

Study Hints for Thinking Further
International Bible Lessons

Luke 14:7-24

Sunday, January 19, 2014

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be the answers to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

**Five Questions for Discussion
and Thinking Further**

1. Why does Jesus say you should take the lowest seat at a feast?

You should take the lowest seat instead of one of the highest seats so you will not risk the embarrassment of the host coming to you and telling you to take a lower seat because the seat you have taken is reserved for someone more important than you. It is better to take the lowest seat, because the host may come to you and honor you by inviting you to take a higher seat reserved for you. Jesus is giving practical advice with spiritual implications.

2. What kind of person does Jesus say will be humbled?

The person who exalts himself will be humbled (See Luke 14:11).

3. How happy do you think a person is who only does things for those who will repay or reward him? How happy do you think a person is who only serves God because he wants God to reward him?

Not as happy as they could be, because they focus primarily upon themselves and may never be satisfied with the return they receive or the rewards they get for what they have done. The happiest people truly give without thought of a return or a reward, and they find their happiness in the giving of themselves and what they have to give. They are not disappointed if they receive nothing in return or no reward for what they have done. For them, giving and having something to give or share with others is a reward in and of itself. The happiness they can bring to others gives them great happiness without the need for any other return or reward.

4. What kind of excuses do people give today for not spending time with Jesus Christ and those who love God and Christ?

Some may make the excuse that they have more important things to do and more important people to spend their time with than seeking to do what God would want them to do or being with those who put their focus on God when they worship and serve God. Some may make the excuse that God and His people are not very exciting or fun to be with, possibly even boring to be with. Some may make the excuse that they do not want God or others to judge their behavior, even though few others (in addition to God) may even know about their bad behavior. Some may just feel guilty around believers.

5. Why will some people be happier existing away from God and Christ after they die than being with God and those who love Him, even while they are suffering torment because they have rejected God's rule and the Kingdom of God?

They would not be happy praising God and spending time praising God with those who love God and love to praise God. They would rather be where God does not interfere with their existence and their desire to keep their focus primarily upon themselves. As they focus more and more upon themselves, they will be less and less happy, but not as unhappy as being in the presence of God because of their self-centeredness.

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