

Limestone Bible Camp

Bible Class Lessons

Series 2

Luke 14:1 - 24

“Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the Rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath That they watched him closely . . .”

LESSON 1: RELIGION THAT'S ONLY SKIN DEEP

(At the conclusion of this lesson, students should understand that Christianity and pleasing God go far beyond simple or even legalistic keeping of rules. It involves our attitude toward God and our fellow man, as well.)

Introduction:

Would you rather go to a party or a speech on gladiola gardening? What kind of party do you prefer, formal coat and tie, or casual? Would you spend your time at a party engaged in small talk, in deep philosophical conversation, trying to meet girls/boys, or trying to be the life of the party? Can you imagine Jesus at your party?

Most of the lessons that we will study this week are based on conversations that Jesus had at a party he attended. It was, in fact, a party of elites. It was hosted by a ruler of the most important group of Jews, the Pharisees. It would be similar to attending a party given by an influential senator (at least a state senator.)

- I. What did Jesus find at the Party?
 - A. Probably – religious leaders, influential people, social climbers and such.
 - B. An attitude of disgust.
 1. These people feared Jesus. (Why? They were afraid that his teaching would result in a loss of prestige for them. (They were right.)
 2. They were always trying to catch him on some technicality
 - a. “Is it lawful to pay taxes?” (Matt. 22:17)
 - b. “What do you say about this woman” (John 8:3)
 - c. How did Jesus answer these two? (There were others.)
 - (1) for “a” Render to Caesar . . . (Matt 22:21)
 - (2) for “b” He that is without sin . . . (John 8:7)
 3. Now they hoped to catch him “working” on the Sabbath.
 - a. The Pharisees had over 30 rules they had devised to define “allowable Sabbath work.” (e.g. 3000 ft = Sabbath day journey)
 - b. Now read Luke 14:1 – 6
 - (1) How do we know that Jesus knew they were “watching him closely?” (He answered them before they even posed a question.)
 - (2) What did Jesus feel was more important.
 - (a) A person in need (Yes. He healed him.)
 - (b) Religious tradition.
 - (3) What was the response of the Pharisees?
 - C. The real problem that Jesus found was a Pharasaical religion that was only skin deep.

- II. Skin – deep religion (from the outside, out)
 - A. It is the things that you can see me do, or not do.
 - B. Pharisees were condemned by Jesus for practicing it. (Matt. 6:2, 5,16 (assuming the “hypocrites” to be Pharisees)
 - 1. They did the **acts** of religion that would impress the observer.
 - 2. Jesus called them, “hypocrites.”
 - 3. What we would see if we watched them would look correct.
 - C. Skin-deep religion is a breeding ground for hypocrisy.
 - 1. When religion goes no deeper than the skin, the heart doesn’t get involved.
 - 2. No matter how wicked your heart, you feel justified to condemn someone else who misses a fine point of some religious rule.
 - a. (Matt. 15:1-2) The hypocritical scribes and Pharisees condemned Jesus’ disciples for eating with unwashed hands.
 - b. (Matt. 23:27-28) Jesus pronounced a “woe” upon these people for having “skin-deep” religion. They were hypocrites.
 - D. Skin-deep religion consists only of dos and don’ts. The concern is for RULES, not for PEOPLE.

- III. Religion of the heart (from the outside, in)
 - A. Concern is for the person involved, not for the rules only.
 - 1. The commandments that God has given us are to be obeyed. (Matt. 7:13-14, 21-23.)
 - 2. But those who have no concern for others are in an unsaved condition as well. (Matt. 25:31-46)
 - B. Jesus expects our religion to be a matter of the heart.
 - 1. As shown by his example.
 - a. (Luke 14:1-6) Jesus was not concerned with trying to keep the “religious rules” of the self appointed religious leaders when the needs of another person were concerned.
 - b. (John 8:10-11) Interestingly enough, Jesus did not even condemn the woman taken in the act of adultery, but encouraged her and let her go.
 - 2. As shown by his teaching.
 - a. (Matt. 15:3-20 [esp. vs 17-20]) clearly it is the processes in the heart of a man that Jesus is concerned about, not those actions that we see.
 - b. (Mark 12:42-44) The action that was visible was quite trivial, but Jesus saw a heart that was totally committed.
 - c. (Mark 12:28-34) Jesus said the two greatest commandments, (the questioner was implying the “Ten Comm.” Which are mostly do’s and don’ts) involved the heart of man. LOVE. When the scribe agreed that love in the heart was more than “all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices,” is recorded as a wise answer and he was commended by Jesus.

Conclusion:

God has set forth a pattern of worship and behavior for his followers. We have no right to change it and we certainly are not important enough to disregard it. But if our religion goes no deeper than the actions we perform, our religion will be disgusting to Jesus. We must follow the example of Jesus, and the teaching of Jesus, to make love for God and fellowman the primary motivator of everything that we do. If we are motivated by love, keeping the commandments will be a necessary sequel because all God's commandments do anyway is demonstrate how to act out of love (Rom. 13:8-10.)

LESSON 2: A PRIDE OF LIONS

(At the conclusion of this lesson, students should understand that a Christian whose religion is embedded in the heart will not allow pride to have a place in his life. Additionally, students should understand what pride is, how it operates, and how it leads to one's downfall.)

Introduction:

All of us have seen the nature shows on PBS or National Geographic specials or the like. What scenes come to mind as you remember as remember some of these shows? Do you recall any that studied the daily life of a group of lions? A pride of lions is a group in which each individual knows his/her proper place and willingly performs their function. The stronger ones care for the weaker. To be sure, there is a 'ruler' and there are subordinates. Each knows his station and does not attempt (usually) to place themselves in a position which does not belong to them.

How different from this was the situation Jesus found at the party he attended. After watching people place themselves in the highest positions available, he told a parable explaining to the people how they were acting improperly. The explanation to the parable is given in Luke 14:7-11. (We will also discuss Luke 14:12-14 in this lesson.) A pride of lions was designed by God. The pride of man is an abomination to God.

- I. What is pride?
 - A. There are several definitions in the dictionary.
 1. Not all definitions indicate something that is bad.
 - a. Pride in a job well done.
 - b. (Reasonable) Concern about one' person. (you try to present an acceptable image to others – some people just don't care what they look (or smell) like.)
 2. The "pride of man" that is of concern here is more akin to arrogance, conceit, self-satisfaction and attitudes that such words bring to mind. If, at this point, you are thinking of someone else, perhaps a classmate you can't stand because they are full of such attitudes, then you should realize that you are also a victim of these same problems. Pride is the very thing that caused you to point your finger at someone else. Pride is, quite possibly, the most over-riding problem facing mankind.
 - B. Pride requires one to lie to themselves.
 1. Because of pride, we are willing to believe lies about ourselves.
 - a. Pride sets us on a pedestal above all others. Since before God, we are all equal, this pedestal must be built on false premises.
 - b. We refuse to see ourselves as we are. Yet this is a necessary ingredient of Christianity (Matt. 7:3-5)
 - 1) Jesus told people their true situation.
 - (a) Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 23)
 - (b) Peter (Matt. 26:34)

- (c) Samaritan woman (Jo. 4:18, 22, 29)
 - 2) So did his followers.
 - (a) Peter (Acts 2:36)
 - (b) Stephen (Acts 7:51-53)
 - 3) Paul admonishes us to examine ourselves to determine our true situation. (I Cor. 11:27-29)
 - 2. We also are willing to believe lies about others. Our pedestal of pride demands that we be above all others. Against every principle of Christianity we therefore readily accept every bad report of others, and help spread them. We maintain our pedestal by falsely elevating ourselves while at the same time trying to undercut all others whom we perceive as a threat to our false opinion of ourselves.
 - a. By believing bad reports of others we are able to feel that they are inferior. This makes us better. It also violates Biblical teaching.
 - 1) (I Cor. 13:5-7) Love does not seek its own, thinks no evil, rejoices not in iniquity.
 - 2) (Rom. 12:10, 16) Treat others kindly, equally.
 - 3) (Matt. 7:3) Take care of your own problems, don't dwell on problems of others.
 - 4) (Matt. 18:15) Problems should be worked out, not promote conceit.
 - 5) (Matt 7:12) Golden Rule.
 - b. A special danger is that we tend to pick out the people who accomplish least, compare ourselves with them and then determine that we are pretty good because we are better than them. Not wise (II Cor. 10:12)
 - C. Pride leads to one's downfall. (Prov. 16:18) Eventually the pedestal falls apart because it was built on a false foundation.
 - 1. Moses (Num. 20:10-12) Pride hurt even this man of God.
 - 2. Saul (I Sam. 15:23)
 - 3. Herod (Acts 12:23)
 - 4. Numerous historical characters.
 - D. Pride is an abomination to God (Prov. 6:16-19) Of the seven abominations to the Lord, pride is first on the list.
- II. Humility is the opposite of pride. Humility is what pride is not.
- A. Humility is a requirement (Micah6:8), pride an abomination.
 - B. Humility allows us to see ourselves as we really are. (Rom5:6-8, Rom. 7:24, Rev. 3:17)
 - C. Humility has proper regard for fellow men.
 - 1. Recognize and follow those who are more spiritual (I Cor. 11:1)
 - 2. Meekly assist those who are weaker. (Gal. 6:1)
 - D. Humility will allow us to rise to a higher level.
 - 1. The example Jesus gives in Luke 14:7-14 is easily recognizable as a real life situation. How many such examples could you give in which

someone who has acted like a real ‘hot-shot’ has been brought low and all who observed it were happy to see it?

2. The first step in solving a problem is admitting/recognizing the problem.
 - a. It is humility, not pride, which allows us to see our shortcomings.
 - b. Only through humility will we be able to deal with our problem.
 - c. Only when the problem/shortcoming is dealt with and eliminated can we rise to a higher level.
3. Humble people often feel overlooked because they do not ‘toot’ their own horns.
 - a. People appreciate quiet quality as much as they dislike horns blaring in their ears.
 - b. Some may be impressed by blaring horns, but those who know what’s going on know who is doing something worthwhile and who is a bag of wind.
 - c. Consider the following verses. (Prov. 8:13, Prov. 25:26-27, Prov. 27:2, Prov. 29:23)

III. The message of Luke 14:7-14.

- A. Control pride, it leads to a downfall.
- B. Be humble, cream rises to the top.
- C. Do that which is right, not that which will provide the best payback.

Conclusion:

If our religion finds its way to our hearts, it will root out the pride that would reside there. Our concern for God and our fellow man will cause us to give ourselves and honest self-examination and deal with our faults. It will cause us to give our fellow man a kind appraisal and try to help those who are in need. We will lose ourselves in the responsibilities at hand and not have time for petty whining and self-seeking. We will do what we do out of pure motives and not because of what it can do for us. And we will be happier and more pleasing to God at the same time.

LESSON 3: A WORLD FULL OF MARTHAS

(At the conclusion of this lesson students should understand that God does not intend to take second place in our lives. Those who don't allow God to have the place of pre-eminence in their lives are those who will not "eat bread in the kingdom." God's invitation is open to all and he wishes for all to respond, but only those who place God first will taste of the supper. We must be serious about our commitment to God and we must not let the cares of this world get in our way.)

Introduction:

In Luke 10:38-42 we find Jesus at another dinner. Martha was busy with the concerns of the dinner. Mary was busy listening to the words of Christ. Jesus said Martha was worried about many things, but Mary was worried about the one thing that was necessary, that one good thing which could not be taken away from her.

At the feast in Luke 14, Jesus' wisdom was clear from his statements. Probably in an attempt to do a little shoe polishing with this 'rising star' one of the attendees made the statement in verse 15. Jesus took advantage of the occasion to explain who it would be that ate bread in the kingdom of God. Was it who the man thought it would be?

- I. The parable at face value. (Luke 14:15-24)
(Instead of just stating all these, ask the students what they think the various 'pieces of the puzzle' represent and encourage discussion.)
 - A. The feast represents Heaven.
 - B. The master is God.
 - C. The invitation to the feast is the offer of salvation.
 - D. The original people invited are the Jews.
 - E. The servant is any messenger sent by God to call people to obedience (you?)
 - F. The excuses represent the misplaced priorities that people have in their lives.
 - G. Those who were compelled to come represent those who are despised by Jews.
 - H. Jesus was telling those assembled that those who entered Heaven would very likely not be those that seemed to have the inside track (as judged by the world.)

- II. There is a message here for us. *(Before going further with the outline, ask the students what they think that message is, and encourage discussion.)*
 - A. The excuses offered contained serious, real problems.
 1. An individual's business/job is to be taken seriously. (Luke 14:18)
 - a. We have a responsibility to care for ourselves (II Thess. 3:10)
 - b. We have a responsibility to care for our families. (I Tim. 5:8)
 - c. We must not let our job interfere with our relationship to God.
 - (1) How would it be possible to get our employer to schedule work hours so that we could attend worship services?
 - (2) Occasional scheduling conflicts are probably unavoidable and should not be a cause for alarm.

- (3) Some chronic scheduling conflicts are also unavoidable, such as a second-shift worker missing Wednesday night.
 - (4) In regard to attendance: God is not so much concerned about the act of attendance as he is about the attitude of the heart. It's not if we go (that's how we judge) it's if we want to go. God knows the Difference.
 - (5) We must not let our job/business become more important than our time for service and study.
 - (6) We must not try to please a group of people (or a single person) who would lead us away from Christ.
2. Finances are crucial but God should be an over-riding concern in all financial decisions. (Luke 14:19)
 - a. A regular, proper contribution should be the first order of business, never to be compromised. (I Cor. 16:2)
 - b. Our money should never be used to support anything which would detract from Christian principles.
 - (1) Those who spread false doctrine (II John 10-11)
 - (2) Immorality (I Thess. 5:22)
 - (a) Clubs
 - (b) Music
 - (c) Movies
 - (d) Magazines
 - (e) TV and etc.
 3. The family is a primary concern of the Christian.
 - a. It should be a major consideration at the time of dating, while you can still make choices.
 - b. You should choose a spouse who will be an aid to your plans for getting to Heaven. (I Cor. 15:33)
 - c. A spouse chosen for a different reason will be a burden to your salvation and a problem to overcome.

III. The real problem is commitment. (Matt. 6:33)

- A. We do what we really want to do when all is said and done.
 1. Consider the training time and effort of Olympic hopefuls.
 2. Consider the social sacrifices a student intent on becoming a doctor is willing to make.
 3. What things are really important to you and what have you done to achieve or participate in them? (*Encourage student discussion*)
 4. Consider Abraham complying with God's requests. (Gen.11 and following)
 5. Consider the trials of Paul. (I Cor. 11:23-33)
 6. We can be a God-pleasing Christian if that is what we really want to do. (Phil. 4:13)
- B. We have to make a choice. (John 24:15)
 1. To fail to choose for God is to choose against God. (Matt 12:30) no middle
 2. We must see things from a spiritual basis. (Rom.8:1)
 3. We must see things from an eternal basis. (Matt. 16:25-26)

Conclusion:

Living in physical bodies it is easy for us to become overly concerned about the physical aspects of our lives. It is necessary for us to care for our physical bodies. It is just as necessary for us to remember that there is much more to our existence than this physical body and the encumberments that come with it.

It was necessary, given the circumstances, that Martha be engaged in the activity of preparing the meal. However, it was also necessary for Martha's well-being that she give heed to Jesus. If Jesus can be called the Rose of Sharon, then the Martha's of the world need to take the time to stop and smell the roses.

LESSON 4: SERIOUS INQUIRIES ONLY, PLEASE

(At the conclusion of this lesson students should understand that there is a challenge involved in living the Christian life. We will no more be successful as a Christian if we have no plan, than would a football or basketball team be successful against a strong opponent when no preparation had been made for the game and there was no game plan. Unfortunately, this provides an all too accurate analogy of the way most Christians approach their lives. We must do a better job of preparation and planning for this most serious “game” (it is no game.) Students should have a plan (of sorts, at least) by the conclusion of this lesson.)

Introduction:

Have you ever looked through the classified ad section of the paper? What interesting ads have you seen there: Occasionally you’ll notice an ad for a job or of an item for sale that says; “Serious inquiries only.” These people are asking you to contact them, but they are warning that they do not wish to deal with someone who does not intend to follow up on the information which they will provide.

In Luke 14:25-35, Jesus has the same message for us. In Matt. 11:28-30, Jesus is passionately asking us to follow him. Now, in Luke, he is also making it plain that there is a price involved. Our dedication to follow Jesus must be a serious decision. We must count the cost. We must have a plan for finishing. If you were asked to put your plan on paper, what would you write?

- I. The message of Jesus
 - A. Living a life that pleases Christ should be more important to you than anything, including living a life that please you. (Matt. 6:33, 16:24-26, Phil. 3:4-9)
 - B. When we decide to start being Christians, we should also determine to hold that conviction in the face of all obstacles until the end. We must count the cost. (Luke 9:57-62, Heb.6:4-6,9-12)
 - C. We must have a plan. It is impossible to live life on a day to day basis, making decisions based on the current direction of the wind, and be a successful Christian. (Phil. 3:13-14, 4:8-9, Rom. 12:1-2, Tit. 2:11-14)
 - D. We have to stand for something (“or we’ll fall for anything.”) We have to be different. (Rev. 2:13-16, 19-26. II Tim. 4:1-5)

- II. Practical applications for us. When you are at home, at work, at school, etc., what can you do to take a stand for Christ, and to persevere till the end?
 - A. You must plan for success.
 1. You must first determine that Christianity matters to you. (Mt. 16:26)
 2. Then other decisions must follow as a consequence.
 - a. You will choose friends on the basis of their ability to help you be a Christian, or at the very least knowing they will not hurt you.
 - b. You will behave as a good influence/example to others, and to attract others to the type of life that you have chosen.

- c. You will look for a college that will not present an obstacle to your Christian principles.
 - d. You will look for a spouse that will help you in your Christian life, and that will want to raise your children as Christians.
 - e. You will choose an occupation that will allow you to continue to use your Christian influence and ability to its utmost.
 - f. You will enhance the skills you have that are most helpful to the cause of Christ and you will find ways to employ those skills.
- B. Long term planning is the easy part. If you want to be successful you must begin to take action now. What can you do now to see to it that you answer the invitation to the master's supper?
1. Constantly thinking of yourself as the link between your friends and their salvation. Thus, you will try to influence them, and you will be conscious of your example.
 2. Select a time to study your Bible and determine to do so with regularity. Do this to please God and to grow in your love for him, not to meet an arbitrary schedule.
 3. Become an active participant in your Bible class. The teacher has no more responsibility to make a Bible class a good class than any other Christian in the class. Know the subject. Make some comments. Ask some questions. Mention good subjects for study. You will know more what teenagers are interested in than adults will. Do this to please God, and to be that link between the people in the class and their salvation.
 4. Find ways to get involved in the program of work at your congregation. If there is no active program of works, you can be instrumental in getting one started (with the help of a concerned adult.)
 5. Be a person of conviction. Many are looking for guidance, and they need to know that someone is not afraid to voice their conviction. Don't sit back and observe the world literally go to hell. Take a stand.
 6. Be respectful and obedient to your parents.
 7. Select someone to lead to Christ and start doing something to accomplish the task. You must continue to be friends even if your attempt is unsuccessful. You may win your friend later.

Conclusion:

Christians are people who love God and their fellow man. They live to please God and help their fellow man, not to keep rules (although they will keep God's commandments in order to please him.) They control pride, examine themselves carefully and truthfully and try to be the best person they can be. Understanding the true purpose of life, a Christian prioritizes his/her activities and interests with Christ receiving first place. Upon this foundation the Christian then takes a stand for Christ and implements a plan that will enable him/her to experience eternal salvation.

Lessons For Evening Speakers.

Please note that the following outlines are provided to suggest a way of presenting the topic. If you have other ideas that are more meaningful to you, then by all means use them. We only ask that you attempt to stay within the general area of the outline so that the various ideas we are hoping to present for the students consideration will be covered and so that there will be a minimum of repetition. Thank you so much for helping us.

- Sunday – Jesus Was A Real Person:
1. He did real things and had real feelings.
 2. David adds to the Biblical picture of Jesus (i.e. “man after God’s own heart.)
 3. We should be able to relate to him.
- Monday – Doing Things Because You Want To
1. Secular – you are better at the things you want to do.
 2. God desires our love more than our obedience.
 3. Religious – this is the road to success as a Christian.
- Tuesday – How Pride gets in the Way.
1. You think you’re perfect and you don’t need help.
 2. You live a lie (like Pharisees) and can’t see the truth.
 3. You cannot submit to God. (after all, look who you are)
- Wednesday – Good, Better, Best
1. Things that are good must yield to that which is better.
 2. That which is better must yield to that which is best.
 3. That which is best should be our only real goal.
- Thursday – Making and Keeping a Commitment
1. Examples from everyday life and the Bible.
 2. Take small steps and definite action (to reach goal/keep commit.)
 3. Nothing ever gets done without a kept commitment.

Daily Lesson Topics

Day	Class	Senior Session
Monday	Religion That’s Only Skin Deep	How to Relate to Jesus
Tuesday	A Pride Of Lions	How to Control Pride
Wednesday	A World Full of Marthas	How to Prioritize
Thursday	Serious Inquiries Only	How to Follow Through