

**TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY - AUGUST 28, 2016**

**I REMEMBER WHEN I FIRST STARTED WORKING AT MVH THEY SHOWED  
ME AROUND - INCLUDING THE CAFETERIA - AND THEN A SPECIAL PLACE  
- WHERE YOU COULD HAVE PRIVACY AND ACCORDION DOORS - FOR  
MEDICAL STAFF LUNCHEON MEETINGS....**

**IT STRUCK ME AS RATHER UNHEALTHY THOUGH -**

**PROVIDING FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS DURING LUNCH**

**I UNDERSTAND THE REASONS -**

**BUT IT'S NOT HEALTHY IS IT?**

**TO HAVE BUSINESS MEETING WHEN YOU ARE EATING....**

**IT DOES NOT ENHANCE DIGESTION.....**

**COMBINING EATING AND WORKING/IS NOT GOOD.....**

**HARD TO RELAX AND EAT WHEN YOU HAVE BUSINESS TO DEAL WITH**

**THERE IS A LOT OF EVIDENCE IN JESUS' LIFE THAT MEALS WITH HIM**

**COULD BE DISTURBING TO ONE'S DIGESTIVE SYSTEM ALSO....**

**AS MARY MCGLONE MENTIONS IN A RECENT NCR ARTICLE - "WE DON'T**

**HAVE A SINGLE STORY OF A MEAL JESUS SHARED THAT DIDN'T INVOLVE**

**SOME SORT OF CONTENTION". CONFLICT...**

**REMEMBER THOSE MEALS?**

**WHY DOES HE LET HER TOUCH HIM?**

**WHY DOES HE EAT AND DRINK WITH SINNERS?**

**WHY DON'T THEY WASH THEIR HANDS?**

**MARTHA, THE COMPANY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MENU....**

***AND FINALLY, "THE HAND OF THE ONE WHO WILL BETRAY ME IS WITH ME ON THE TABLE"***

***SO, AT LEAST BASED ON THE SITUATIONS REMEMBERED AND REPORTED IN THE GOSPELS WE HAVE TO CONCLUDE, AGAIN ACCORDING TO MCGLONE, BREAKING BREAD WITH JESUS WAS RARELY PEACEFUL AND NEVER BORING.....***

***PERHAPS THAT ALSO CHARACTERIZES THE LIFE OF A TRUE DISCIPLE - IN GENERAL - RARELY PEACEFUL AND NEVER BORING***

***HE WAS THE TYPE OF PERSON WHOSE BEHAVIOR WOULD GIVE RISE TO CONTROVERSEY AND HE WAS ALSO THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO WOULD TAKE NOTICE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOR AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE, AND HE OFTEN ADDRESSED THE ISSUE ON THE SPOT....***

***EVEN IF IT MADE PEOPLE UNCOMFORTABLE AND MADE IT HARDER TO ENJOY THE MEAL...***

***GRAB AN OPPORTUNITY WHEN YOU CAN - A "TEACHABLE MOMENT".... IF IT IS IMPORTANT - LET'S TALK ABOUT IT NOW....***

***TODAY'S MEAL IS A GREAT EXAMPLE.....***

***AND THE ISSUE IS CERTAINLY IMPORTANT - IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO DISTURB THE CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE OF A MEAL -***

***AND RISK SOME INDIGESTION EVIDENTLY***

***THE ISSUE SEEMS TO BE - OUR NEED TO FEEL IMPORTANT - OUR NEED TO THINK WELL OF OURSELVES....SELF-ESTEEM***

***IT'S A CONSTANT STRUGGLE ISN'T IT?***

***TO THINK WELL OF OURSELVES.....***

***EVERYONE OF US WANTS TO FEEL IMPORTANT....***

***AND IT CAN BE A HARD STRUGGLE IN TODAY'S WORLD.....***

***SELF-ESTEEM IS VERY IMPORTANT AND NOT EASY TO ACHIEVE - AND  
CAN BE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN...***

***UNFORTUNATELY, A NUMBER OF THINGS CAN MILITATE AGAINST US  
THINKING POSITIVELY OF OURSELVES -.***

***OUR GOSPEL STORY SPEAKS TO US OF THIS VERY STRUGGLE....***

***IN THAT CULTURE - NOT COMPLETELY UNLIKE OUR OWN - THE SEATING  
ARRANGEMENT WAS VERY SIGNIFICANT....***

***IT WAS AN INDICATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF GUESTS....***

***THE CLOSER TO THE HOST - THE MORE IMPORTANT YOU APPEARED TO  
THE OTHER GUESTS....***

***HENCE, THE JOCKEYING FOR SEATS .....***

***JESUS OBVIOUSLY NOTICED THIS STRUGGLE AMONG THE GUESTS TO  
PAD THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THE VIEW OF OTHERS.....***

***HE UNDERSTOOD THEIR DESIRE TO FEEL IMPORTANT ....***

***IT IS BASIC TO HUMAN NATURE - WE ALL HAVE THE NEED TO FEEL  
IMPORTANT.....***

***"WHEN YOU ARE INVITED BY SOMEONE TO A WEDDING BANQUET DO NOT  
RECLINE AT TABLE IN THE PLACE OF HONOR'***

***SOMEHOW WE MUST APPRECIATE NOT ONLY***

***OUR OWN IMPORTANCE BUT ALSO THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHERS....***

***THAT'S BIBLICAL HUMILITY...***

***"FOR THOSE WHO EXALT THEMSELVES WILL BE HUMBLLED, BUT THOSE WHO HUMBLE THEMSELVES WILL BE EXALTED."***

***HE EVEN EXPECTS US TO EXPRESS THIS HUMBLE ATTITUDE WHEN WE THROW A PARTY.....***

***"DO NOT INVITE YOUR FRIENDS OR YOUR BROTHER OR YOUR RELATIVES OR YOUR WEALTHY NEIGHBORS, IN CASE THEY MAY INVITE YOU BACK AND YOU HAVE REPAYMENT. RATHER INVITE THE POOR, THE CRIPPLED, THE LAME, THE BLIND; BLESSED INDEED WILL YOU BE BECAUSE OF THEIR INABILITY TO REPAY YOU"***

***HERE I THINK OF THE QUOTE: "HUMILITY IS NOT ABOUT THINKING LESS OF YOURSELF. IT'S ABOUT THINKING OF YOURSELF LESS"***

***REPEAT THE QUOTE - -***

***WE EXPERIENCE AND KNOW OUR OWN IMPORTANCE AND WE ARE COMMITED TO LETTING OTHERS KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THEY ARE.....***

***WE VALUE OURSELVES AND AT THE SAME TIME, BUILDING ON THAT WE VALUE OTHERS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE.....***

***AND NOT BE SO THREATENED BY THEIR IMPORTANCE THAT WE FEEL LESS IMPORTANT.....A CHALLENGE CERTAINLY***

***WE ARE ALL IMPORTANT, ALL VERY IMPORTANT IN DIFFERENT WAYS***

***THIS ISSUE WAS SO CRITICAL TO JESUS THAT HE RISKED NOT ONLY***

***CHALLENGING THE OTHER GUESTS BY HIS REMARKS BUT ALSO***

***ALIENATING THE HOST - BY WAY OF SUGGESTING WHOM THE***

***HOST SHOULD INVITE TO THE NEXT PARTY....***

*INVITE THE POOR, THE CRIPPLED, THE LAME, THE BLIND...*

*HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU DONE THAT AT A SPECIAL MEAL OR BANQUET...*

*CHALLENGE, NOT ONLY OTHER GUESTS, BUT THE HOST*

*SOMEHOW HE DIDN'T SEEM TO RUN OUT OF INVITATIONS IT SEEMS*

*AND THAT SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT HIM.....DOESN'T IT?*

*SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT HIS FOLLOWERS MOST REMEMBERED*

*YEARS AFTER ALSO ...AND WROTE DOWN*

*IRONICALLY ENOUGH, THAT SEEMS TO BE ONE OF THE WAYS THAT*

*JESUS BUILT COMMUNITY AT THESE MEALS....*

*HONESTY.....*

*NOTICING OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOR AND BEING WILLING TO*

*POINT OUT ITS SIGNIFICANCE - AND SUGGESTS OTHER POSSIBILITIES*

*ALWAYS ENCOURAGING INCLUSIVITY - OPPOSING EXCLUSIVITY....*

*REACHING OUT TO THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT*

*AT THIS MEAL, ON THIS SPECIAL QAC DAY LET US PRAY THAT WE WILL*

*GROW IN CONFIDENCE IN OUR OWN IMPORTANCE AS WELL AS SOME OF*

*THAT SAME HONESTY AND WILLINGNESS THAT WE SEE IN CHRIST TO*

*REACH OUT TO THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT THAN WE ARE.....*

*TO SEE AND VALUE IN THEIR IMPORTANCE, EVEN AND ESPECIALLY*

*THOSE WHO CANNOT REPAY US*