

R.A. Torrey:

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. The Path to Honor, 7-11

What in v. 7 indicates that we are to look for some deeper spiritual meaning in the following verses than the mere teaching as to our conduct in social life that lies on the surface? To whom were these words addressed? Why did our Lord teach them these things? How did He know that they needed this teaching? Does He mark how we conduct ourselves at social and other gatherings? What about their conduct did He especially note? Was it characteristic of those times for men to squabble for the places of honor? (11:43; 20:46.) Do we ever see anything of that in our modern Christianized society? Do we ever see anything of it in the church of Christ? Is it as excusable in us as it was in those Jews? Why not? (Phil. 2:5-8.)

What did our Lord tell them they should not do? Why not? What would be the probable result of inviting one's self to the place of honor? Is this good advice to follow in its literal sense? Has it any application beyond its literal sense? (v. 11; Phil. 2:3, 6, 7; Matt. 18:4.) Was this teaching in its literal application original with our Lord? (Prov. 25:6, 7.) Was the deeper meaning and application original with Him? Are any other instances recorded in which He took current proverbial teaching and gave it a new and deeper meaning?

What did He tell them they should do? (R. V.) Which place? How were they to make it absolutely sure that they got quite low enough? Is this good advice to follow in its more literal applications? Suppose one should happen to get a lower place than he rightly deserved? Why is it that we are not often bidden by the Lord to come up higher than the place we have picked out for ourselves at His table? What goes before honor? (Prov. 15:33.)

What is our Lord's far-reaching interpretation of His own apparently commonplace parable? Is that a commonplace truth? What evidence have we of its vast importance in God's sight? (18:14; Matt. 23:12; Ps. 18:27; 138:6; Prov. 15:33; 29:23; Is. 2:11, 17; 57:15; Jas. 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5.) Is there any other reason besides its importance why this truth is so often repeated in the Word of God? If we wish to be set on high what must we do? If we set ourselves on high what then? Are there any exceptions to this principle?

2. The Path to Heavenly Recompense, 12-14

Having taught the guests a needed lesson, to whom did our Lord next address Himself? If we invite Him to be a guest with us, in what way may we be sure He will always repay us? What did He tell His host that he should not do? Why not? Why ought we not to seek our recompenses in *the* life that now is? (Matt. 6:1-4, 16-18.) Ought we to regret it when we get no recompense here for the good we do? Of what may we be confident? In whom have we an illustration of one who does not invite the rich to His banquets? (1:53; Matt. 11:5.) Is this the method of the world? (Prov. 14:20.) Does the professing church follow Christ's method or the world's? (Jas. 2:1-6.) Does v. 12, taken in exact literalness, absolutely prohibit an interchange of hospitalities and courtesies? Where does it tell us to look for our guests in our more elaborate feasts? In a world where there is so much want and misery to relieve ought a follower of Jesus Christ to spend much time in the mere entertainment of those who have no need?

What did He tell His host he should do? Is this intended to be taken literally? How are those upon whom we are to bestow our hospitalities characterized? Who is recorded in this same chapter as inviting these very same classes to His feast? (v. 21.) In whose footsteps then will we be following if we obey this injunction?

What did our Lord say would be the result if he invited these classes? Are there elsewhere in the Bible promises of blessedness to those who are generous to the poor? (Prov. 19:17; Is. 58:7, 8, 10, 11.) What reason did our Lord give why he should be blessed? Do men regard it as an especially blessed thing when those to whom they show kindness cannot recompense them? Why does He say it is a blessed thing? Which is better, to be recompensed now in this life or at the resurrection of the just?

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. Our Lord

Marks men's behavior, 7; always on the watch for opportunities to teach the truth of the kingdom, found the text for His teaching in the most commonplace passing events, 7, 12; put new meaning into familiar proverbs, adapted His teaching to each hearer's peculiar need, 7-11, 12-14; taught truths of which He Himself was the most amazing illustration (a) humility, 7-11, (b) all-absorbing consideration for the poor, 12-14; repays those who invite Him to their homes by teaching them the way of blessedness, recompenses those who bestow their bounties upon those who cannot themselves recompense, 12-14; took the lowest place and God called Him up to the highest place, 10, 11 (Phil. 2:6-11); invites to His feast the poor, maimed, lame, blind, 13, 21.

2. Man

His need of circumspection seen in the fact that Christ marks what he does, 7;

His pride seen in his seeking the chief seats, 7;

His selfishness seen in his bestowing his bounties upon those who can repay, 12;

His only road to exaltation is self-abasement, 11.

3. Four Paths

(1). The path to honor:

Take the lowest place, 10, 11.

(2). The path to heavenly blessedness:

Seek not the recompenses of the rich, but minister to the poor, expecting nothing in return, 12-14.

(3). The path to shame:

Take the high chief seats, 8, 9.

(4). The path to future emptiness:

Minister to those from whom you expect a recompense, 12.

4. The Spirit of Christ in Social Life

If you are a guest take the lowliest place, 10;

If you are the host invite to your feast the poor, maimed, lame, blind, 13.