

Sermons at all Saints Anglican Church, Luxem bourg

Preached by Rev Geoff Read on Sunday 31st August 2025

Text: Luke 14:7-14

Last week I talked about how the stories or parable Jesus told are like binoculars – they bring God closer to us when we read them right

This week I want to talk about the importance of magnifying glasses

They help us notice detail that is important

At first reading the gospel sounds like good advice, the importance of being humble rather than proud, not thinking ourselves as more important than we really are

But if you take your magnifying glass I want you to notice two things

One is that when Jesus saw people acting important, “how guests at a meal chose the places of honour” it says, “He told them this parable ...” (v7)

Parables are always about the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom is God’s upside down way of seeing what is important

Its about His will, His ways

Its also about how He sees us, sees His world

This is a parable



The other thing to notice is the word “Blessed” in v14 when Jesus talks about not inviting to dinner those who will repay us with an invite. But instead inviting those who are simply in need of food, welcome, acceptance in v12ff

Blessed means “made happy by God”

This is a parable about being made happy by God.

And the star of parables is always the King, Jesus

Jesus says to understand the King and the Kingdom better imagine you are invited to wedding party. You can choose where you sit, but be careful because it’s the host who will decide whether you have got that right

Those who come in and see themselves as the most important He knows need some help to see things clearly about He sees them

Now what might that look like?

Last week we saw how two other parables – the man who finds treasure in a field sells all to get it, and the merchant searching for a pearl of great price, does the same

Jesus is that man digging, He is that merchant

The parables are a way of understanding how Jesus sees us – as treasure, as a pearl of great price

- and how He gives all to set us free

The same is true in this parable – God as host invites the guest to move up higher

What counts is His way of seeing us, and our experience of knowing that – imagine what that feels like!

That's the problem with coming in and choosing that place for ourselves – our pride and own sense of self worth block us from hearing the King and the Kingdom

As Jesus says: "For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted"



The other word I see with my magnifying glass is the word "blessed" – in grk Makarios, which literally means made happy by God

and it first occurs in Jesus's first big time of teaching, what we call the Beatitudes

It's where he says Blessed are ... made happy by God are ...

And the first one – you who are poor or poor in spirit

This is the way into God's Kingdom – letting go of our own Me centred way of seeing myself – secretly believing we should sit at the top table - and instead letting God speak His way of seeing us – that we are, in His eyes a pearl of great price, treasure, one to whom He says come up higher and sit by me

In my work I get invited to some places where I sit near or at the front

Maybe that happens in your work too

It makes me feel I am important

It feels nice

In fact, it's only because of my role

There is something dangerous about this feeling of importance, because the way we use the word "important" is always as a relative term – it only has meaning to us by saying we are more important than others

Individuals do it

People groups do it

And countries do it



And it is bad for our souls

And it is deadly for others too - we are seeing that play out in Ukraine, in Gaza

And so, we need to be set free, rescued from the tyranny of self-centred importance and set free to receive the gift of God-centred importance

Which is why we need to hear and experience how God sees us – what the King and the Kingdom has to say – "Friend, move up higher ..."

God speaks this to all, for all are important to Him, all are of equal importance to Him

And hearing that truth we are set free!