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**(Louise Gosbell, "The Parable of the Great Banquet: Luke 14:15-24 CBM and the church" *St Mark's Review* No 232 July 2015 (2) pg109-122)**

# The parable of the great banquet (Luke 14:15–24), CBM and the church

## Churches as places of welcome and belonging for people with disability

**Louise Gosbell**

Chapter 14 of Luke's gospel features two significant references where 'the poor' and people with various physical and sensory disability are described as potential banquet guests. While the list of marginalised invitees is virtually indistinguishable between the two occurrences,<sup>1</sup> the majority of commentators suggest that the Lukan author has in mind two separate groups of invitees. The first parable (14:7–11),<sup>2</sup> with Jesus' subsequent directive to invite 'the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind' (Luke 14:13) to meals, is considered by commentators to be a reminder to the Jesus movement's earliest converts to act with beneficence towards those who were poor and marginalised within their communities. In contrast, these same commentators consider

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the banquet host's invitation to 'the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame' in 14:21 to be, at least partially, an allegorical reference to the Gentiles. In this sense, rather than serving as an apologetic for evangelistic ministry with those on the margins of society, many scholars understand the parable of the great banquet (14:15–24) as a representation of God's outworking of salvation history. In this sense, the parable of the great banquet (14:15–24) was included in Luke's narrative as a means of explaining 'the inclusion of Gentiles in the present kingdom of God as God's response to Israel's refusal to "enter"'.<sup>3</sup> However, by interpreting the poor and marginalised in this parable as Gentiles, the Christian community has traditionally perceived the parable as describing the work that God has already completed in inviting the Gentiles into the community of God. Christians have thus come to see themselves as the marginalised, the outsiders, and those who were separated from God in 14:15–21, but who have now been allowed to enter the heavenly community. This interpretation runs the risk of excusing further obligation on the part of the church to seek out those who are still truly marginalised within our own communities.

While a large number of exegetes and commentators consider Luke's reference to the poor and marginalised in chapter 14 to be allegorically representative of the Gentiles, it will be argued here that there is very little in the Hebrew Bible or in Luke's gospel that would indicate that a first-century Jewish audience would have interpreted the reference to 'the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame' in 14:15–24 as a veiled reference to the Gentiles. Instead, we propose that Luke retains both of the parables in Luke 14:1–24 as a means of emphasising Jesus' ministry to the poor and marginalised, and the need for those in the early Christian community to follow suit. Not only this, but Luke envisions this inclusive nature of Jesus' ministry as a foretaste of the inclusion manifested in the future kingdom. Having established that a more literal reading of 'the poor' and people with disability is envisioned in 14:15–24, we will then examine the way in which both parables of Luke 14 serve as the theological underpinning for the development of CBM Australia's *Luke 14* program, which serves to equip Australian 'churches to be places of welcome and belonging for people and families living with disability'.<sup>4</sup>

### **The parable of the banquet (Luke 14:15–24)**

As with other parables in the canonical gospels, the allegorical approach to the parable of the banquet in Luke 14:15–24 was commonly cited by the early church fathers.<sup>5</sup> Charles W Hedrick describes an allegory as ‘a narrative that tells one story on its surface but whose elements are ciphers, which, rightly understood, tell an entirely different story.’<sup>6</sup> In this sense, the parables are stories which must be deciphered in order to be understood, and interpretation thus begins by ‘assigning meaning to every detail.’<sup>7</sup> Allegorical readings of the parables remained ‘the primary method for the interpretation of Jesus’ parables from at least the time of Irenaeus to the end of the nineteenth century.’<sup>8</sup> The cessation of the allegorical approach at this time was associated primarily with the parable research of Adolf Jülicher,<sup>9</sup> as well as CH Dodd<sup>10</sup> and Joachim Jeremias.<sup>11</sup> For these scholars, Jesus’ parables elucidated one general maxim rather than a series of theological comparisons.<sup>12</sup> Despite this shift away from allegorical readings of the parables, this method of interpretation remains the favoured approach of modern exegetes and commentators in their assessments of 14:15–24.<sup>13</sup>

Allegorical readings of 14:15–24 attribute theological significance to the sending of the servant. The parable begins with the servant initially directed to summon the original invitees to the banquet. However, ‘they all alike began to make excuses’ (14:18) and, in response, the banquet host sends out his servant on two more occasions to gather in the marginalised members of the host’s community. In this way, those originally invited are thought to represent Jews who have shunned Jesus and denied his messiahship, and who have thus excluded themselves from participating in the long awaited eschatological feast of God. As a consequence, the banquet host directs the servant to go instead into the ‘streets and alleys’ to gather in ‘the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame’ (14:21). Numerous scholars believe this second group of invitees to represent the marginal members of Jewish society.<sup>14</sup> This, it is argued, is clear from the Lukan Jesus’ reference to the ‘streets and alleys.’ Just as the ‘streets and alleys’ are located *within* the walls of the city, so also are the people indicated here located *within* Judaism.<sup>15</sup> The third and final sending sees the servant directed again to gather the marginalised, this time from ‘the roads and country lanes’ (14:23). Those on ‘the roads and country lanes’ are *outside* the city and may be considered representative of those *outside* Judaism, that is, the Gentiles.<sup>16</sup> The parable then, according to this interpretation, suggests that, due to Israel’s

sinfulness and disobedience, God has rescinded his original invitation to the messianic banquet, emphasising instead that the kingdom of God has been reserved for a new community: a reconstituted Israel composed of a faithful remnant of marginalised Jews, as well as faithful members of the Gentile community. Advocates of this interpretation suggest it is consistent with Luke's interest in Jesus' mission to the Gentiles, which is alluded to throughout Luke's gospel and brought to fruition in the Book of Acts.<sup>17</sup>

Some recent scholarship has questioned the dominant allegorical interpretation of this parable. A number of scholars, for example, believe it presents an 'unflattering portrait of God' by depicting him as 'extend(ing) invitations originally in a way consistent with the social elite of Luke's world and only turn(ing) to the poor when rebuffed by the rich.'<sup>18</sup> As a result, a number of scholars, including Joel B Green, Willi Braun and Luise Schrotzoff, have proposed that, rather than being a parable, this is merely a story of a wealthy follower of Jesus who embraces the inclusion of the marginalised promoted in Luke 14:7–13.<sup>19</sup> Due to space restrictions, we are unable to describe in any detail the arguments advanced by these scholars, but will focus instead on a proposal developed by Craig Blomberg.

In his scholarship on the interpretation of parables, Blomberg suggests that the means of understanding any allegorical elements in Jesus' parables are to be found in the Hebrew Bible and/or the rabbinic parables of Jesus' day. Blomberg proposes that the meaning of Jesus' parables is reliant on a collection of stock images that would have been easily recognisable to Luke's first-century audience through their use in other Jewish literature.<sup>20</sup> Such imagery included references to vineyards and wine, sheep and shepherds and, so Blomberg argues, also the image of an elaborate banquet.<sup>21</sup>

Blomberg agrees with the majority of scholarship that the image of a great banquet would have conjured images of God's end-time feast with his people depicted in the Hebrew Bible and developed throughout Second Temple Judaism.<sup>22</sup> However, the assumption that Gentiles are now also to be included in this end-feast is problematic.<sup>23</sup> Blomberg suggests that, while the image of the banquet may have had latent theological meaning, there is no precedent for using the phrase 'highways and byways' (Luke 14:23) as a symbol for the Gentiles or Gentile territory.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, Blomberg asserts that, in the context of this parable, the 'highways and byways', although outside the city walls, are still 'entirely within Israel.'<sup>25</sup> Thus, Blomberg concludes,

‘there is nothing in the parable’s imagery to suggest that any non-Israelites are in view.’<sup>26</sup>

However, Blomberg’s proposal can be developed further. Not only is there no precedent for regarding ‘highways and byways’ as synonymous with Gentiles, there is also no precedent for interpreting ‘the poor’ or references to disability in this way either. While there are certainly occasions in the Hebrew Bible where either poverty- or disability-related language is employed metaphorically,<sup>27</sup> in all these cases the metaphors relate to the spirituality of the members of the Israelite community rather than to the Gentiles. At no time in the Hebrew Bible are references to poverty or disability used as a collective metaphorical referent to the Gentiles.

The only references in the Hebrew Bible to ‘the poor’ and those with disability from among the nations are clearly literal references to specific individuals who have either a physical disability or are in financial difficulties.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, if anything, the opposite is true; when the language of poverty and/or disability is used collectively as a metaphor in the Hebrew Bible, it is used to describe the members of the Israelite community. This can be seen, for example, in Isaiah 42:19: ‘Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one in covenant with me, blind like the servant of the Lord?’

This is likewise the case in Luke’s gospel. While there are certainly occasions where poverty- and disability-related language could be interpreted as encompassing both a literal and metaphorical element, on no occasion is poverty- or disability-related terminology used as a collective metaphor for the Gentiles. However, the most compelling evidence for a literal reading of ‘the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame’ in 14:21 is the fact that, in the preceding parable (Luke 14:7–11), the Lukan Jesus employs almost identical language to describe, literally rather than metaphorically, those who should receive banquet invitations. In this first parable, Jesus, upon noticing ‘how the guests picked the places of honour at the table’, tells the guests a parable about a wedding feast. Rather than inviting those who are your social equals, the Lukan Jesus exhorts those present to instead invite ‘the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind’ (Luke 14:13). While clearly Jesus’ reference to the inclusion of ‘the poor’ and those with disability is to be understood literally here, proponents of the allegorical interpretation of Luke 14:15–24 hold that essentially the same phrase should be interpreted allegorically only eight verses later. As Kyoung-Jin Kim has posited, ‘Is it

really possible that Luke intends his readers to read almost identical verses in a different way one after another?<sup>29</sup> This seems highly unlikely. Lyle J Story concurs, observing that although:

Luke does reveal a concern for the concentric movement of the gospel from the Jewish to the Gentile recipients...here in this chapter, such allegorical nuance is untenable. The gospel as a whole is concerned with the poor and unfortunate and does not spiritualise or allegorise these persons.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, while Luke certainly considers the inclusion of the Gentiles to be an inevitable consequence of Jesus' earthly ministry, this is something that, while foreshadowed in Luke, is not fully realised until the Book of Acts. Indeed, if Luke had intended the parable of the banquet to signify Jesus' rejection of traditional Israel in favour of the Gentiles, then it would seem reasonable to expect Luke's overall narrative to reflect this shift in direction. However, this is not the case. The rest of Jesus' ministry, as narrated by Luke, though punctuated by occasional stories of Jesus' interactions with Gentiles,<sup>31</sup> is still focused primarily on those within the house of Israel. It is not until the beginning of the Book of Acts that Luke records the commencement of a deliberate and sustained mission to the Gentiles.

In addition to this internal evidence, there is also compelling external evidence to suggest that Luke employed these parables of Jesus as a means of criticising traditional Greco-Roman banqueting practices that were marked by exclusivity and the disenfranchisement of marginal members of society.<sup>32</sup> More specifically, Luke emphasises that Jesus' inclusion of 'the poor' and other marginalised members of the ancient community stood in stark contrast to traditional meal practices where such people were only present at meals in order to serve or entertain the invitees. Due to space restrictions, we are unable to elaborate further on this external evidence further, but have addressed this topic in more detail elsewhere.<sup>33</sup> In sum, while traditional scholarship of this parable has focused on the rejection of Israel, it has been argued here that internal evidence suggests it is more likely that Luke uses this parable to highlight a reversal of fortunes for the marginalised members of the Jewish community. Where previously 'the poor' and those with disability experienced exclusion and marginalisation, they are now to be included as an important and valued part of the diverse

Jesus movement, as a foretaste of the inclusion to be manifested in the future kingdom.

Interpreting the parable in this way means that we can no longer use allegory as a means of identifying the marginalised in this parable with the Gentiles, and thus to see ourselves as those outsiders who have been brought into God's house. A less allegorical approach forces us to think beyond a work that God has *already completed* to focus instead on a work that is *still in progress*; the work of seeking out and inviting in, indeed imploring, the disenfranchised in our communities to accept God's invitation.

### **CBM Australia's Luke 14 Program**

It is precisely this vision of hospitality and evangelism to and with 'the poor' and people with disability that forms the foundation for CBM Australia's *Luke 14* program. CBM (formerly Christian Blind Mission) is an international Christian development organisation working to improve the situation of people living with disability in the world's poorest countries. In many developing countries, 'lack of access to adequate nutrition, preventative and curative health care, access to clean water and sanitation, and unsafe working conditions'<sup>34</sup> means that those living in extreme poverty are at a high risk of acquiring a disability within their lifetime. And the reverse is also true. People with disability in developing countries are more likely to be living in conditions below the poverty line because of 'discrimination and institutional and attitudinal barriers.'<sup>35</sup> In addition, people with disability 'are less likely to have access to rehabilitation, education, skills training and employment opportunities—opportunities which could otherwise reduce poverty.'<sup>36</sup> As a result, people with disability are often 'among the poorest in any community.'<sup>37</sup> This is referred to as the 'poverty–disability cycle.'<sup>38</sup> CBM believe that if advocacy and development organisations across the world are going to make any impact on global poverty, this 'poverty–disability cycle' must first be addressed. CBM thus partners with local churches and community organisations to provide advocacy for those affected by the 'double disadvantage' of poverty and disability.<sup>39</sup>

In 2007, CBM Australia was the first branch of the international organisation to appoint someone into the position of Disability Access Officer, thus modifying CBM's traditional focus on international work also to incorporate issues of disability on the home front. Lindsey Gale was appointed CBM Australia's first Disability Access Officer and, after many interviews

with people with disability and their families, research, church visits, and consultations with theologians and disability practitioners, CBM Australia's *Luke 14* program was developed. *Luke 14* was developed in order to 'partner with Australian churches and community to develop inclusive practices (and) to promote biblical responses to the issues of poverty and inclusion.'<sup>40</sup> As such, the aim of the *Luke 14* program is to equip churches 'to be places of welcome and belonging for people and families living with disability.'<sup>41</sup> This is done through the distribution of relevant materials, including guides to improving the accessibility of church buildings and facilities, and bible studies which illuminate issues of disability and inclusion, as well as through workshops and training sessions focusing on various aspects of disability and inclusion. I have served in the voluntary position of Sydney coordinator for the *Luke 14* program since its inception. This has included facilitating workshops for various individual churches and Christian organisations, teaching on disability within theological colleges and, in conjunction with my doctoral research on disability in the gospels, presenting at a range of conferences at home and abroad in order to assist with keeping issues of disability and inclusion on the theological agenda.

The program was given the title of *Luke 14* as a direct response to the banqueting parables of Luke 14:1–24. It is not merely that churches need to focus on people with disability as the *recipients* of hospitality or charity (known in disability studies as 'the charity model'),<sup>42</sup> as might be the case if we were to limit our disability practice only to the directives in Luke 14:5–13. But rather, the combination of the *two parables together* emphasises that churches need to respond with hospitality and inclusion as a reflection of God's ultimate inclusive call to the gospel. In this way, our churches need to become not simply physically accessible through the addition of ramps or accessible parking spaces, but accessible and hospitable in terms of attitudes and practices. While providing appropriate physical access can be expensive, it is generally relatively easy to implement. Instead, it is often the attitudes and exclusive practices of our church communities, which can be much harder to adjust, and which have a greater impact on a person's experience of welcome and belonging.

Although the World Health Organisation estimates that approximately 15 per cent of the global population have some form of disability,<sup>43</sup> statistics gathered through the 2011 National Church Life Survey (NCLS), suggest that 'the Australian church has less than half the proportion of people

with a disability than the wider society.<sup>44</sup> In addition, while the NCLS indicated that ‘churches are doing well’ with respect to the development of ‘major physical facilities (the ramps, parking spaces, and toilets)’ and ‘reasonably well with minor physical facilities (hearing loops, large-print alternatives and alternative seating arrangements’, the NCLS also indicated that respondents considered Australian churches to be lacking in terms of ‘adapting programs to needs, and achieving an active culture of inclusion’ for people with disability and their families.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, although numerous churches were considered to have excellent physical accessibility, this did not automatically translate into a commitment to ‘reaching out to people in the community.’<sup>46</sup> In this way, ‘the presence of ramps and toilets, or even hearing loops and seating alternatives do not distinguish disability-engaged churches from those with no such connection.’<sup>47</sup>

In their study of the NCLS results, Lindsey Gale and the Revd Jason Forbes list a number of church practices and attitudes which contribute to ‘the ongoing marginalisation of people with disability.’<sup>48</sup> The list includes:

- developing ministries that are ‘characterised by charity motivations that fall short of identification and cast people in the role of the eternal needy recipients’;
- ‘removing people to separate groups, from a mistaken belief that some needs are better met apart’;
- ‘churches/home groups characterised by uniformity which quashes inclusive culture’;
- ‘not prioritising and proactively welcoming and including people (with disability).’<sup>49</sup>

In response to these marginalising practices, CBM Australia’s *Luke 14* programme encourages and guides churches to expand and develop church practices and ministry opportunities that are inclusive in nature. Rather than considering people with disability as merely passive recipients of church ministry, *Luke 14* encourages churches to explore expressions of community which embrace the full diversity of human ability and disability. This happens when people with disability are not merely relegated to the role of ministry recipients, but when people with disability can serve and be served, and can minister to and with both people with and without disability alike. Such ministry engages not only the Lukan Jesus’ directives to invite ‘the poor’ and people with disability to participate in the joys and fellowship of this current age, but also seeks to give people with disability

the same access to the grace and fellowship found in Jesus' eternal message of salvation and participation in the heavenly banquet.

## **Conclusions**

In this article I have briefly addressed the two parables featured in Luke 14:1–24, especially the parable of the great banquet in 14:15–24. Studies of this parable have traditionally been dominated by allegorical interpretations, which suggest that Israel's rejection of Jesus has led God likewise to reject Israel, with the beneficiaries of the gospel now being marginalised Jews and, especially, the faithful members of the Gentile community. While Luke certainly does envisage the inclusion of the Gentiles in Luke–Acts, it has been argued here that this is not the primary message of Luke 14:1–24. Instead, the parable of the great banquet, in conjunction with the previous parable in 14:5–13, emphasises the reversal of fortunes for the marginalised members of the Jewish community. Rather than remaining disenfranchised, the combined parables of Luke 14 emphasise that those who are poor and have physical and sensory disability are now genuine recipients of banquet invitations and have an important place within the Jesus movement as a foretaste of the inclusion manifested in the future kingdom.

It is argued here, however, that due in part to the allegorical reading of Luke 14:15–24, the Christian church has in many ways overlooked the need to work at including those who are marginalised in our communities. While the church has a long history of caring for those experiencing financial, emotional, or physical hardship, in reality this care has remained a form of charity, often performed at a distance, rather than a means of extending welcome and belonging and an invitation to participate as part of the church community. As a result, we, as the body of Christ, are depriving ourselves of opportunities for people with and without disability to minister alongside each other. By only seeing value in those who are physically strong, intellectually capable and/or outwardly attractive, we miss the opportunity to express the body of Christ in its fullness of diversity and dynamism in the way it is described by the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 12:12–31). This can only begin to take place when, as outlined in the Lausanne Cape Town Commitment, the churches 'recognize, affirm and facilitate the missional calling of believers with disabilities themselves as part of the Body of Christ.'<sup>50</sup> For this to take place, the church needs to take seriously the directive of the banquet host

in Luke 14 and ‘go out quickly into the streets and lanes and compel them to come in’ so that God’s house may be full.

For more information on CBM Australia’s *Luke 14* program, go to [www.cbm.org.au/luke14](http://www.cbm.org.au/luke14).

## Endnotes

1. Following the first parable, the Lukan Jesus refers to ‘the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind’ (πτωχούς, ἀναπίρους, χωλούς, τυφλούς; Luke 14:13) as potential invitees. In the second parable, the marginalised invitees are described as ‘the poor, the crippled, *the blind*, and *the lame*’ (τούς πτωχούς και ἀναπήρους και χωλούς και τυφλούς; Luke 14:21).
2. Note that although the first parable in 14:7–11 is clearly described as a ‘parable’ (παραβολή), the second is not referred to as a παραβολή by Jesus or Luke. Despite this, the majority of scholars consider the story of the great banquet as another parable of Jesus (e.g., Arthur A Just, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, ConcC, Saint Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1997, p. 575); *contra* Willi Braun, *Feasting and Social Rhetoric in Luke 14*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, No. 85, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 64.
3. Paul D Meyer, ‘The Gentile Mission in Q,’ *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 89, No. 4, 1970, p. 414.
4. CBM Australia, ‘Luke 14: Disability Inclusive Christian Communities,’ *CBM Australia* 2015, <http://www.cbm.org.au/content/our-work/luke14#.VW5Gys-eDGc> (accessed 1 June 2105).
5. See, for example, Augustine, *Letters*, 93.5; Sermon 1120; Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 3.22; Bede, *Luc. Exp.* 4.14.
6. Charles W Hedrick, *Many Things in Parables: Jesus and His Modern Critics*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2000, p. 12.
7. Arland J Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2000, p. 12.
8. Klyne Snodgrass, ‘From Allegorizing to Allegorizing: A History of the Interpretation of the Parables of Jesus’ in James DG Dunn and Scot McKnight (eds), *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research*, Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns, 2005, p. 249.

9. Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, 2 vols, Freiburg, Mohr Siebeck, 1886.
10. CH Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, London, Nisbet & Co, 1935.
11. Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, trans. Samuel H Hooke, rev. ed., New York, Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1963.
12. Contra Craig L Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, Downers Grove IL, IVP, 1990.
13. For example, Michael F Bird, *Jesus and the Origins of the Gentile Mission*, LNTS 331, London, T&T Clark, 2006, pp. 81–82; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, SP, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 1991, p. 232; Allan W Martens, 'Salvation Today: Reading Luke's Message for a Gentile Audience,' in Stanley E Porter (ed.), *Reading the Gospels Today*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2004, p. 119; Willard M Swartley, 'Unexpected Banquet People (Luke 14:16–24),' in VG Shillington (ed.), *Jesus and His Parables: Interpreting the Parables of Jesus Today*, Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1997, p. 177.
14. Kenneth E Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, their Culture and Style*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1980, p. 100; Martens, 'Salvation Today,' p. 119; Swartley, 'Unexpected Banquet People,' p. 177.
15. Martens, for example, states that '[t]he parable serves as an allegory of Jewish refusal and Gentile acceptance of the banquet of salvation' ('Salvation Today,' 119; cf. supra fn. 14).
16. See, for example, Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, p. 101; Thomas W Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus: As Recorded in the Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Luke*, London, SCM Press, 1949, p. 130.
17. Manson, *Sayings of Jesus*, p. 130, for example, suggests that the reference to compelling the poor and those with physical disability to attend the host's banquet is evidence of the interest of the Gentiles in the Q material.
18. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, p. 688, fn. 217.
19. Braun, *Feasting and Social Rhetoric*, *passim*; Joel B Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT), Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1997, p. 556; 'Das Gleichnis vom großen Gastmahl in der Longienquelle,' *Evangelische Theologie*, Vol. 47, 1987, pp. 204–9.
20. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, p. 37.
21. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, p. 37.

22. Craig L Blomberg, 'When is a Parallel really a Parallel? A Test Case: The Lucan Parables,' *TJ*, Vol. 46, 1984, p. 87.
23. Scholars of Jesus' parables such as Mary Ann Getty Sullivan believe the 'real teaching value of Jesus' parables' to reside in the 'twist' that 'changes the story's dynamic from a familiar one to a surprising one.' See Mary Ann Getty Sullivan, *Parables of the Kingdom: Jesus and the use of Parables in the Synoptic Tradition*, Collegeville, Liturgical Press, 2007, p. 3.
24. Blomberg, 'When is a Parallel,' p. 87.
25. Blomberg, 'When is a Parallel,' p. 87.
26. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, p. 234.
27. For example, it is possible that the Psalmist's declaration in Psalm 70:5 ('I am poor and needy; Hasten to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer, O Lord, do not delay') is a metaphorical use of 'poor' to mean afflicted rather than financially poor. The LXX use of the word for 'poor' (πτωχός) is often translated as 'affliction' (for example, Ps. 69:29; 72:4). Note the rendering of Psalm 74:21 in the LXX, which combines both Greek words for poverty πτωχός and πένης: 'μὴ ἀποστραφήτω τεταπεινωμένος κατησχυμμένος πτωχός καὶ πένης αἰνέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομά σου' ('Do not let the oppressed retreat in disgrace; may the poor and needy praise your name'). The combination of both πτωχός and πένης for 'poverty' occurs on numerous occasions in the LXX (for example, Ps. 82:3; 86:1; 109:16; 109:22). There are also numerous occasions where disability-related terminology is used metaphorically in the Hebrew Bible. This includes references to the 'blind' (Deut. 28:29; Isa 42:18–19; Isa. 56:10), 'deaf' (Isa 42:18–19), and 'mute' (Isa. 56:10).
28. See, for example, 2 Kings 5:1 (Naaman the Syrian who has 'leprosy'); possibly 2 Samuel 5:6, 8, with reference to the 'blind and lame' Jebusites guarding the city's walls from David's attack.
29. Kyoung-Jin Kim, 'Stewardship and Almsgiving in Luke's Theology,' *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement (JSNTSup)* 155, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 2012, p. 188.
30. J Lyle Story, 'One Banquet with Many Courses (Luke 14:1–24),' *JBPR*, Vol. 4, 2012, p. 91.
31. See, for example, the Centurion's servant (Luke 7:1–10) and the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11–17).
32. See Louise Gosbell, 'Banqueting and Disability in the Ancient World: Reconsidering the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15–24)' in Mike

- Habets and Andrew Picard (eds), *Theology and the Experience of Disability*, Surrey, Ashgate, forthcoming.
33. See above, fn. 32.
  34. CBM Australia, *Strategic Framework 2014–2018* 2013, [https://www.cbm.org.au/documents/FactSheets/StrategicFramework/CBM%20Strategic%20framework\\_web.pdf](https://www.cbm.org.au/documents/FactSheets/StrategicFramework/CBM%20Strategic%20framework_web.pdf), 4 (accessed 1 June 2015).
  35. CBM Australia, *Strategic Framework*, 4.
  36. CBM Australia, *Strategic Framework*, 4
  37. CBM Australia, 'FAQs' 2015, <http://www.cbm.org.au/content/who-we-are/faqs#.VW2QT8-eDGc>, n.p. (accessed 1 June 2015).
  38. CBM Australia, 'FAQs' 2015, n.p.
  39. CBM Australia, 'FAQs' 2015, n.p.
  40. CBM Australia, *Executive Summary: Luke 14*, Melbourne, CBM Australia, 2013, p. 1. I am grateful to Rob Nicholls, CBM Australia's Church Engagement Officer, for providing me with this resource.
  41. CBM Australia, 'Luke 14,' n.p.
  42. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Making PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) Inclusive* 2008, <http://www.making-prsp-inclusive.org/en/6-disability/61-what-is-disability/611-the-four-models.html> (accessed 1 June 2015), n.p.
  43. World Health Organization & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, pp. 28, 262. Note that this statistic is higher in developing countries.
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