**“Generous and Humble”**

Psalm 116:12-29

Proverbs 25:2-10

Hebrews 13:1-17

Luke 14:1-14

 Pentecost 12, August 27/28, 2022

Jesus said, “Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

While stinginess and arrogance are among the most-**ugly** of human characteristics, generosity and humility, Jesus teaches, shows **beauty**.

Stinginess can be displayed at all income levels. It can be displayed in an unfriendliness (being in-hospitable), holding grudges and avoidance (being greedy with one’s presence among others), being clearly absent from where you ought to be present and encouraging. Being delinquent from the gathering of God’s people is a stinginess with the brother and sisterly “mutual encouragement of the saints”. Covid has given excuse for much stinginess which, I believe, continues beyond most excuse for health needs often. I need your ministry / hospitality of me, and we each need that of each other. Do not be stingy with it, please. I beg of you (for **my sake**). Grant me your hospitality. Show me, please, that you **care for me by being with me**.

Often stinginess stems from an arrogant greed from pride. One may stubbornly not see me worthy of risk, I beneath them so even interest my way would hurt their pride to condescend themselves to. How else could I explain negligence in **caring for me** by another if I’m willing to care for them in a way (personally and in person) that their interest is in not ever coming to. I know you all feel the same slight when you’ve bothered to come where you can meet and be with supposed brothers and sisters (made that way by Christ through baptism and commitment), but they skip the opportunities. Delinquency from the living body of God’s Church must be expressed this way … because it is that way … and the topic is “generosity” as well as a “humility” beautiful against its opposite.

And we can’t come or be (as we’d come anywhere) self-promoting, but serving. Arrogance races for the best seats and clamors to be heard rather than to listen. Some people (if they even bother to show up to ask) ask how you’re doing in order to get past that entry to an **appearance** of interest (self-serving). Others ask to, then, **hear** about you and **discover** how they can then **be of use**.

**Text**

Jesus speaks to both **guests** stingy or generous and arrogant or humble and gathering **hosts** either way disposed. In every situation and station of our life (at home, even, or at a work-place or school) we’re either guest or host so this is not, just, a banquet topic, how we project from an attitude we, apparently, have to express is either of ugliness or beauty. Jesus illustrates with a banquet, but imagine in ugly or beautiful ways to your spouse or kids / parents to your siblings, coworkers or classmates and teachers and students / students and teachers.

Jesus was invited to a banquet, likely ushered to His spot since He was the Guest of Honor, but observed where people gravitated … and who was invited and who was left out, and how people acted one to another (this was probably the most graphic place where **human interaction** was commented on by the Lord). His commentary was reflected on both **guest in their choices** and **host in theirs**, humility and generosity … or some **other tendency**. How to act and think is the lesson of today, and that whole gamut ought be cause of soul-searching and how **we** “**interact**”, or “**don’t**” … and **why either is the case**.

Where **we** are flawed in any of these areas (or don’t even **realize that we are**), may we seek God’s mercy, and encouragement for a better way to think and act. I was at a conference this week where (I know) there were people who I’d neglected to say “hello” to that I should have, and where I did, listening and caring about what I heard from each one, reflecting from that in helpful hospitality and humility. As we confessed earlier, my quiet time was spent on such things that I now notice more having lived in this text for the week, as well as what I’m certain I’m oblivious to (but equally guilty of). And we have, both, Example and Guide and Savior of forgiveness in Jesus also in this account …

 **Application**

… because **He / Jesus Himself** is, both, the genuinely **humble Guest** and **generous banquet Host**. To a world that invited Him by need, He came and assumed the cheap seats of the event. He was born in an animal feed trough of a lowly young girl, He spent much of His earthly walk submitting (though God) to parents / Joseph gaining His help in his carpentry shop. He picked fishermen and like laborers to accompany Him and be His brothers in the work. He rode in to Jerusalem to give Himself up to authorities for death on a donkey’s colt (none to fancy). He stretched out His arms to allow nails to assail hands to wood and He prayed for captures and took momentary burial in a tomb borrowed for the moment. He came to “serve and not to be served”, “to give Himself as ransom for the world”, “scorning the shame of the cross” for the life that it would offer us once He got through it …

… and, then, He serves up banquet feasts for all the world that would come week after week after week since His resurrection and ascension, Host them Himself, give attendees Himself for the rest of all eternity, and invite us “poor and crippled and lame and blind”. I don’t see kings in the congregation, nor in my mirror, so I’m grateful for the generosity of God.

I leave you with these words (from Philippians 2):

“If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, and participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy” the apostle Paul says “by being of the same mind as the Christ, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind together with Him. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but **in** **humility** count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interest of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, **He humbled Himself** **by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross**. **Therefore** **God has highly exalted Him** **and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Fathe**r.”

In +Jesus’ name. Amen.