



PARTY TIME RULES

Luke 14:1-14

Sunday, August 28 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, August 29 at 7 PM
15th Sunday after Pentecost / 14th Sunday after Trinity – 2016

Introduction: Dear friends: By grace through faith we are alive in Jesus Christ; then, *as we live*, ♣ God knows our hearts and ♣ others see our actions. So how do we 😊 honor our God and 😊 show others what is right? Jesus will tell us today!

1. **Kind – We Always Help Those in Need:** ¹ **One Sabbath, when [Jesus] went to dine [literally, to eat bread] at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees [an important man], they were watching him carefully [hoping to catch him in a trap]. // In a similar way, when people know we are followers of Christ, they may be watching carefully and may even try to trap us.**
 - a. **An opportunity to help: ² And behold [oh look, probably on purpose], there was a man before him who had dropsy [an old term for retaining water under the skin, sometimes related to congestive heart failure – so it was a **visible** condition]. ³ And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees [both in those groups being experts in the law], saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?” ⁴ But they remained silent. Then [Jesus] took [the man who had dropsy] and healed him and sent**

him away. // Since Jesus took action for the man, *we know it is always good for us to help those who are in need.* Sometimes the help will seem normal, other times awkward, yet we should always show love to the one in need by helping in whatever way we can!

- b. A practical example: ⁵ **And [Jesus] said to [the lawyers and Pharisees], “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?”** ⁶ **And they could not reply to these things.** // Think about this general rule: It’s **always good** to do **I LOVE YOU** (green for GO), but it is **not always good** to do **I LOVE ME** (red for STOP)! What does that mean? **I LOVE YOU** is *my action to those in need*, but **I LOVE ME** is *my action to me*; for example: **I LOVE ME** so “I won’t get involved” or “I would rather go to breakfast than to church” or “helping could cost me, so I will decline.” Let us *know we are forgiven in Christ for all of our past sins* of **I LOVE ME**; then, let us go forward to practice **I LOVE YOU!**

2. **Humble – We Consider Others to be More Important:** ⁷ **Now [Jesus] told a parable to those who were invited [to the home of the Pharisee], when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them,**
- a. Take the lowest place: ⁸ **“When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast** [*regular gatherings – sit wherever, but for wedding feasts*], **do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more**

distinguished than you be invited by him,⁹ 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.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. // Jesus not only gave God-pleasing seating instructions, but warned against the sin of pride! Dr. Kretzmann wrote, “He that exalts himself, places himself above his neighbor, boasts of his own merit and worthiness before God, he will be humbled, will be excluded from the kingdom of God” (NT 1:345). So pride in one area of life *can point to pride in other areas*; Jesus is calling us to *be humble and trust in Him in every area of life!*

- b. Let someone else exalt you:¹¹ **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.** // So our part is to ♦be humble and ♦consider others to be more important; then, *when the time is right – in this life or in the life to come*, we will be exalted!

3. **Generous – We Expect Nothing in Return:**

- a. Don’t give to get:¹² [Jesus] 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. // Jesus’ words get at the **heart** of the matter:

Why are we hosting a party and inviting certain people – *just to give, or hoping to get?* Even with God, why do we **attend** or **give** or **serve** – *just to honor Him, or hoping to get something from Him?* At all times, *God knows the intent of every heart!*

- b. Give freely: ¹³ **But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,** ¹⁴ **and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”**
- i. When we invite those who cannot repay us, our intentions are good – *we want to be generous and we expect nothing in return.* Jesus even encouraged us to proceed in that way by promising that we would be repaid on the last day – *when He returns and all the just ones are raised to the **fullness** of eternal life!*
 - ii. Our motivation for inviting the needy should **not** be a future reward – *though it has been promised, **but rather** our genuine concern for the needs of the needy.*

Conclusion: Dear Jesus, since we are eternally blessed through Your finished work, help us to gladly follow Your instructions by always 😊loving others, 😊being humble, and 😊freely helping those who are in need! And all God’s people said: **Amen!**