

# Dinner Guests Unleashed

Presented By Pastor Scott Walters on 09-01-19  
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While common in Edwardian & Victorian times, place card for dinner are rarely used anymore. (That may say more about me).  
About the only times: 1] Event where presenters are needed to be around tables at a certain point, and 2] wedding reception dinners.

At the dinner table in the house I grew up, there were only 4 of us.  
Place cards weren't necessary - silly.

I will forever remember my place at the table.

I suspect the host at the dinner in today's scripture could only wish that Place Cards were invented by Roman times. It would have prevented a big headache from his dinner party with Jesus.

You see, Da Vinci's "Last Supper" doesn't really help us understand what was going on at today's dinner party.

In Jesus' time: 3 rectangular tables in the shape of a "U." Low to the floor, with pillows or cushions on which to recline.

One always eats with their right hand; your "dirty hand" (left) is the one that props you up.

Only after the host took his proper place, do the other dinner guests try to find a place as close to the host as possible. The closer to the host, the higher your status.

These dinner customs functioned to reinforce where you belonged not only at that dinner party, but also in society in general.

Jesus knew those rules. Everyone did.

I think you have to feel a little sympathy toward the Pharisee hosting the dinner party. Poor guy. Jesus just seemed to take over.

So much for a sophisticated dinner with scintillating conversation.

Jesus wanted to talk about the political maneuvering going on in the room.

Jesus basically tells the dinner guests to not humiliate themselves by sitting in someone else's reserved seat.

So is Jesus just the oldest form of Emily Post or Martha Stewart or "Miss Manners?" If only it were that!!!

Our dinner host has lost control of his own party!

Jesus was just getting started. While he started with who sits where, now he wants to talk about the invitation list.

"The next time you have a dinner party, don't just invite your fiends and family and rich neighbors; the people who can and will return the favor. The kind of people who feel they're

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entitled to be there.

The beautiful people: those whose parties have the address of Central Park West in New York or Louisburg Sq., Beacon Hill, Boston; or summer addresses of the Hamptons or Martha's Vineyard.

Jesus says to bring the poor and those who can't pay you back with an equally fine party.

**That's the kind of hospitality that God notices; that's the kind of hospitality that says something about you. Hospitality that expects nothing in return. Wow!**

Surely our host went all out for his party. In form and function it embodied the values of the reign of Caesar; but not of the reign of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus has this tendency to arrange the seats so that those who've always felt left out, and brought in. The "wallflowers" and those in the "nose-bleed" sections receive new seating assignments, so that everyone might have a different idea who is beautiful and welcomed at God's table.

Martin Luther King, "Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives."

Jesus throws a different kind of party. We are to do the same.