

Text: Luke 14: 7-11

Theme: “Upside Down Looks Right Side Up”

*7*Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, *8*“When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, *9*and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. *10*But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. *11*For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

We read the Bible and sometimes we find ourselves saying, “Oh sure Jesus, you betch ya. I’ll run right out and do that.” Take the lowest seat. Turn the other cheek. Give away all your wealth. Seek first the kingdom of God. These things all seem so backwards to us, so upside down in the world. We understand that it is what Jesus says to do but it does not seem that it will play out very well for us in the real world.

The thing is, we forget that when Satan turned the world upside down by introducing sin into God’s perfect creation, he corrupted everything in the world. So now, what looks naturally upside down, is really right side up and conversely, what looks naturally right side up, is really upside down. This world in which we live seeks paths that lead to sin and Satan and we, the children of God, we are the people who are out of place, backwards, upside down. We are the ones who don’t fit into the world and we are not

supposed to. In fact, if we find ourselves fitting in too well, if we are not feeling that uncomfortable pain of being an outsider, that is a warning flare that you are going down Satan's path. We walk an odd road as God's children.

For instance, just recently there was a March for Life on Washington and I heard a great deal of talk about right to life and being pro-life. Conversely, I know people who are very passionate about the right to die and being pro-choice, that is believing that a woman has the right to choose to abort her unborn baby. These two polar opposite positions exist in the same society and they have honest, committed people on both sides of the issues. Sometimes I find myself torn between these opposing views, both of which have strong arguments. Which is right side up and which is upside down? Both cannot be right. To know which is right, we cannot rely on our own senses because they have been corrupted by sin just like everything else. We cannot rely on our intelligence because that too has been corrupted. All we can do is look to the Holy Scriptures because the Word of God is not corrupt.

Looking at God's Word, we see from the 6th Commandment that to be consistent with God's will, we are pro-life by definition. That is to say that we recognize that life is a gift from God and is to be celebrated and lived to his glory. But sadly, we also live in this

upside down world where we have to try to live out our right side up beliefs in a contrary upside down world. Just recently there was much chatter about the young woman who chose to take her own life in Oregon rather than allowing herself to be slowly incapacitated by a brain tumor.

Is it right to commit suicide? No. It never is. Is it right that God's children should suffer hideous diseases that bring on unimaginable suffering? No. It never is. And there we are. Caught in the conundrum of being right side up people in an upside down world. And there is no way to legislate this world into being right side up. There are no laws we can pass that will force people to live in accordance with God's will. Satan and sin turned everything upside down and only on the day of the resurrection will this world be recreated right side up.

So what do we do? We push onward through this upside down world refusing to judge others for their choices between two evils in a corrupted world and celebrating the life that we have as God's children, and more importantly, we celebrate the life that is to come when everything will be recreated, and we will live eternally as right side up people in a right side up world.