



“For who would begin construction of a building without first getting estimates and then checking to see if there is enough money to pay the bills? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of funds. And then everyone would laugh at you!” When Epworthies hear these words in the Gospel reading this Sunday, they might think of what was called the Boise Tower, which would have been Idaho’s tallest building. This photo, by Shawn Raecke of The Idaho Statesman, shows the hole where the Boise Tower began, and then stopped, behind the Capital City Public Market. Photo credit: www.idahostatesman.com. Jesus’ point: Although crowds were following him at that time, real discipleship requires counting the cost, carrying a cross, and giving all for him.

Kingdom Behavior Requires That We Renounce Any Claim of Merit for Ourselves, and Not Do Good for Personal Advantage

When Jesus was invited to a Sabbath brunch, “Jesus observes the jostling among (the guests) for the best seats,” Deacon Donald Hughes said in his sermon Sunday. “While they were working things out,” he continued, “Jesus takes his cue for another teaching moment and tells a parable

“The advice goes something like this: to save yourself embarrassment, do not take the best seats at a wedding feast. You may be asked to move.” Although this was a Sabbath brunch and not a wedding feast, Jesus’ point “was not overlooked. ‘As any lawyer or Pharisee would recognize, the wedding feast is a symbol for the kingdom of God and heavenly bliss.’

“Jesus is not offering good advice,” Deacon Hughes said. “Rather, Jesus is talking about the way people contend for position in God’s eyes as exhibited by the behavior of these dinner guests: ‘eagerly pushing themselves forward, demonstrating how well they keep the law and maintain their own purity.’ They misunderstand if they expect membership in the Kingdom of God as a reward for keeping the Torah. The only way they can gain entrance to the messianic feast is to renounce any claim of merit of one’s own. The parable concludes, ‘For the proud will be humbled, but the humble will be honored.’

“Jesus now turns to the host and gives him some simple, plain advice: ‘When you put on a luncheon or a dinner, don’t invite your friends, brothers, relatives and rich neighbors Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.’ With this Jesus overturns the standard pattern of reciprocity. It would be good for this host to entertain those who have no capacity to return the favor This kind of hospitality expresses God’s hospitality and generosity.”

“Jesus is not condemning having a party for one’s family or friends. Jesus is condemning the attitude which does good for personal advantage.”

The Epistle lesson, Deacon Hughes said, teaches us that “the practical life of the Christian community must be ordered in such a way that generosity and love will be its central features,” with caring for one another “in practical (p.2→)

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Sundays
10:00 a.m.: Word & Table service
11:30 a.m.: Refreshments, conversation
11:45 a.m.: Post-service discussion
6:00 p.m.: (First Sundays only) Choral Evensong

Thursdays: 6:30 p.m.: Evening Prayers. 7:00 p.m.: Singing & discussing hymns.

Readings, 9/9: Deut. 30:15-20; Ps. 1; Philemon 1-20; Luke 14:25-33. **9/16:** Ex. 32:1, 7-14; Ps. 51:1-11; 1 Tim. 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10.

Prayer Emphases: France; Evangelical Free Church; St. John the Forerunner Orthodox Church, Cedar Park, TX, and Fr. Aiden Wilcoxson, Rector; military chaplains of our armed services; parishioners on Mountain View Drive.

For the poor (supplemented list): Ground beef, chicken, bacon, *fresh produce, canned fruits and vegetables, milk, butter, cheese, cooking oil, pancake mix, syrup, dry cereal, chili powder, garlic powder, diapers, baby wipes, toilet paper, hand and bath soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream, men’s and women’s new underwear, gift cards or money to buy ice for dining facilities, cleaning supplies and bleach. *(particular need at this time)

(**Sermon, cont’d.**) ways. Mutual affection is vital. Hospitality must be extended everywhere possible,” in the way that such hospitality “marked the early Christian community.” The humility which today’s Gospel reading teaches is rooted in “right knowledge,” according to J. C. Ryle, a 19th-century Anglican priest: “The person who really knows himself and his own heart . . . and the price at which he was redeemed . . . will never be a proud person.”