

BIBLE STUDY
August 27-28, 2025

THE TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sirach 3: 17-18, 20, 28-29

Luke 14: 1, 7-14

Hebrews 12: 18-19, 22-24a

1. Sirach 3: 17-18, 20, 28-29

- The full name of the book of Sirach is The Wisdom of Ben Sira. It is also known as Ecclesiasticus (not to be confused with Ecclesiastes). It was thought to be originally written in Greek—thus there is dispute about its place in the canon—but later discoveries showed that it was written in Hebrew. The book was written in a time when there was a move to make Greek culture the unifying principle of the world. Some Jews favored the broadening of Jewish thought, other opposed it as a watering down of the Jewish mission to witness to the one God. The author opposes the imposition of Greek thought and urges fidelity to temple worship and observance of the law.
- V. 17-18: The author extols humility. A humble person is loved more than one who donates money. The higher your position in life, the greater your humility should be. Pride corrupts and makes a person think they are better than they really are. “Pride goeth before the fall.”
- V. 20: Take the example of the Lord who is genuinely great in his power but has special concern for the humble and listens to their prayers.
- V. 28: A proud person will not have the inner strength to withstand a crisis. They depend on material things and flattery to boost their ego.
- V. 29: The truly wise person is a humble person, and they make their focus the wisdom of the ages. The author is warning that adopting Greek culture instills pride that corrupts a person. Better to be humble and focus on the wisdom contained in the Scriptures that has been proven by the experience of centuries.

2. Luke 14: 1, 7-14

- V. 1: This verse provides the setting. Jesus is a guest at the home of a leading Pharisee on the sabbath. Although they are scrutinizing his every move, Jesus is not restrained to heal on the sabbath. He is making a statement that the sabbath is the time to make known God's healing and restorative will and power.
- Vv. 7-11: This parable seems to be nothing more than practical social advice. Jesus critiques the behavior of the guests who seek the best seats. Take the lower seat as a strategy for getting a better seat! Like all parables, there is a deeper meaning. The feelings of honor and shame run deep in the Middle East. Imagine the shame you would feel if you were asked to surrender your seat of honor to a more important guest. This would be a humiliating experience. In the great reversal at the end of time (first shall be last and last shall be first) how much more your humiliation

and horror would be when you are cast down. It is better to take your place with lowly and humble of the world and later be raised up in the Kingdom of God.

- Vv. 12-14 Jesus challenges the host to invite people to a social event not for what they can repay you but as an act of service and hospitality. Invite those who cannot repay you because you will be repaid in the Kingdom. The wealth and influence of the poor is God's rewards in the Kingdom. Let our behavior on earth be guided by the future promises of the Kingdom of God. Look for eternal reward not just temporary reward on earth.

3. Hebrews 12: 18-19, 22-24a

- The author contrasts the old order with the new. The first covenant (Vv. 18-19) produced fear and trembling at the fire and smoke and trumpet blasts that came from Mt. Sinai when God established the covenant. People withdrew in dread and awe. The new covenant (Vv. 22-24) is a welcoming celebration that produces joy and peace. We are drawn to Jesus whose blood has saved us. Because of Jesus, we belong to the heavenly city.