

# Dinner Party Etiquette In God's Kingdom

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[ 0 : 00 ] I've been asked to read this passage, Luke 7, 36 to 50. Don't panic. I know I preached on this very recently, but this is not what Colin is preaching on, correct?

Okay. So, a supporting passage to the text he will preach upon, Luke 7, 36. Now, one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.

When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears.

Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is, that she is a sinner.

Jesus answered him, Simon, I have something to tell you. Tell me, teacher, he said. Two men owed money to a certain moneylender.

[ 1 : 22 ] One owed him 500 denarii and the other 50. Neither of them had the money to pay him back. So he canceled the debts of both.

Now, which of them will love him more? Simon replied, I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled. You have judged correctly, Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

You did not give me a kiss, but this woman from the time I entered has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.

Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven, for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.

[ 2 : 30 ] Then Jesus said to her, Your sins are forgiven. The other guests began to say among themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins?

Jesus said to the woman, Your faith has saved you. Go in peace. Come, brother, set the Savior before our eyes again tonight.

Well, good evening. It's good to be with you all, to be able to be here on Resurrection Sunday, as we remember especially this day that our Lord is not dead, just as Mark prayed, but he is alive, and we rejoice in him.

So we are going to be still in the Gospel according to Luke, but in Luke 14. So you can go ahead and turn over there. I probably gave Pastor John a bit of a scare when he first got my email, and he saw Luke 7 right there.

But he's right, that was more just a passage that's something of a parallel to Luke 14. And this is where we kind of see the parallel, is that in both passages, Jesus is invited to a dinner party, and he has no problem causing a stir.

[ 3 : 45 ] So in both of these accounts, Jesus is invited to a dinner party, and he has no problem causing a stir. Now, when you are invited over to someone's home for dinner, I would think you probably want to come on your best behavior.

You probably want to come being polite, agreeable, very gracious, because whoever invited you over, they were being hospitable, they were being generous, they were opening up their home to you.

And so I don't typically go to somebody's house just ready to have a confrontation, to make life difficult. I'm going over thankful. Well, Jesus, he is ready for a confrontation here in Luke 14.

And we're going to see that as we open with just the first six verses here. This is where the stage is set for us. Luke 14, beginning in verse 1, this is the word of the Lord.

One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?

[ 4 : 57 ] But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. 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?

And they could not reply to these things. So Jesus has actually just had a really similar interaction with the religious leaders one chapter earlier, back in chapter 13.

Basically the same kind of situation. Somebody comes to him who needs healing. It's a Sabbath day. And he heals them. And that causes a stir with the religious leaders.

So Jesus knew when he asked that question here in chapter 14, he knew the answer that they had in their minds to that question. But Jesus is telling them, No, it is good.

It is good to do good on the Sabbath. To heal on the Sabbath. And so Jesus is ready to be brutally honest with his host. Jesus is ready to be brutally honest with the other guests that are at this dinner party.

[ 6 : 02 ] And we have to remember that Jesus wasn't invited over because the host was wanting to be gracious. Because the host was wanting to be hospitable. What do we see that the Pharisees were doing here?

They were watching him carefully. They wanted to trip him up. They wanted to find a way to catch him in his words so they could accuse him.

We see that. Later in the gospel, when Jesus is on trial, this sham trial, what do they do? They accuse him of blasphemy. They accuse him of saying things, of doing things that were unfounded. Not true. Because they couldn't trip him up. They tried their hardest, but they couldn't. And so here we have the stage being set. That Jesus is prepared for this to maybe not be the most enjoyable dinner party.

But he's okay with that. Because truth is far more important. And setting the record straight is far more important. And Jesus is interacting with those who are opposed to God.

[ 7 : 04 ] And he is going to correct the error of their way. He is going to address the sin in their hearts. And so he's going to teach us some important truth tonight as well. He is going to teach us about the kingdom of God.

And he's going to teach us more so about the people in God's kingdom. So this is like dinner party etiquette in the kingdom of God. Three characteristics of what God's people are like in God's kingdom.

And we see that right here in the next five verses. And this is the first characteristic that we see. God's people are filled with humility and not pride.

We'll pick up in verse 7. Now he told them a parable. He told a parable to those who were invited. When he noticed how they chose the places of honor. Saying to them, 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. 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.

[ 8 : 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.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. Now I like baseball.

And I know that sentiment is shared by very few in this room. Because not very many people like baseball anymore. Uncle Stan, you like baseball. Now if you are ever going to do a baseball game, You will notice, Often times, The stadium is not filled.

Sad reality, 162 games, Folks just don't all pack out the stadium. And if you go into those games, You will often also see this happen. People who are seated in row like 88, About the sixth inning or so, Moving down to row 8.

So they are in 88, They move down to row 8. The problem is, They didn't pay the price of row 8 seats. They paid the price of row 88 seats. And there is a difference, Even at a baseball game, There is a difference in the price of those seats.

[ 9 : 19 ] And so invariably, Those people will move down to row 8. But something else often happens. There are these ushers. And they are all around the stadium. And they are watching. They are always watching.

And they see those people move down. And they go down. And they embarrass them. Because they say, Can I see your ticket please? And a person scrounges out the ticket. And they show the ticket.

Yeah, I know. I'm up there. I'm down here. But is it okay that I stay here? No, you can't stay here. Back to row 88. And so they take the walk of shame. Back to row 88. And I am, I mean, For probably wrong reasons at times, Ask my wife.

But I'm a rule follower. So I'm giving that nod. Like, Yeah, you deserve it. Get back there. I saw what you did. Well, something similar Jesus is teaching us here in these verses.

It's embarrassing. But people had special places that they sat at meals back in Jesus' day. And those special places, they represented who was highly respected.

[ 10 : 24 ] Who was worthy of honor. And when you would see in their society that there was social status. That was attached to these places that they would sit. And so Jesus is giving some very practical advice here.

Don't sit where you might be told to move. You don't want to be embarrassed. You don't want that to happen. But, he's saying more than that.

He's also saying this. Because if all that he was doing was giving practical advice here about where to sit, there wouldn't be a whole lot of takeaway for us. Because, by and large, we're not super interested in seating arrangements in 21st century America.

It's not a huge, huge deal. At least when we have people over sit anywhere at the table, it's fine. I'll sit next to my child so you don't have to worry about my child. But by, you just don't want to sit there. You can sit anywhere else.

But in Jesus' day, it mattered. But he's teaching us more than just where to sit. He's working through a bigger issue. And it's the issue of pride. pride. The example of where we sit at a table, that's just a symptom of a bigger problem.

[ 11 : 33 ] Our hearts are drawn towards recognition. Are drawn towards being well thought of. We're drawn towards having others respect us and think highly of us.

And it's all wrapped up in pride. We want to puff ourselves up. And so Jesus cuts that desire down here in verse 11. Those who exalt themselves will be humbled.

Humbled by God. But those who humble themselves will be exalted. Exalted by God. Simple enough to say, certainly harder to live out.

Because for those of us who are believers, our hearts are complicated. God has given us good new desires, but we still have sin that remains in us. And so this pursuing of humility is difficult.

I am fighting these mixed emotions, these mixed desires within me. I can do the right thing, but still with the wrong reasons or at least a mixture of good and bad reasons.

[ 12 : 35 ] Jesus is telling us that those who are humble will be exalted. But I can take that truth and I can twist it to serve my own purposes. Okay, God, I'll be humble so that I can get exalted.

I'm good at still making it all about me. God, I'm going to do this, but I'm doing it really because I have these other motives that I want recognition. I want people to think highly of me so I can look humble, but I'm doing it in the name of being exalted.

I get the praise. I get the recognition. People take note of me. I want to be seen. I want to be celebrated, patted on the back so we can actually manipulate the situation to get that praise while still giving this like appearance of being humble.

It's kind of like the idea of a humble brag. If you're familiar with that term, humble brag. Like try to sound humble, but really we're trying to make it about ourselves. I don't outright brag.

I say something that sounds humble, but it's just really me trying to look good. So it is true that the humble will be exalted, but we have to fight the temptation to be humble simply so that we can get exalted.

[ 13 : 53 ] Because here's the kicker. God sees our hearts. God knows our motives. We can't trick God. Side note, I write a lot of notes for my sermons I typed out that line, you can't trick God.

And I typed it on Google Documents. And Google Docs has like a grammar punctuation catcher. And it underlined can, because I had accidentally typed, you can trick God. And it underlined can, and it recommended I change it to can't. Even Google knows you can't trick God. I was like, oh my goodness, I almost like tried to trick God there and Google was like, no, can't trick God.

Can't trick Him. Those who do things that look humble or say things that sound humble but just really want to elevate themselves, they won't be exalted by God.

Only those who are truly humble will be exalted. And so we work hard to kill our pride. We don't assume that we deserve the place of honor.

[15:02] We don't assume that we deserve to be exalted. Because those who are truly humble know, those who are truly humble understand that they don't deserve any praise.

That they don't deserve the recognition, the honor, the exaltation. Any of that is an incredibly gracious gift that God has given to sinful, weak, fragile creatures.

When we truly know ourselves, when we truly know our sinful state, we will absolutely run to the lowest place because we know who we are apart from Christ.

And then, we will be shocked when God says, friend, move up to the higher place. And we'll say, me? God, do you remember me?

I'm a wretch apart from you. I was lost in my way. I was going my own way apart from you. Me? Move up to the higher place. And then you look at the higher place and you see Christ seated at the higher place.

[16:09] And you think, now he deserves to be there. Christ deserves to be in the heavenly places, seated in the heavenly places, Ephesians says. And yet, Ephesians also tells us that because God has saved us in his grace, he then seats us with him.

So we don't deserve that. But we see that Christ is there and that those who are exalted with Christ are there because he's bought us with his blood and he's made us worthy of that place.

So live humbly now. Remember the truth of the gospel now to keep yourself from getting puffed up, to keep yourself from manipulating the situation and pretending to be humble so you can get something out of it.

Let's remember the gospel. Let's remember who truly deserves exaltation. And let's live humbly before him. So that's the first characteristic of people in the kingdom of God.

They are filled with humility, not pride. Okay, let's look at the second characteristic. Second characteristic, they are selfless and not greedy for gain.

[17:21] Verses 12 to 14. 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.

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

So Jesus is giving us a very clear illustration of what it means to love our neighbor. For most of us, it doesn't come easy. This might make us feel a bit uncomfortable.

It definitely made Jesus' initial hearers uncomfortable. Remember, Jesus has been invited to dinner with these religious leaders.

They would have fit this category of friend, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbors. They could have easily invited their host over to their home in return. The host could have been repaid.

[18:25] They would have probably felt a little uncomfortable when they looked around the table and they said, we don't see the lame, the blind, the crippled, the poor, those who can't repay the host, they're not present.

There was probably this uncomfortable tension in the room. Look at verse 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.

So that man, he was uncomfortable. He didn't like this comparison between these groups of people, between those who can repay and those who can't, so he just lumps everyone together. Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.

This guy doesn't want to think about who he prioritizes in life. He doesn't want to think about the fact that he only hangs out with people who can maybe benefit him. He's uncomfortable with what Jesus is saying. He wants to avoid seeing his own self-centeredness because Jesus is making the point.

We're greedy for gain. Not financial gain, but any kind of personal gain. We do what we do because it benefits us. I get something out of it. These people, they can repay me.

[ 19 : 31 ] They can do me a kindness as well, and I want that. Now, hear me out. There's nothing wrong with inviting friends and family over. It's not sinfully selfish to hang out with people you know and love and very well may invite you to their home in return.

Because interestingly, in a similar way, we can be sinfully selfish even when we hang out with those that society has deemed the lowly and the insignificant. Jesus himself said in Matthew 6, 2, thus when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others.

Truly I say to you, they have received their reward. So whether we invite our friends and relatives and rich neighbors, or we invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, we can be doing both for the wrong reasons.

That's the bigger point that Jesus is driving at. Don't be greedy for gain. Don't do things to build yourself up. Don't do things to make yourself look good. To get something out of it.

That's the opposite of what it means to be a part of God's kingdom. Those who are in God's kingdom serve. When we serve others, we're sacrificing of ourselves.

[ 20 : 49 ] When we serve others, we're giving our time, we're giving our abilities, we're giving our resources for the benefit of another. So if we make decisions based on how much something or someone benefits us, we don't really get what it means to be a Christian.

We don't get who Jesus was. Because what did Jesus do? He came to seek and to save the lost. He came to serve and not to be served.

He wasn't concerned with his own gain as he set his face to go to Jerusalem. He wasn't concerned with his own gain when he journeyed there to go to the cross. He was concerned with fulfilling his father's will.

He was concerned with redeeming those he had set his love upon. He was thinking about us and reconciling us to the father. So he was giving of himself for the sake of others.

So this is a call for us in the kingdom of God to be selfless and not greedy for gain. That's the second characteristic of those in the kingdom of God. Let's look at the third and the final characteristic.

[ 21 : 56 ] They have their priorities straight and they aren't too busy for God. Verses 15 through 24. When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.

Jesus replied, A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet, he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, Come, for everything is now ready.

But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, I have just bought a field and I must go and see it. Please excuse me. Another said, I have just bought five yoke of oxen and I'm on my way to try them out.

Please excuse me. Still another said, I just got married so I can't come. The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, Go out quickly into the street and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.

Sir, the servant said, what you ordered has been done but there is still room. Then the master told his servant, Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in so that my house will be full.

[ 23 : 14 ] I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet. So Jesus tells this parable about this man who had given this great banquet and he invited a bunch of people to attend it.

Now the way that Jesus tells the parable, it seems that he sent out invitations ahead of time. So all those invited, they knew there was this banquet that they had been invited to.

And when the servant comes along and says, Come, for everything is now ready, it's not like the people were caught off guard. They had been told ahead of time about this banquet and that they didn't really care to attend.

It wasn't high on their list of priorities. It didn't matter all that much to them. They each had their excuse to not go. They had more important things to attend to.

They cared about checking out their new field or trying out their new oxen or spending time with their spouse. Now I'll be honest, the marriage excuse seems pretty valid but it doesn't seem valid. [ 24 : 14 ] That's hard to grasp but that just goes to show how important this banquet was. Like even being married, like that, what? I'm not going to say that. I'm not going to give that to anybody.

My wife, absolutely, that's a valid excuse but even here, nope, not valid. This banquet is that important, even just getting married, not valid enough. Jesus is making it clear, no good reason to miss this banquet.

Everyone invited absolutely should come. The master expected them to be there and that's what makes the master angry. Everyone had excuses and some of them were just pretty lousy and so the master has the servant go and get those who would have been considered unworthy, those who would never have been invited to such an important event.

They were welcomed in, the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame. Sound familiar? Have we heard Jesus talk about them already? They were all invited and none of them had excuses, no excuses. They weren't going to miss this banquet for anything. They had their priorities straight and then after they came there was still room so the master invited more people until his house was full.

[ 25 : 27 ] Now we aren't told the occasion for the banquet but clearly the master wanted to share in it with others so he wanted to make sure that his house was full with people who actually wanted to be there, with people who weren't too busy for him.

They had their priorities straight. Now Jesus doesn't come out and say it but the message is clear. Remember the words of the man in verse 15, blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Jesus is affirming this man's words but with one very significant caveat. Not everyone that you would expect to be in the kingdom will actually be in the kingdom.

From the parable you would have expected the original guests to attend but they had their priorities backwards so they weren't there at the banquet. And from the parable you wouldn't have expected the social outcasts, those deemed unworthy to have been in attendance and yet they were the very ones who were at the banquet.

Those in the kingdom absolutely are blessed but Jesus is making it clear not everyone you'd expect to see in the kingdom is there. And that brings us to the thrust of this entire passage.

[ 26 : 46 ] All 24 verses are building to this. These parables are not just teaching us how to relate to each other. They're not just teaching us how to be a good host or how to be a good guest.

This isn't just some teaching on dinner party etiquette, on banquet behavior, where to sit, where not to sit, who to invite, who not to invite, what to do when all your friends don't come.

This isn't just about that. As much as we can draw some good principles from it, sure, if we came away from this passage just with this conviction to do a better job at hosting a dinner, that would be incomplete because these parables aren't just about how to relate to each other.

They're about how we relate to God because you see, Jesus, he is the master of the house. Jesus is the one who threw the great banquet.

Now, you read through the parables, all 24 verses, you don't hear him say, I am the master. So where are we seeing this? Look again at verse 24. Jesus concludes with these words, For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.

[ 27 : 58 ] Now, in this story, that's the master of the house saying those words. So it's the master speaking to his servant, one servant, saying, For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.

Now, starting back in verse 23, he says, Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.

So those words spoken by the master and he spoke them to his single servant standing before him. But here's the thing, and your Bibles might even footnote it because it's helpful.

In English, we can't tell the difference, but in the original context, in the original language, that word you in verse 24, For I tell you, is plural.

So in English, we don't really differentiate between singular you, plural you. Unless you're from Texas, then you say y'all. I have a sister-in-law from Texas. I kind of say that sometimes. So, y'all.

[ 29 : 01 ] Jesus is basically saying, y'all, at the end of verse 24, or at the beginning of verse 24. Now what is he doing there? He's inserted himself into the parable.

And he's inserted all of his listeners around the table that he's talking to into the parable. And he's saying, For I tell you, none of those men who were invited will be at my banquet.

You religious leaders, you were invited to this banquet and you rejected the invitation. You guys sitting at this table with me, you're the guests and you've rejected the invitation.

I've come, I've brought the kingdom of God, and yet instead of warmly receiving your king, you're watching him carefully. You're trying to catch him in his words.

You've set traps for him. You've rejected him. You've conspired against him. You're ready to kill the master of the house. You're ready to kill the man who threw the banquet.

[ 30 : 06 ] So in this immediate context, the parable is about the Jewish leaders. It's about the Jewish people in general. Jesus has come, and as John chapter 1 says, his people rejected him.

And in doing so, now Jesus' attention in the book of Acts we see is directed toward the Gentiles.

They're given a more explicit invitation to the kingdom. They're being invited in.

Later in Luke, Jesus tells another parable about a vineyard with wicked tenants. And at the end of that parable, the owner of the vineyard kicks the wicked tenants out and gives the vineyard to others.

Same idea. The Jewish people were given the vineyard. They were not good stewards of the vineyard. The owner's going to kick them out, and it's going to be now the Gentiles that he's going to shift his attention to in Acts.

The kingdom is offered to them in very overt ways. And so when Jesus first arrived on the scene, his focus and his influence was upon the people of Israel. And Jesus is saying, now the door is going to be kicked wide open for the Gentiles.

[ 31 : 09 ] Read the book of Acts. We see it there. So Jesus is the host, the initial guests who make all the excuses are the Jews, and the later guests who don't make any excuses are the Gentiles, the non-Jews.

There. We've identified all the people in the story. We see how the part they play. We can be done. No, we can't. Because if we just walked away thinking, okay, so the Jews got invited in and they rejected it and the Gentiles, they get there.

We're missing it. Because what the point is is that the Gentiles were undeserving. The Gentiles in Jesus' day, the Jews would have been shocked. They would have been shocked that the Gentiles are getting welcomed in.

They don't deserve to come in. What do you mean? How could you be extending the kingdom to them like this? And so as we read these parables, I don't think about my Gentileness very often. I don't do a good job this week. I'm not going to probably think about the fact that I'm a Gentile, but I should remember that I'm an undeserving guest. We are undeserving guests at God's great banquet.

[ 32 : 16 ] not because we're Gentiles, but because at one time we were enemies of God. We were in opposition to God. How incredible that those who are in Christ have been invited to the table once we who were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

We did nothing to earn God's favor. We did nothing to warrant his grace. He chose us because it pleased him to do that. He didn't choose us because of anything in us. He didn't choose us because of anything that we had done or would do.

He chose us in his good pleasure, ugly and blemished as we were, undeserving as we were, outsiders, welcomed in as honored guests.

And we were welcomed in because of Christ, because of his death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave, defeating sin and death. Made us sinners into saints by grace through faith.

And so, if you're sitting here tonight and you are on the outside, you are far from God, this is a moment where God is working in your heart.

[ 33 : 29 ] Turn from your sin, put your trust in Christ. He warmly receives all who come to him. And if God is working in your heart, repent of your sin and turn to him.

There's a great banquet to be had in God's kingdom. And for us who are already in Christ, we have every reason to rejoice today. Not just because it's Easter.

But we have every reason to rejoice today and to also long for a future day. If Jesus Christ has made you his own, if by grace through faith, you've been saved from your sins, you are already in God's kingdom.

You already have a seat at this banquet. You're an invited guest, as crazy as that may be. And you have every reason to rejoice today. And yet, we have every reason to also long for a future day because the kingdom has not arrived in all of its fullness.

Remember, Jesus said back in verse 11, those who exalt themselves will be humbled, but those who humble themselves will be exalted. there's a future day coming when God's people will be vindicated, when we will be rewarded for faithfulness.

[ 34 : 39 ] Remember also when Jesus said in verses 13 and 14, to invite to dinner those who can't repay you, to love those who can't love you back, to serve those who can't serve you in return, he said there's a great reward at the resurrection of the just.

So there absolutely is a future reality that we still await in the kingdom of God. We eagerly await the day when we're going to enjoy God's presence forever, when we're going to see him face to face, and all of the riches of our eternal inheritance will be there.

And the greatest inheritance of all will be God himself. Let's pray together. Father God, we are humbled, we are astounded that you would make us your own, that you would take our dead hearts, that you would bring them back to life, and that you would give us eyes to see, that you would grant us repentance and faith to believe, and that you would welcome us as invited guests into your great banquet, that you would welcome us as children adopted into your family.

Lord, you didn't just save us from our sins and then send us on our merry way and say, well, I hope things go well for you. You saved us from our sins and then you welcomed us in.

You brought us near to you. You've made us your own. We belong to you. Father, help us to live as people of your kingdom filled with humility.

[ 36 : 13 ] Help us to live as people who are selfless. Help us to live as people who have our priorities straight and are not too busy for you, Lord. There's nothing that gives us an excuse from serving you.

So, Father, I pray that you would help us as we go into this week that we would be nourished by your word, that we would be reminded of the truth of your word, and that we would see the glory of Christ once again as the one who is seated in the heavenly places, and that we would marvel that we are seated there with him.

Thank you for your abundant grace towards us. We pray all of these things in Christ's name. Amen.