

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

OLD TESTAMENT – Proverbs 25:2-10

More Proverbs of Solomon

2 It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out. 3 As the heavens for height, and the earth for depth, so the heart of kings is unsearchable. 4 Take away the dross from the silver, and the smith has material for a vessel; 5 take away the wicked from the presence of the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

6 Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great, 7 for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put lower in the presence of a noble. What your eyes have seen 8 do not hastily bring into court, for what will you do in the end, when your neighbor puts you to shame? 9 Argue your case with your neighbor himself, and do not reveal another's secret, 10 lest he who hears you bring shame upon you, and your ill repute have no end.

25:2–27 Content of this collection of Solomon's proverbs shows that it was intended for instructing kings and their courts. Vv 2–5 introduce the nature of kingship; vv 6–15 provide advice for dealing with kings; vv 16–26 explain the manner in which a king should deal with wicked people; v 27 concludes the section. (TLSB)

According to 1 Kings 4:32, Solomon "spoke three thousand proverbs." (PBC)

the men of Hezekiah king of Judah. There was a great revival in the reign of Hezekiah (c. 715–686 B.C.), and the king restored the singing of hymns to its proper place (2Ch 29:30). His interest in the words of David corresponds to his support of a compilation of Solomon's proverbs. Solomon was the last king to rule over all Israel during the united monarchy; Hezekiah was the first king to rule over all Israel (now restricted to the southern kingdom) after the destruction of the divided monarchy's northern kingdom. (CSB)

Although he was not without his faults, the Bible tells us that for the most part King Hezekiah was a good, God-fearing king. In the next few chapters of Proverbs, we have one of the good results that came from his reign – namely, the collecting of more of Solomon's proverbs. (PBC)

25:2 to conceal things. God gets glory because man cannot understand his universe or the way he rules it (see Dt 29:29; Job 26:14 and note; Isa 40:12–24; Ro 11:33–36). (CSB)

God's glory is manifested in many ways, e.g., creation, intervention in history, and, specifically, human redemption through His Son. Yet His ways and will are often hidden from human comprehension. (TLSB)

Part of God's glory comes from the fact that he is mysterious, beyond our understanding. His working in nature and history is often hidden, which only makes Him all the more awesome. St Paul describes this in a magnificent doxology in Romans 11:33-36, "³³ Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴ "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" ³⁵ "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen." (PBC)

to search things out. A king gets glory if he can uncover the truth and administer justice (see 1Ki 3:9; 4:34). (CSB)

The glory and greatness of kings, however, is manifested in their ability to make God's ways known to those under their rule. Solomon emphasizes wisdom as research. This would eventually lead to what we call science. (TLSB)

As for kings, their glory is to search out and discover. When he became king, Solomon asked God for "a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong" (1 Kings 3:9) (PBC)

25:3 *is unsearchable*. Cannot be understood; like the four things in 30:18–19. Yet God controls the hearts of kings. (CSB)

A king's intentions may not always be known. (TLSB)

Who can follow the behind-the-scenes maneuvering of diplomats? We also have here a warning against being taken in by the flattery of kings. It may not be sincere. We ought to be guided by higher motives than that of the outward approval of earthly potentates, whose praise can be quite fickle. Rather than living to please the high and mighty of this world, we live by faith in the King of kings and let His Words direct our lives. (PBC)

25:4 *take away the dross from the silver*. A process compared to the purification of society in general and rulers in particular in Isa 1:22–25; Eze 22:18; Mal 3:2–3. (CSB)

Impurities removed when refining silver. (TLSB)

This refers to impurities that are taken out in the process of refining silver. (PBC)

25:5 *his throne will be established in righteousness*. Luther noted that it was the duty of kings and secular officials to force "those who do not want to be good and righteous ... to become good and righteous in the eyes of the world." In doing so they carry out God's will, for "although God will not reward this kind of righteousness with eternal life ... he still wishes peace to be maintained among men" (AE 46:99–100). The peace that results from the removal of wickedness under the jurisdiction of rulers establishes what is called "civil righteousness." (TLSB)

If wicked people (e.g., self-serving advisors) are not surrounding the king, his will be a precious, righteous governing. (PBC)

25:6 *do not put yourself forward* – Don't blow your own horn. If we use our God-given talents well, discerning people will notice them. (PBC)

in the king's presence. Probably at a feast (cf. 23:1). Jesus spoke about the place of honor at a wedding feast (Lk 14:7–11). (CSB)

People in positions of authority (e.g., kings, elders). (TLSB)

25:7b-10 Though lawsuits may be necessary in some cases, it is wise to settle disputes between parties involved instead of seeking out a third party for legal representation before a court of law (cf Mt 5:25; 7:1–5). (TLSB)

25:7 *Come up here*. Cf. "Friend, move up to a better place" (Lk 14:10); contrast Isa 22:15–19. (CSB)

25:8 *do not bring hastily into court.* A warning about the seriousness of disputes (see 17:14) and the need to exercise caution (see 24:28). (CSB)

Don't be in hurry to get a lawyer, sue, and take someone to court. You may come out a lose. God wants us to try to settle matters in a personal way outside of court. Jesus said, "As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled to him on the way, or he may drag you off to the judge, and judge will turn you over to the officer, and the officer will throw you into prison" (Luke 12:58). (PBC)

25:9 *do not reveal another.* If you do, you are a gossip (see 11:13; 20:19). (CSB)

25:10 *ill repute.* A good name is one of life's most valuable possessions. (CSB)

EPISTLE – Hebrews 13:1-17

Sacrifices Pleasing to God

Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3 Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. 4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. 5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" 7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9 Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. 10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tent[a] have no right to eat. 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. 12 So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. 13 Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. 14 For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. 15 Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. 16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. 17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

13:1 *let brotherly love continue* – Philadelphia – Love for known bothers and sisters in Christ. The writer is urging the continuance of this type of love in their Christian community. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5 & 11, Parts 3 & 3)

This noun, Philadelphia, speaks of brotherly affection, the special love which Christians have for each other. Bruce says: "in the biblical area the classic passage is Psalm 133:1 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!'" But the very fact that our writer says *menetow*, "let it remain," shows that it can easily be lost. Christians are very much aware of their own sinful flesh, their old Adam (Romans 7). Satan attacks them often and when they least expect it. He is a master at causing division among Christians. Our Hebrew text implies that it must be carefully nurtured. It is so easy to neglect Christian affection. The word Philadelphia occurs again at Rom. 12:10; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 2 Peter 1:7. Guthrie comments: "Brotherly loves expresses that special mutual regard for one another irrespective of race which is particularly characteristic of Christians." Lenski says: "It is the new

commandment given us by Jesus in John 13:34 and repeated again and again: 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 2:10; 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 21.” Bruce writes: “the grace of brotherly love itself, whatever terms be used is inculcated throughout the NT. Exegetical Notes – Buls)

The inspired author has presented the matter to which he wanted to call the special attention of the Hebrew Christians. But in connection with this doctrine he now takes occasion to address some special admonitions to his readers: Brotherly love should continue. Love of the brethren had existed in their midst, as he had frankly acknowledged, chap. 6, 10. But if they did not heed the appeal and warning addressed to them in the preceding chapter, there was danger that the general decay of their faith would be accompanied by the inevitable corresponding loss of true brotherly love. (Kretzmann)

13:2 do not neglect – In verse 1 it is *meneto* (let it remain). Here is it “do not forget.” In verse 3 it is “remember.” Christians need constant reminders. They need Law and Gospel constantly. The world is not inclined to love a stranger. In fact in many cases it is not inclined to love the one who is well known. Lenski comments: “Public hotels and lodging places were unknown at this time.” And Guthrie: “In the environment of the early church it was essential, since alternative facilities for travelers were such that Christians would not choose to make use of them. Wayfarers’ hostels, where they existed, were notorious for immorality. This was a common practice in the early days of the LC-MS. Pastors, with their whole families, would often stop at each other’s houses and even spend the night or (or two) with each other. In those days people would often spend Sunday afternoons visiting with each other. Modern living has curtailed much of earlier hospitality. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

But in order that brotherly love might remain, it required constant exercising, two forms of which are here mentioned. First of all: Entertainment of strangers do not neglect; for through this some have entertained angels without knowing it. True hospitality is here earnestly recommended, not an indiscriminate feeding of loafers. Conditions often made it necessary for the Christians to move from one place to another in those days, and many of them could ill afford to make use of the public inn. In such cases the brethren should be willing to show their love by receiving others, often fugitives, into their homes and providing for their wants. (Kretzmann)

entertained angels unawares. As did Abraham (Ge 18), Gideon (Jdg 6) and Manoah (Jdg 13). (CSB)

There are two important points in this verse: kindness to strangers and the blessing which God may have in store for us. On this point Lenski comments: “It is sufficient to say that, as some were unexpectedly blessed by receiving strangers, so we, too, may be thus blessed. (Matt. 25:38, 40).” And Bengel brings out another point: “An unknown guest is often more worthy than he appears, and has angels as attendants, although they are unseen. (Matt. 25:40, 45)” It is not limited to welcoming people into our houses. Love for strangers can be exercised just about any place. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

We shall probably never entertain angels, when we help strangers. Although it is becoming increasingly difficult to help strangers, let us not forget the value our Lord himself places on such Christian hospitality. What a surprise it will be to hear from him on the Last Day, “Whatever you did for one the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me. (PBC)

In this work of love the thought was to encourage them that some people at least who practiced hospitality in that way had entertained angels without knowing it, Gen. 18, 19. The hospitality of the early Christians was commented upon favorably even by heathen writers. It is a virtue which might be practiced with far greater liberality in our days, when a suspicious coldness has come to mark the intercourse of Christians with one another, Rom. 12, 13; 1 Pet. 4, 9; 1 Tim. 3, 2; Titus 1, 8. (Kretzmann)

13:3 remember those in prison ... who are mistreated. See 10:32–34; 1Co 12:26. (CSB)

Not criminals but believers suffering persecution, possibly under Emperor Nero. (TLSB)

mimnaskomai – Many of their brothers and sisters were wrongly imprisoned because of their faith. It also recalls Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25:36. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 3)

mimnaskesthe is a present imperative which means “keep on remembering.” Two classes of people are mentioned, the prisoners and those who are mistreated. What do they have in common? Those who are down and out, the helpless, the defenseless. A man's real attitude toward others comes out when he is confronted with situations like this. On the first part of the sentence Guthrie writes: “Prisoners are out of sight and apt to be forgotten, hence the exhortation to remember.” Lenski says: “As having been made fellow prisoners is not to be understood in a physical but in a spiritual sense: feeling their imprisonment as if it were your own.” He correctly quotes 1 Cor. 12:26: “Whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it.” The Living Bible has a good paraphrase here: “Share the sorrows of those being mistreated, for you know what they are going through.” Guthrie comments: “The words ‘since you also are in the body’ are added to remind the readers that they too could be exposed to the same treatment. The words draw attention to the physical limitations to which all are subject.” Lenski says: “‘As being yourselves also in the body’ refers to or susceptibility to the same sufferings. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

But some of their fellow-Christians might be in even a worse plight, and therefore the text continues: Be mindful of those in bonds as fellow prisoners, of those that suffer evil as being yourselves also in the body. The Christians to whom these words were addressed were living in troublous times. The general persecution which came upon them after the death of Stephen had indeed subsided, but the hatred of their enemies remained, and there were probably local disturbances. The believers, then, should feel a prayerful sympathy for all those that were languishing in prison for the sake of the Gospel, just as though they had been bound with them and were suffering the same hardships. In the same way they should remember those that were being abused, maltreated, showing this cordial sympathy all the more readily since they, being in the body, were liable to similar ill-usage. It was in accordance with these and similar instructions that the early Christians composed special prayers for those suffering imprisonment and in every way provided for their relief. (Kretzmann)

13:4 *marriage be held in honor among all* – en pasin – In every way, in all aspects. Marriage is honorable in all aspects and the marriage bed should remain undefiled. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

Not contaminated by sexual immorality. Cf Lv 18. (TLSB)

Both Gentiles and Jews (especially those who followed the teaching of Hillel) in early NT times were quite lax in their sexual morals. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

The defilements that dishonor marriage are fornication, which dishonors marriage in advance, and adultery, which dishonors marriage after it has been entered into. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

God will judge the sexually immoral and adultrous – The combination of these terms is intended to include those who sin in and out of wedlock. Those who ignore this commandment should expect a fearsome judgment, often beginning in this life (disease, poverty, brutality). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

He will punish with bodily afflictions, heartbreak, and if they do not repent, eternal condemnation. (TLSB)

A special admonition concerns the sacredness of holy wedlock: in honor let marriage be held by all, and the marriage-bed be kept unstained; but fornicators and adulterers the Lord will judge. Whether a person has already entered the state of holy wedlock or is still unwed, marriage should be held in honor, sacred as an institution of the Lord. There must be no violation of its sanctity either by the unmarried, by presuming upon the special functions of this state, or by the married, by defiling the marriage-bed through unfaithfulness or in entering this holy estate for the mere gratification of sexual lust. The conjugal relations should be chaste. With solemn emphasis the writer adds that it is God who will judge and condemn the fornicators and adulterers, those who in any manner violate the sacredness of the boundaries which He has drawn around the state of marriage. (Kretzmann)

13:5 *love of money*. See Lk 12:15, 21; Php 4:10–13; 1Ti 6:6–10, 17–19. (CSB)

It is dangerous to put our trust in earthly goods. God Himself must have our confidence and trust. All else fails He will never fail us. This is the opposite as Luke 16:14. There we learn that love for money is attended by self-righteousness. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

This phrase speaks volumes about our society which has such an obsession with consumerism. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

1 Timothy 6:9-10, “⁹ People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief’s.”

be content. See Php 4:11–12; 1Ti 6:8. (CSB)

Contentment is hard to come by, for the appetites and fears of the flesh must be curbed, and trust in God’s promise must be cultivated. The writer helps by giving the assurance, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

Lenski says: “Contentment with whatever little God has given or left us is the cure for all money-love, all worry about money and the like... We have what is far better than all earthly wealth.” Here one can apply 1 Tim. 6:9-12 and Phil. 4:11. The words of Jesus found at Matt. 6:25-34 are very applicable here. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

1 Timothy 6:8, “But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.”

Of the entire conduct of the Christians the author says: Your mode of life be without covetousness, being content with what you have: for Himself has said, I will by no means leave thee, nor will I at all forsake thee. The entire life of the Christians, all their thinking and doing, their conduct under all circumstances, should be free from avarice, from the love of money, for God demands that His children on earth should be satisfied, content with what they have, with what He has given them. This contentment has a firm foundation in the promise of God that He will under no circumstances leave His own to want, nor will He in any manner forsake them, Deut. 31, 6, 8; 1 Chron. 28, 20. Cp. Gen. 28, 15; Josh. 1, 5; Is. 41, 17. (Kretzmann)

never leave...forsake – God categorically denies that He will ever forsake us. Guthrie says here: “The words appear to come from a mixture of sources (cf. Josh. 1:5; Deut. 31:6, 8) Bengel comments: “What was said to Jacob, to Joshua, the people, and to Solomon applies also to us.... He will neither withdraw his assistance nor his presence.” (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

13:6 *the Lord is my helper; I will not fear* – This is a direct quotation from Psalm 118:6-7, a favorite of Luther. The confidence of the child of God in his heavenly Father is not mere wishful thinking. It is based on the saving act of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

Guthrie says: “Psalm 118 formed an important part of the Jewish Festival services, and is quoted several times in the NT. The Lord is constantly speaking the Gospel of verse 5b. And the Christian should constantly be responding with the confession of verse 6. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

John 16:33, ““I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Romans 8:31, “What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?”

This promise of God being secure, we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, I will not fear, Ps. 118, 6. The Psalmist asks the challenging question, but the author here changes the question to the bold statement of faith which fears no danger with God on its side. Cp. 1 Chron. 28, 20. Men can at their worst but take our lives; but our salvation in Christ Jesus is secure in the hands of the Father. The body they may kill, but the soul has been entrusted to the certainty of everlasting Mercy. (Kretzmann)

13:7 *leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God.* Office distinct from “the saints” (v 24). Its duty was to speak God’s Word (v 7) and refute error (cf v 9). Perhaps former elders or pastors, including some already put to death for their Christian confession. (TLSB)

mnamoneuete – Present imperative which means “keep calling to mind.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

elalasan – The aorist (past tense) verb indicates that these leaders were no longer with them, but they had taught them the Word. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 3)

Consider the outcome of their way of life. Probably indicates that these exemplary leaders were now dead. (CSB)

Confessing Christ to the end, they died trusting in Him. (TLSB)

imitate their faith. See 6:12; 1Co 4:16; Eph 5:1; 1Th 1:6–7; 2:14; 3Jn 11. (CSB)

The first point which the sacred author brings out in this paragraph is that of keeping in remembrance the former teachers of the Gospel: Keep in remembrance them that had the rule over you, who spoke to you the Word of God, upon the close of whose life look closely, and copy their faith. The Christian’s should remember their spiritual guides, or leaders, keep them in kind and honoring remembrance. This feeling should be intensified by the fact that it was they that proclaimed to them the glorious Gospel of their salvation, God’s Word of Love, These leaders, these early guides of the Hebrew Christians, had now passed away, but they were still acting as examples through their conduct. These men had sealed their teaching with their lives; they had remained steadfast in their belief in the Gospel to the end, and had thus exhibited a faith worthy of imitation. The believers should carefully consider this; they should keep the same faith, and God would keep them. (Kretzmann)

13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same.* A confession of the changelessness of Christ, no doubt related to the preceding verse. The substance of their former leaders’ faith was the unchanging Christ. (CSB)

According to His eternal divinity, He is unchangeable (Mal 3:6). His covenant of grace also does not change. Cf Jn 1:1. (TLSB)

Everything that we deal with in this world is constantly, though imperceptibly, changing. Times, people, circumstances and conditions constantly change. And we soon learn that people are fickle. They change quickly. But not so with Jesus Christ. Bengel says: Jesus Christ, a solemn title: the sum of the Gospel, which is to be maintained by faith.” Then he adds: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday – before he came into the world, before his passion, before his ascension – and today, in heaven. Westcott writes: “The thought of the triumph of faith leads to the thought of Him in whom faith triumphs. He is unchangeable, and therefore the victory of the believers is at all times assured.” Christ and His Word continue. Matthew 24:35 (Buls Notes)

yesterday. Probably the days of Christ’s life on earth, when the eyewitnesses observed him (2:3). (CSB)

today. The Christ whom the eyewitnesses saw was still the same, and what they had said about him was still true. (CSB)

forever. And it will always be true. To compromise his absolute supremacy by returning to the inferior Aaronic priesthood and sacrifices (see chs. 5–10) is to undermine the gospel. (CSB)

This may be set forth all the more emphatically, since the object of faith has not changed or passed away: Jesus Christ, always the same, yesterday and today and forever. That is the inscription which the Christians may at all times place upon their banner. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, is the basis of our faith. There was and is and will be only this one Redeemer; but in Him we have all that we need for this life and for the world to come, Acts 4, 12; 15, 11; Rev. 13, 5; 1 Cor. 3, 11. Yesterday is the time before His incarnation, today is the time of His revelation in the flesh. Thus it is now and in eternity the same Christ, through whom, and through whom alone, all believers in the past, in the present, and in the future time are delivered from the Law, justified, and saved.” 15) (Kretzmann)

13:9 *strange teachings.* New teachings, not supported by Scripture. (TLSB)

not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. As the legalistic Judaizers were teaching. The old Mosaic order was done away with at the cross and must not be revived. (CSB)

Either dietary rules or sacrificial meals. OT sacrificial meals strengthened faith in the coming Messiah. But with Christ’s coming, these meals are no longer needed. (TLSB)

With this basis of faith, it follows: With various teachings, and strange, be not carried away; for it is a fine thing for the heart to be confirmed by grace, not by meats, which were of no avail to them that had recourse to them. This was the great danger which was menacing the Jewish Christians. There were many men that sought admission to the Christian congregations in those days who construed the Old Testament doctrine in such a way and insisted upon the former institutions and practices with such emphasis as to loosen the attachment of the believers to Christ as the only Mediator. Many a Christian who was not firmly grounded in the liberty of Christ was swept away by the flood of specious arguments brought forward by these Judaizing teachers. It was necessary, therefore, that the hearts of the Christians be strengthened and confirmed, a fact which only the grace of God in the Gospel could bring about. A fine and laudable thing it would certainly be if all Christians would stand firm in the knowledge of the efficacy of this grace, for it is all that we need for this life and the next. The writer, in this connection and for the sake of his readers, purposely rejects the idea that this aim might be reached by the use of certain foods of

the sacrificial meals, of which some Jewish Christians still believed that they had the power to give spiritual strength. All the people that had ever placed their trust in these sacrificial meals, in the eating of the meat and other food that was connected with the offering of certain sacrifices, had had no benefit of their work, having thereby not become justified before God, Gal. 4, 9. 10; 5, 1-4. (Kretzmann)

13:10 *We have an altar.* Probably refers to the cross, which marked the end of the whole Aaronic priesthood and its replacement by the order of Melchizedek, of which Christ is the unique and only priest. (CSB)

Table of the Lord (1Co 10:21), from which the faithful receive the Lord's body and blood. (TLSB)

serve the tent. Those who still seek cleansing and forgiveness through the OT rituals performed at the temple. "Tent" is used to describe the impermanent nature of their devotion. The OT could not last. (TLSB)

no right to eat. † The priests could not eat of the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, but we can partake of our sacrifice, so to speak—through spiritual reception of Christ through faith (see Jn 6:48–58). We have a higher privilege than the priests under the old covenant had. (CSB)

Distinguishes those who may commune from those who may not. The distinction depends on the faith they confess in their speech and actions. "The priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to the Communion and keeping back others" (AC XXIV 36). (TLSB)

It is in contrast to this ceremonial eating of the Old Testament that the author says: We have an altar, from which to eat they have no authority that serve the tabernacle. The contrast is between those that cling to the Levitical sacrificial cult and those that place their trust in the mercy and grace of God alone. Those that still serve the tabernacle, whose heart is bound up with the form of worship of the Old Testament, who insist that the observance of the Ceremonial Law is necessary also in the New Testament, have no authority, no right and power to take part in the blessings which come to us from our altar, from the Cross of Christ, on which the Lamb of God was offered for the sins of the world. For to eat of this altar means to become a partaker of the benefits which the great Sacrifice brought to the world, it means to accept in faith the true righteousness before God and eternal salvation. Cp. John 6, 51-58. (Kretzmann)

13:11 *burned outside the camp.* This is emphasized by another comparison between the sacrifices of the Old Testament and the one great offering of the New: For of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, their bodies are burned outside the camp; therefore also Jesus, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside of the gate. According to the Ceremonial Law of the Jews, the carcasses of those animals whose blood, on the great Day of Atonement, was taken into the Most Holy Place and sprinkled against the mercy-seat, chap. 9, 8-25; 10, 19, had to be burned outside of the camp of the Jews, and later outside of the city of Jerusalem, Lev. 16, 27. Of the flesh of these sacrifices, therefore, no one was permitted to eat, as was the case with many other offerings. But now the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement is the principal type of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, chap. 9, 7-12. (Kretzmann)

13:12 *Jesus also suffered outside the gate.* Christ's death outside Jerusalem represented the removal of sin, as had the removal of the bodies of sacrificial animals outside the camp of Israel. (CSB)

It was for this reason, then, that Christ, in consecrating the sinners to Himself, in working salvation for all mankind through His own blood, suffered and died outside of the gates of the city of Jerusalem. Like a malefactor He was taken outside of the city and put to death, Lev. 24, 14; Num. 15, 35. 36; Deut. 17, 5; Mark 15, 20-28. The very fact that Christ was cast out and condemned and put to death won salvation for

all men. Those, then, that still insist upon keeping all the precepts of the Ceremonial Law are obliged to look upon Christ as an unclean criminal; whereas we, who know ourselves to be free from the demands of the old church law of the Jews, rejoice that Christ was made to be sin and a curse, because we know that it was done for us, 2 Cor. 5, 21; Gal. 3, 13. (Kretzmann)

Join Him in being rejected by unbelievers. (TLSB)

13:13 *go to him outside the camp.* Calls for separation from Judaism to Christ. As he died in disgrace outside the city, so the readers should be willing to be disgraced by turning unequivocally from Judaism to Christ. (CSB)

Phrase used in Lv, Ex, and Nu to describe where unholy things such as refuse should be discarded. Here used ironically to describe abuse and rejection of Jesus by the Jerusalem authorities. (TLSB)

Here the natural consequence of our having cast our lot with the crucified Christ is brought out: Let us, therefore, go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. The author wants his readers to consider it a privilege to be branded outcasts and traitors to the Jewish cause. Having chosen Jesus as their Lord and Master, they should freely confess that they were willing to join Him in His shame and reproach as a malefactor and criminal in the eyes of the Jews. True believers will have nothing to do with the Law and its ordinances as necessary for their salvation, they will have nothing to do with legalistic practices. Having cast their lot with Jesus and His salvation by grace alone, they will be glad to bear the shame and reproach which fell upon Him, for His sake. (Kretzmann)

13:14 *city that is to come.* The new Jerusalem, the kingdom of heaven. Cf Gal 4:26; Rv 21:2. Luther: “God permits him [a Christian] to remain alive in the flesh and lets his body walk the earth in order that he may help others and bring them to heaven too. Therefore we must use everything on earth in no other way than as a guest who travels across country.... Thus we must also deal with temporal goods as if they did not belong to us. We must limit our enjoyment of them to what is necessary for the preservation of the body. With the rest we must help our neighbor” (AE 30:35). (TLSB)

Surely this step is one which should not cause regret in the heart of any one that has accepted Jesus in truth: For not have we a lasting city here below, but we seek earnestly the one to come. The believers are strangers, sojourners, in this world; they are the Lord’s pilgrims, Ps. 39, 12. The short span of life which is granted them in this world is but a time of preparation for the world to come. Our real home, where we have our true citizenship, is in heaven, Phil. 3, 20. Only that which is spiritual and eternal can truly satisfy the ambition and fill the heart with that peace which passes all understanding. We strive earnestly, therefore, for the city which abides forever; we keep our attention centered on its glorious advantages, on its bliss inestimable. (Kretzmann)

13:15–16 “In these last times it is certainly no less needful to encourage people to Christian discipline <to the way of right and godly living> and to do good works. We need to remind them of how necessary it is that they exercise themselves in good works as a declaration of their faith [Matthew 5:16] and gratitude to God” (FC Ep IV 18). (TLSB)

13:15 *sacrifice of praise.* “Sacrifice” is used metaphorically here to represent an offering to God (see Ro 12:1; Php 4:18). Animal offerings are now obsolete. (CSB)

“These sacrifices are not satisfactions.... He asks us to offer praises, that is, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, and the like. These benefit not by the outward act, but because of faith” (Ap XXIV 25–26). (TLSB)

Thus we are enabled also to do what the inspired author urges: Through Him, then, let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is to say, the fruit of lips celebrating His name. We believe in the virtue of Christ's atoning sacrifice, we have openly taken the part of Him who was condemned as a criminal by men; but through Him we are also identified with the Father as His children and worshipers. As such it is our cheerful duty, our glad privilege, to bring sacrifices to Him through Christ. Not only occasionally and periodically, but continually we offer to God, our heavenly Father, the fruit of our lips in the praise and celebration of His holy name. Hos. 14, 3; Ps. 50, 14. 23; Is. 57, 19. (Kretzmann)

the fruit of lips. God's forgiveness leads us to confess Him and praise Him. See SC, Second Commandment, p xxxv. Luther: "We learn that we do not offer Christ as a sacrifice, but that Christ offers us.... That is, we lay ourselves on Christ by a firm faith in his testament and do not otherwise appear before God with our prayer, praise, and sacrifice except through Christ and his mediation. Nor do we doubt that Christ is our priest or minister in heaven before God. Such faith, truly, brings it to pass that Christ takes up our cause, presents us and our prayer and praise, and also offers himself for us in heaven" (AE 35:99). (TLSB)

13:16 *do not neglect to do good* – Another fruit of forgiveness. (TLSB)

At the same time we do not lose sight of the fact that our faith, expressed in the sacrifice of the lips, will also express itself in the fruit of the hands: But do not forget beneficence and charity; for those are the sacrifices which are well-pleasing to God. A heart that is enjoying the certainty of salvation through the redemption of Christ cannot but feel some of the deep and wonderful love which the Savior showed all men in His vicarious suffering and death. All acts of beneficence, therefore, all forms of doing good, of communicating to the brethren and to all men in need, are the sphere of the Christian's activity. And such good works, growing out of a heart filled with faith, imperfect as they are in themselves, nevertheless are looked upon by the heavenly Father with all good pleasure, since the merits of Christ cover up all their shortcomings. Thus we Christians are living under the good pleasure of God. (Kretzmann)

sacrifices are pleasing to God. "Our spiritual offerings are acceptable to God through faith for Christ's sake" (FC SD VI 22). (TLSB)

13:17 *your leaders.* Their present leaders, as distinct from their first ones, now dead, mentioned in v. 7. (CSB)

Same word as in v 7, but here speaks of leaders currently serving. (TLSB)

submit to them. Dictatorial leadership is not condoned by this command (see 3Jn 9–10), but respect for authority, orderliness and discipline in the church are taught throughout the NT. (CSB)

This passage requires obedience to the Gospel. It does not establish a dominion for the bishops apart from the Gospel" (Ap XXVIII 20). See SC, Table of Duties, pp xlii–xliv.(TLSB)

GOSPEL – Luke 14:1-14

Healing of a Man on the Sabbath

One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. 2 And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. 3 And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" 4 But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. 5 And he said to them, "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.

Lk 14:1 introduces the setting for the narrative in 14:2–24. It is a Sabbath meal at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees. As is his custom (4:16), Jesus will teach at the synagogue on the Sabbath (6:6; [7:36]; 13:10; 14:1). Jesus foreshadows his teaching on the road to Emmaus on Sunday, the eschatological day of rest. Here after sundown on Friday, he is invited by a local dignitary to “eat bread” at the festive Sabbath evening Seder. (CC p. 570)

While there Jesus performs a miracle and directs teaching to the host and invited guests. The literary unit is tied together by “eat bread” (14:1) and “taste my banquet” (14:24) and by the references to the poor and infirm (14:2, 13, 21). Jerusalem’s unwilling children (13:31–35), who were eating and drinking in Jesus’ presence, will be excluded at the end, when the Great Reversal comes (13:26–30). To “eat bread” is one thing; to “eat bread in the kingdom of God” (14:15) is something more. It is to “taste my banquet” (14:24) at which the poor and infirm are welcome guests. (CC p. 570)

D. Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet*, 157, notes “that far more is at stake than friendly words of correction about rewards.” He concludes, “The Pharisees’ own meal practice and especially their own *eating and drinking* with Jesus are not allowing them to recognize the Lord of the Banquet in their midst (cf. vv. 21–23). They are [so] puffed up with self-esteem in interpreting and guarding the Law that they are numb to the invitation by the Lord of the household (v. 21) at their own table” (p. 158). To taste Jesus’ banquet means to eat bread humbly with the last, the poor. (CC pp. 570-571)

Both the meal (5:27–39; 7:36–50; 11:37–54) and the Sabbath (6:1–11; 13:10–17) have been the occasion for controversy with the Pharisees or religious authorities (in 13:10–17 it is a ruler of the synagogue). The controversy with the Pharisees and their careful observation of Jesus at the table during the Sabbath remind the hearer of their previous concern for his behavior at the first Sabbath miracle (6:7, 11) and the second meal with the Pharisees (11:53–54). The Pharisees’ unwillingness to be gathered into Jesus’ brood is exactly the kind of rejection Jesus just described in 13:34–35. (CC p. 571)

14:1 One Sabbath. Of seven recorded miracles on the Sabbath, Luke includes five (4:31, 38; 6:6; 13:14; 14:1); the other two are Jn 5:10; 9:14. (CSB)

Jewish traditions specified numerous categories of work to avoid on the Sabbath, making the Sabbath a detailed and onerous observance. (TLSB)

In Judaism the Sabbath was a sign of election and granted a foretaste of glory. It was believed that even the wicked in Gehenna enjoyed respite on it. Many held that if Israel could keep two consecutive Sabbaths the Messiah would come. The Sabbath stood at the heart of the Law; hence the Maccabean struggle to keep it, even to the point of refusing to attack enemies on the Sabbath. Rules about journeys, driving or rescuing cattle, drawing water, moving vessels, and the like are developed in different circles, although the Pharisees and scribes tried to adjust the laws to practical situations. More important, however, is the NT proclamation of Jesus as the Lord of the Sabbath, who decides concerning the applying or transcending of the Sabbath. While on the Sabbath is a day to put down the sword and the plow, the Pharisees do not put down the sword but keep careful watch in order to discredit Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

to dine – There are five words or expressions for meals in this passage: “to eat bread” (14:1; φαγεῖν ἄρτον); “wedding feast” (14:8; γάμους); “breakfast” (14:12; ἄριστον); “dinner”/“banquet” (14:12, 16–17, 24; δεῖπνον); and “dinner party” (14:13; δοχίον). (CC p. 568)

at the house of a ruler of the Pharisee – ὢν ἀρχόντων [τῶν] Φαρισαίων—See the excursus “The Opponents of Jesus in Luke.” As a leader among the Pharisees, this man may have represented them on the Sanhedrin and could have been instrumental in calling for Jesus’ death after Jesus arrived in Jerusalem. (Cf. also Lk 23:13, 35; 24:20; Acts 3:17; 4:5, 8, 26; 13:27; 14:5) (CC p. 568)

A leading rabbi among them, renowned for meticulous devotion to the Law. (TLSB)

watching carefully – ἦσαν παρατηρούμενοι—This durative imperfect with a present participle refers to the continual watching of those at the feast. This has been the pattern of the Pharisees since their first confrontation with Jesus in Luke 5. The word παρατηρέω is used of the Pharisees’ close observation of Jesus during his Galilean ministry at the first Sabbath controversy (6:7), here during his journey to Jerusalem, and during his Jerusalem ministry (20:20), where the observers are not described as Pharisees but hypocrites sent by the chief priests and scribes (who are also unnamed Pharisees). (CC p. 568)

The Pharisees’ growing conflict with Jesus (ch 13) made them hope that He would break their Sabbath rules as in 6:7. (TLSB)

14:2 dropsy. An accumulation of fluid that would indicate illness affecting other parts of the body. The Greek for this word is a medical term found only here in the NT. (CSB)

Swelling caused by water pockets collecting in body tissue. Some believed the cause was immorality. (TLSB)

ὕδρωπικός—This condition of swelling, called edema today, is caused by water retention in the body. It was considered grotesque because of the disfigurement it caused. One who had dropsy was considered unclean according to Lev 13:2. (CC p. 568)

Luke’s schema shows the movement in the miracle from sickness to healing (14:2—A; 14:4b—A’), from Jesus’ question about what is permitted on the Sabbath to his question that offers an interpretation of what is permitted on the Sabbath (14:3—B; 14:5—B’), from silence (ἡσύχασαν) to an inability (note the play on words with ἰσχύσαν) to answer Jesus (14:4a—C; 14:6—C’). The previous controversies concerning Jesus’ Sabbath teaching are pertinent to this Sabbath healing. At the three Sabbath miracles, there has been a progression from anger (6:11) to humiliation (13:17) and now to silence (14:4; οἱ δὲ ἡσύχασαν). The lawyers and Pharisees’ complete inability to answer Jesus’ questions (14:6) indicates that Jesus’ overturning of their Sabbath requirements is irrefutable. (CC p. 571)

The heartless and impenitent attitude of the Pharisees is brought out in verses 2-6. They are willing to use the suffering of the man with dropsy and Jesus’ mercy toward him as tools for their own purposes. (Concordia Pulpit Resources)

14:3 lawyers. By questioning them before the miracle, Jesus made it difficult for them to protest afterward. (Note from 5:17 – “Scribes,” who studied, interpreted and taught the law (both written and oral). The majority of these teachers belonged to the party of the Pharisees.) (CSB)

τοὺς νομικοὺς καὶ Φαρισαίους—Lawyers are part of the Pharisaic group. See the excursus “The Opponents of Jesus in Luke.” (CC p. 568)

is it lawful – Also used in 6:2, 4, where the issue was eating grain from the field on the Sabbath. Here there is more at stake, namely, healing a man who was suffering. (CC p. 568)

14:4 sent him away – Dismissal with blessing (e.g., 7:50; 8:48). (TLSB)

14:5 *he said to them* – πρὸς αὐτούς—The emphatic position of the prepositional phrase accents the fact that Jesus is speaking directly to those who were watching him closely. (CC p. 568)

having a son. The reading “donkey” matches well with the “ox that falls into a well.” But in Dt 5:14 the law is specified for both humans and animals; one category opens with “son” and another with “ox.” Jesus’ action was “unlawful” only according to rabbinic interpretations, not according to the Mosaic law itself. (CSB)

υἱὸς ἢ βοῶς—Some manuscripts replace υἱὸς with ὄνος or πρόβατον, since “son” and “ox” do not seem to go together as well as “donkey” or “sheep” and “ox.” Nestle Aland has the more difficult reading. For a detailed analysis, see I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 579–80, who suggests the meaning “a child or even just an ox.” (CC p. 568)

Some rabbinic traditions allowed only the person to be rescued; others allowed the animal also to be rescued. (TLSB)

14:6 *could not reply* – The lawyers and Pharisees’ complete inability to answer Jesus’ questions (14:6) indicates that Jesus’ overturning of their Sabbath requirements is irrefutable. (CC p. 571)

Their hypocrisy became obvious. (TLSB)

14:1–6 Jesus exposes His enemies’ inconsistencies and cruelty. Today, we are also tempted to build our religion on human tradition (rather than on God’s Word) and then to condemn others on the basis of our traditions. Jesus holds the well-being of God’s children above all. Still, He reaches out to us in mercy, despite the indifference or rejection of others. • Jesus, look upon us in our need, heal us, and dismiss us with Your blessing. Amen. (TLSB)

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

7 Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, **8** “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, 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. **11** For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

14:7-11 The parable offers advice about manners in social situations and also applies to our pride before God. (TLSB)

14:7 *now he told a parable* – The message is not about party manners. Rather, Jesus’ teaching expands on his unique role as host of the Messianic banquet, who calls people into fellowship at the table of his Messianic Feast. – The point of comparison of this parable is clearly stated in verse 11. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

those invited – τοὺς κεκλημένους—Those who have been invited to the banquet are the focus of this section of Jesus’ teaching. They will be referred to frequently throughout Jesus’ teaching on table etiquette. The same verb (καλέω) is used both for those who were invited (14:7–11) and for the host (14:12–14), linking Jesus’ teaching of both groups. (CC p. 569)

Guests were expected to give priority to those of higher rank, who would take the most prestigious places near the head of the group. (TLSB)

places of honor. Maneuvering for better seats may also have caused trouble at the Last Supper (22:24). (CSB)

ἐξελέγοντο—This a durative and conative imperfect; there is a sense of engagement and deliberation over their choosing of the seats. (CC p. 569)

14:8 *do not sit down in a place honor* – At such a feast, there is great significance in the position of the guests. The marriage banquet is also a frequent image in Scripture for the kingdom of God. (TLSB)

They were being arrogant even in their own company. Again, this speaks to being aware of who invited you and that the invitation is a gift and not a right. – With his simple illustration Jesus speaks not only to the specific situation but also to the attitude behind it. The Pharisees behaved in an arrogant manner even among themselves. Luke returns to this point in chapter 18 where the Pharisee thanked God that he was “not like other people,” including other Pharisees. At a wedding a wider spectrum of guest would be expected, and those who thought highly of themselves usually made it known. How often we hear today that “rank has its privileges.”

τὴν πρωτοκλισίαν—“First couch at the meal” accents that this is a place of honor at the table and that this is a festive meal since they reclined at the table. Cf. 20:46. (CC p. 569)

14:9 *give – δός*—This is the first of three imperatives (four if one includes the participle πορευθείς that acts like an imperative—see above at 13:32) in 14:7–11; the other two are in 14:10: ἀνάπεσε (“recline at table”) and προσανάβηθι (“come up higher”). (CC p. 569)

with shame to take the lowest – μετὰ αἰσχύνης—One’s position at the table is very significant in the first-century Jewish culture (B. Malina and J. Neyrey, “Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World”). (CC p. 569)

Publicly acknowledging that one has exalted oneself. (TLSB)

This implies a continued action; the guest suffers humiliation for the whole time of the banquet. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

14:10 *sit in lowest* – The result agrees with verse 11: those who humble themselves are exalted by God not because their humility merits exaltation, but because of God’s grace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

you will be honored – ἔσται σοι δόξα—God is the unnamed giver: “there will be for you honor” from God. (CC p. 569)

Being promoted to a more dignified position. (TLSB)

14:11 *everyone* – This leaves no room for exceptions; final judgment will be universal. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

humbles himself will be exalted. A basic principle repeated often in the Bible (see 11:43; 18:14; 20:46; 2Ch 7:14–15; Pr 3:34; 25:6–7; Mt 18:4; 23:12; Jas 4:10; 1Pe 5:6). (CSB)

The person who boasts before God will be humbled in His judgment, while the one who humbly confesses sin may trust in Christ for forgiveness and so be raised up at the Last Day. Cf 1:51–52. Hus: “[The apostles], like Christ, began to do good by excelling in good works and not by receiving kisses, given as unto God. For they despised mundane honors” (*The Church*, p 145). (TLSB)

Noting these parallels in Jesus’ teaching for both the guests and the host helps clarify the intent of Jesus’ teaching. In each instance, he begins with the improper *eschatological* table etiquette situation, introduced by “when” (14:8, 12; ὅταν) and then counters with the proper table etiquette at the *end-time* banquet, introduced by “but when” (14:10, 13; ἀλλ’ ὅταν). His instructions to the guests are about humility. One should never recline at the first couch at the table lest the host shame the aggressive guest by placing him in the last place. Such humiliation! Rather, recline at the last place so that the host may elevate you. When this occurs, *there will be honor* for you in the presence of the guests. This is a clear warning not to exalt oneself but to choose humility, and thus the logion “every one who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted” (14:11). (CC p. 573)

These words clearly apply to the guests, but how might a catechumen hear them, especially in view of Jesus’ earlier teaching about the slave and his Lord at the table where the Lord performs the humble act of serving his slaves (see comments on 12:35–40)? This saying is part of Luke’s reversal motif, a restatement of “some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last” (13:30; another reason to see a parallel between 13:22–30 and 14:1–24). This is a motif that began with the Magnificat and continues throughout the gospel. But is it to be applied only to catechumens, or is it also *first and foremost* a statement of Christology and a description of the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus? For did Jesus not also say during his farewell discourse at the Last Supper, when a dispute arose among the disciples concerning “who of them seems to be greatest,” that the greatest is not the one who sits at the table, but the one who serves, and that he, Jesus, is with them “as the one who serves” (22:24–27)? The biggest reversal of all is that Jesus himself is the Messiah who suffers and dies. Jesus girded his loins (12:35) for his final Passover with his disciples and then went to his bloody death and vindicating resurrection. Jesus is exalted in the very act of humiliation, which is one of the themes of his last parable, “The stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner.” (CC p. 573)

Lk 20:17, a citation from Ps 118:22, the same psalm that was cited by Jesus in Lk 13:35, another reason for a parallel between 13:22–30 and 14:1–24. With this exposition by Jesus, also the common sense court wisdom of Prov 25:6–7 is being shown to have a Christological and spiritual aspect. Even as the King’s Son humbled himself and was exalted, so those who are “wise” in him are drawn into his exaltation when they remain as nothing in the King’s presence. (CC p. 573)

will be exalted – This is another example of the great reversals that are a part of the Bible in general and the teaching of Jesus in the gospels. In our world of pride and self-promotion, God values humiliation. The passive verbs imply God as the agent; He exalts, He humbles. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

ταπεινωθήσεται ... ὑψωθήσεται—These are two more theological passives: one will be humbled or exalted *by God*. (CC p. 569)

Philippians 2:1-11, If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature ^a God, did not consider equality with God something to be

grasped,⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Pride is really fear that our supposed greatness will not be acknowledged. Jesus' mature love throws out fear. True humility knows no fear. The humble accept what they are: people totally dependent on their Savior. Trust in that great Lord results in every need being provided through His mercy. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

14:7–11 Jesus illustrates how pride leads to humiliation. Let others praise you or promote you rather than praise and promote yourself. No matter what others say or do, your greatest promotion is when the heavenly Father calls you His beloved child, through Christ. • Grant me a humble and steadfast heart, O Lord, to see myself as You see me. Amen. (TLSB)

The Parable of the Great Banquet

12 He 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. 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.” 15 When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” 16 But he said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. 17 And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ 18 But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’ 19 And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.’ 20 And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ 21 So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the

master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ 22 And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ 23 And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’”

14:12 *to man who had invited him* – We understand him to be the man in verse 1 who laid the trap for Jesus. Perhaps the host was feeling smug as Jesus addressed the other guests. Now it is his turn, and Jesus uses exactly parallel grammar to address him. A favor done in expectation of reward or repayment does not express love. Nor is self-serving charity confined to the unregenerate. The key is one's selfless attitude toward others at the table, regardless of whether they are relatives, friends, or strangers. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

do not invite...invite– Jesus' instruction to the host is very similar, but now the focus is on whom to invite. Jesus instructs his host that his hospitality *now* will affect his status at the end-time banquet. Do not invite (imperative!) those who can repay your hospitality (friends, relatives, rich neighbors), but instead, invite (imperative!) those who cannot repay you (the poor, disabled, lame, blind). Jesus has already dealt with the theme of reciprocation in the Sermon on the Plain (6:32–35). To the host of this Sabbath evening Seder, Jesus is suggesting that he invite the outcasts of society whom the Pharisees and lawyers would consider unclean and therefore not party to their table fellowship. This would be

considered a serious break of table etiquette, but Jesus is reversing what would be considered normal Pharisaic table etiquette. Jesus not only reverses this etiquette *now* in his own table fellowship with sinners (see 15:1–2), but he indicates that table fellowship with outcasts brings a state of blessedness *now* because they cannot repay and that one’s reward will be at the end-time banquet (the *not yet*). This provides a perfect transition to the “banquet beatitude” (14:15) and the “banquet parable” (14:16–24). The reward at the resurrection of the righteous results from one’s humility as host at table, just like the invited guests whose humility led to their exaltation. (CC pp. 573-574)

R. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity I*, 183, notes a correspondence between this saying and the Lazarus story: “The promise in 14:14, ‘It will be repaid to you in the resurrection of the just,’ is the positive counterpart to the warning in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, which indicates the punishment awaiting a rich man who fails to feed the poor. Thus teaching to the rich about their responsibilities to the poor is a repeated theme in Jesus’ discussions with scribes and Pharisees.” (CC p. 574)

Emphasis should be on generosity. Jesus is neither criticizing His host nor forbidding people to host their family and friends. (TLSB)

14:13 *invite poor, crippled, lame and the blind* – Lists people likely reduced to begging for food. (TLSB)

Jesus desires an attitude that includes the destitute, but He is not requiring that hosts exclude anyone. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

πτωχούς, ἀναπήρους, χωλούς, τυφλούς—These categories are repeated in 14:21 with the article, and three of them appear in 7:22, where Jesus responds to the question of whether he is “the Coming One” by pointing to his miracles of healing. Men with these characteristics are disqualified from the priesthood according to Lev 21:17–21. The man with dropsy is such a person. (CC p. 569)

14:14 *blessed* – μακάριος ἔση ... ἀνταποδοθήσεται—God is the unnamed agent: you will be blessed by God, and it will be repaid to you by God in the resurrection of the righteous. (CC p. 569)

“Blessed” refers to the condition of fruitful believers. Good works are the result of salvation, not the cause. Good works truly become “second nature” for the believer in that he usually does not even think about doing them. How different is he from the scheming Pharisee! (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

you will be repaid – Christians are to do things without expecting any reward. This is true servanthood which Jesus modeled on more than one occasion. Their payment will come at a time and place determined by God. Only God can repay, and repay He will. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 3)

Unlike the circumstances in v 12, God will repay the giver. Cf Ac 20:35. (TLSB)

resurrection of the righteous.† All will be resurrected (Da 12:2; Jn 5:28–29; Ac 24:15). (CSB)

Those justified by God’s grace, who through faith rise to eternal life. The repayment already promised for Christ’s sake outweighs anything we could hope to receive in this life. (TLSB)

ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τῶν δικαίων— The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the righteous. (Cf. Acts 24:15: “a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.”) The Sadducees, who also are members of the Sanhedrin, do not believe in the resurrection (see Lk 20:27–40; Acts 23:6–9). (CC p. 569)

the just. Those who have been pronounced so by God on the basis of Christ's atonement and who have evidenced their faith by their actions (cf. Mt 25:34–40). (CSB)

Humility is a mark of the messianic age in the teaching of Jesus, who becomes a paradigm of this humility both in his instructions on table fellowship with the outcasts of society in 14:12–14 and in his humble suffering and death upon a cross just prophesied in 13:31–35. This humility illustrates once again that *the table fellowship of Jesus is where he teaches about the kingdom and is itself an expression of the new era of salvation.* The kingdom does not belong to the Pharisees, but to these outcasts and sinners, for wherever Jesus is sitting at table with these humble, repentant, believing sinners, there is the kingdom of God. Those who *now* sit at table with Jesus will be rewarded at the resurrection of the righteous to sit at table at the messianic feast, the very thrust of the next parable in 14:15–24. *In essence, they are both the same table, expressing the eschatological tension of the present and future realities of the kingdom of God. This is the ongoing feast. Those who dine at the Lord's Supper today are participating in this same feast.* (CC p. 574)