Digging Deeper: The Greater Meaning of Luke 14:13, 14

Monday, October 19, 2026

> *“But when you spread a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; and you will be happy, because they have nothing with which to repay you. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous ones.” (Luke 14:13, 14)*

Jesus said these words while eating a meal on the Sabbath at the home of a leading Pharisee, where the guests were scrambling for the best seats. The main point is that real generosity does not keep score. As the day’s text says, a hospitable man opens his home and his heart to people outside his circle of close friends, including those who could never

pay him back, and Jehovah himself makes sure that such kindness is rewarded.

1 “Feast”: Receiving People Into Your Home (*δοχή, do·khe'*)

The Greek word δοχή (*do·khe'*) means a feast or reception. It comes from a verb that means “to receive” or “to welcome.” So the word is not mainly about the food; it is about receiving people as your guests.

Just before this, Jesus pointed out a common custom: people invited friends, relatives, and rich neighbors, who “might also invite you in return, and it would become a repayment to you.”

(Luke 14:12) A meal like that is really a trade. Jesus urged his host to welcome people who had nothing to trade.

- Hospitality is measured less by what is on the table and more by who is welcome at it.

2 "Hospitable": Love for Strangers (*φιλοξενία, phi·lo·xe·ni'a*)

The day's text quotes Peter: "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling." (1 Peter 4:9) The Greek word for "hospitality," φιλοξενία (*phi·lo·xe·ni'a*), joins two words meaning "love" and "stranger." Literally, it means "love of (*fondness for*) strangers."

That fits the description in the day's text: "The door of his house—and of his heart—must be open to strangers."
Hebrews 13:2 adds: "Do not forget hospitality, for through it some unknowingly

entertained angels.” Abraham ran to welcome three strangers and quickly served them a meal, not knowing at first that they were messengers from Jehovah. (Genesis 18:2-8)

- Being hospitable is not only for close friends; it reaches out to newcomers, the lonely, and hardworking visitors like circuit overseers and visiting speakers.

3 “Repaid”: Paid Back in Return (*ἀνταποδίδωμι, an·ta·po·di'do·mi*)

The Greek word ἀνταποδίδωμι (*an·ta·po·di'do·mi*) means to give back in return, or to pay someone back. Jesus used it twice in verse 14: the poor have nothing with which “to repay” you, but you “will be repaid.” The guest cannot pay the debt, so God takes it on himself.

Jesus pointed to when that reward will come: “in the resurrection of the righteous ones.” Paul also spoke of the hope “that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Acts 24:15) Even now there is a reward, because Jesus said: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35)

- When we give to those who cannot give back, we are trusting Jehovah to settle the account, and he never forgets.

Key Spiritual Reflections

- **Opening the Door:** When was the last time I invited someone outside my usual circle of friends, such as a newer one, an elderly one, or someone of little means, into my home or to share a meal? (Luke 14:13)

- **Checking My Motive:** When I am generous, am I quietly hoping to be paid back or noticed, or am I content to let Jehovah do the repaying? (Luke 14:14)
- **Welcoming Visitors:** What could I do to make the next circuit overseer or visiting speaker feel truly welcome, even if all I can offer is simple? (Hebrews 13:2; Proverbs 3:27)