion ends in disgrace. This illustrates the principle: 'whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased' (v. 11). The parable warns against presumption while pointing to deeper spiritual truth—those who claim righteousness based on merit will be rejected.

Historical Context

Public shame was devastatingly powerful in honor-shame cultures. Being demoted at a feast would damage one's reputation and social standing permanently. Jesus uses this fear to motivate humility, but His deeper concern is spiritual—those who presume standing before God based on religious achievement, ethnic privilege, or moral performance will face ultimate shame at final judgment. The Pharisees epitomized this presumption, confident in their righteousness (Luke 18:9-14). Jesus consistently taught that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the fear of public shame motivate humility, and how does this relate to standing before God?
2. What contemporary forms of presuming status before God exist (theological knowledge, ministry position, moral achievement)?
3. How does this parable prepare the way for understanding justification by faith rather than works?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐλθὼν	ὁ	σὲ	καὶ	αὐτὸν	καλέσας	ἐρεῖ	σοι
And	him come	G3588	thee	And	G846	he that bade	and say	to thee
G2532	G2064		G4571	G2532		G2564	G2046	G4671
Δὸς	τούτῳ	τόπον	καὶ	τότε	ἄρξῃ	μετ'	αἰσχύνῃς	τὸν
Give	this man	place	And	G5119	thou begin	with	shame	G3588
G1325	G5129	G5117	G2532		G756	G3326	G152	
ἔσχατον	τόπον	κατέχειν						
the lowest	place	to take						
G2078	G5117	G2722						

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 16:18 (Parallel theme): Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 11:2 (Parallel theme): When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

Proverbs 3:35 (Parallel theme): The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

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