

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

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[0 : 0 0] Please open your Bibles to the Gospel of Matthew in the 22nd chapter, Matthew chapter 22. Matthew chapter 22, we're looking today at the parable of the wedding feast, verses 1-14.

So if you'll read there with me, chapter 22, verse 1. And again, Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast.

But they would not come. Again, he sent other servants, saying, Tell those who were invited, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready.

Come to the wedding feast. But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized the servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.

The king was angry. And he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy.

[1 : 3 4] Go, therefore, to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find. And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good.

So the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to look at the guest, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?

And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

Let's pray together. O Lord, we again ask for your spirit's help in the opening of your word, that you would bless the preaching of your word, that you would be glorified in it, that your people would be encouraged.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Now, we were looking previously at Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, and we were talking about this is the last week before the cross.

[2 : 3 6] And now here we are really just two or maybe even three days away from the crucifixion. And Jesus is still in the temple. This is continuing the temple discourse.

And he's continuing to give a parable. And this is another parable that's explaining the nature of the kingdom of heaven, as we see there in verse 2. You may remember back in chapter 13, we spent some time looking at the kingdom parables.

He gives eight parables in chapter 13 that are all about the kingdom of God. And now here we see a return to this theme of what the kingdom of heaven is like. And so the parable not only explains the nature of the kingdom, it also continues Jesus' judgment upon Israel and upon the religious leaders of Israel.

And so he's continuing to judge them and express his judgment upon them. And we see in this parable the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. We'll talk more about that in a minute.

What I'd like to do in terms of the structure of the message is for us to look at the three people that are discussed here, the three types of guests that are described in this parable, and what each one teaches us.

[3 : 53] So first we see in verses 2 through 7, those guests who reject the invitation. Now before we get deep into looking at these guests, let's just observe the fact that this invitation is really meant to represent the gospel invitation.

The free offer of the gospel, we might call it. The gospel offer. And so as this invitation goes out, we understand the gospel going out of Jesus Christ being the Son of God who would come and die for our sins.

And so thinking back to what we have looked at previously and more recently, the parable of the vineyard or the tenants addressed how they treated the messengers.

It focused upon how the messengers were treated. We talked about the prophets who came and told, and then ultimately how the son was put to death. And now this parable is focused more on how they received the message.

But yet the treatment of the messengers is still mentioned. And really both is true in both the parables. They both address both the messengers and the message.

[5 : 01] But I would say the parable of the tenants focused on the messengers and how they were rejected and how that's going to lead to the rejection of the Christ. And now this one is talking about the message itself. You rejected the message of the prophets.

Now you're going to reject the gospel message as it comes to them as well. Both of them are pointing them to Christ. If you rejected Christ from the prophets, you're going to reject Christ from the apostles, from the church.

And we see in this parable even some of the delights of the kingdom. The delights of the kingdom are compared to a wedding feast.

And if we just think about a wedding feast, and probably in our culture the wedding feasts aren't quite as extravagant as they would have been in that day and age, where sometimes wedding feasts could last for long periods of time.

But you imagine a nice wedding feast. I don't have this in my notes, so I probably shouldn't say it, but you notice there's aughts and calf. So they're having steak. It's a nice big steak dinner.

[5 : 59] Fancy. It's the kind of thing we would delight in, a special dinner. And this is meant to represent to us just how glorious will be our time in heaven, the joys that will be there.

If we compare even a wedding feast to a funeral feast, both places there's a dinner taking place. But the atmosphere is different. There's a jovial, there's a joy to be had in a wedding feast.

And it speaks to us of what heaven will be like. Matthew Henry describes this dinner as, all the privileges of church membership, and all the blessings of the new covenant, pardon of sin, the favor of God, peace of conscience, the promises of the gospel, and all the riches contained in them, access to the throne of grace, peace, the comforts of the spirit, and a well-grounded hope of eternal life.

These are the preparations for this feast. A heaven upon earth now, and a heaven in heaven shortly. And so we see there even this idea of all these blessings that we inherit from Christ.

They're ours now to enjoy, and we taste now even of the feast. But there awaits for us in heaven this great wedding feast, where we will enjoy, there could be steak, I do believe there's going to be some physicality to the new creation.

[7 : 20] Okay? But what we're really delighting in is not the food itself, as good as that may be, but it's in all the blessings we have in Christ that are ours through him. And that's what's enjoyed here in this wedding feast, and what's represented to us in the parable by the example of a wedding feast.

And we might ask even, so if this is a wedding feast, what is a wedding being celebrated? I always want to be careful not to carry parables too far, but God's word does speak to us very clearly about a wedding in eternity, and that is between Christ and his church.

So we read in Revelation 21, 2, and then later in verses 9 through 11, And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

We might ask, well, is it the city that's prepared? There's a new Jerusalem that's coming down, that's prepared. And then later it says, Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

[8 : 34] And Revelation here is speaking not to a physical city, but to God's people. It's interesting even that they're called the new Jerusalem in light of what Jesus is saying about the present Jerusalem.

They're being judged. And in many ways they're being rejected because of their rejection of the Messiah. But there's coming a new Jerusalem, God's people, who will be married to the Lamb of God, to Christ Himself.

I think in this passage we also see, again, God's patience with man. It's something we looked at before with the parable of the tenants. You may remember, Jesus kept sending messengers, excuse me, God kept sending messengers, even sending His own Son, looking for some fruit.

If only He could get some fruit from His people. They received none, and they killed Christ. But again, we see God's patience with sinful man as He sends out more servants to those who reject the invitation.

So look at verse 4. Again, He sent other servants saying, tell those who are invited, see, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready, come to the wedding feast.

[9 : 47] So, the invitation's already gone out, and they reject it. And how does the king respond? How does God respond to this? Well, He sends out more messengers. Maybe there's some failure on their part.

Go tell them again. And we even see in this, a way in which I see God imploring people to come. He's appealing to them. There's stake going to be at this feast.

Again, it's figurative. Okay. But there's stake at the feast. There's reason to come. I've slaughtered my oxen and my fat calves. There's a feast prepared. Do you really want to miss out on this?

Free dinners. Come. Enjoy. And so, not only do we see God patient in sending additional messengers, but even in the message itself, He wants them to see how glorious, how delightful it will be at this wedding feast.

2 Corinthians 5.20 reads, Therefore, we, the church, Christians today, are ambassadors for Christ. God making His appeal through us.

[10 : 49] We implore you on behalf of Christ. Be reconciled to God. So, Paul, speaking here of Christians, I think gives us an example of what this looks like. We are those messengers sent out to invite people to come enjoy the wedding feast.

And, he says, we're ambassadors of Christ. God making His appeal through us. It's not just that we flatly present, here's the truth of the gospel. God's appealing to them through us.

And so, then, Paul says, we implore you on behalf of Christ. Be reconciled to God. We implore you. There's this emphasis.

There's this power with it. On behalf of God, we're speaking this message. And we want people at the feast because God wants people at the feast. Now, isn't that a beautiful picture for why our God is patient and long-suffering?

He wants people to enjoy the joys that are to be had in heaven. He wants them to come into the kingdom. We're not working against Him. We're imploring people on behalf of God to be reconciled to Him that they might enjoy the blessings, the joys of heaven.

[12 : 01] Now, it says, some of these servants, they ignored, others they beat, or killed. And again, this ties it in with the parable of the tenants that He said just previously to this, or just prior to this.

We saw the same example with the parable of the tenants where the messengers were beaten, killed, even killing the son when He comes. So, it helps us also to make clear that these people that are first invited are the same people that were dealt with in the parable of the tenants.

Now, who are the ones who are the tenants of God's vineyard? It's the Jewish people. And so, too, those who are first invited into the kingdom are the Jewish people. We see the connection there as well. It is the Jews who had all the blessings and they were the rightful recipients of the invitation.

They were the ones who deserved to be invited to this feast. You might think of this wedding feast and in this example we have, who do you invite to a wedding feast? Well, the family has to be invited, right?

They're of obligation. You better invite the family or aunt so-and-so or third cousin so-and-so removed. They're going to be angry at you. But then beyond that, it's your friends, those who are closest to you. If we think about that in terms of what's being said here, we imagine it's the Israelites that we're speaking of that are God's family, the ones who had the blessing, those who are closest who deserve to be invited.

[13 : 24] And then there's those who are outside. And you can imagine this example where you're inviting your family and your friends and none of them want to come to this wedding feast for whatever reason. And so you're left inviting strangers. This is how this parable is presented to us that those who are closest, the Jews who deserve the invitation, they reject it.

I think Jesus is even foretelling his coming death as the ultimate expression of that rejection. It's the son in the parable of the tenants who comes and is put to death. And so they're given the greatest invitation they could have and they reject it even to the point of putting Christ to death.

And I think it's clear in this parable that Jesus is directing it toward the Jewish people. But I think we also have to understand that there's a relevance, there's an application for people today who hear the gospel message and reject it.

And so the judgment that falls upon Israel is because the gospel was presented to them. They were invited to the wedding feast and they rejected it. And notice that some of them ignored the invitation to go about their business.

Look at verse 5. It says, they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business. And I think, does that not sound so much like our day? How many people will there be who hear the gospel invitation and ignore it because they've got other things to do?

[14 : 46] They're too busy going about the things of this world. These are good pursuits. They're farming and they're working their jobs. They're providing for their family. These are things we ought to be doing.

But, they reject the invitation because they're too busy with these things. I mean, it's not limited to American culture. I think, this is something that's common in American culture.

You hear people all the time say, I'm too busy. You can invite them to church. You could, I mean, even, I think for Christians sometimes, about spending time in the Word of God, spending time in prayer.

Well, I'm just too busy. And, isn't that the American excuse these days? I'm too busy. And here we see the same kind of argument being made. They ignore the invitation because I think they're too busy for it. They've got more important things to do than go to the wedding feast.

And so I think this is very relevant for us. There are those who reject the message today because they're too busy or they have better things to do in their mind.

[15 : 49] And the reality is those who reject the message today will face the same judgment as those who reject the message in Jesus' day and even before Jesus' coming. Look at verse 7.

the king was angry and he sent his troops and he destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Now, some of them were murderers. Some of them just ignored it.

Some of them are working their farms when the king comes and has the whole city destroyed. And I think there's some in this room who are probably in danger of this. This is the result of those who ignore the gospel invitation.

I seek each Lord's Day to make the gospel as clear as I can to invite you to believe and place your trust in Jesus Christ. I seek to implore you in the words of David excuse me in the words of Paul to be reconciled to God.

And there will be some of you who will ignore that invitation and the judgment that Jesus is speaking of here for Jerusalem for the Israelites will fall upon you. And I don't want that.

[16 : 54] And the reality is we see from the king he doesn't want that either. He keeps on sending his messengers out to implore you to come. And so it really begs the question how many people will be condemned simply because they ignored the gospel invitation.

They were too busy with their business. They were too busy with the world of concerns. They weren't in their minds at least opposed to God. They weren't angry with God. Just too busy.

I got other stuff to do. And in the end they will face the same condemnation. So that's the first group. Those who ignore the invitation and those who reject the invitation.

Secondly, there are those who are gathered in. Look at verses 8-10 with me. Then he said to his servants, the wedding feast is ready but those invited were not worthy.

Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find. And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found both bad and good so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

[17 : 59] We see in this even that the rejection of Christ by the Jews brings blessing to the Gentiles. The inclusion of the Gentiles it brings the blessings of the gospel to the Gentiles.

Here's what Romans 11 says in verses 11-12. So I ask this is Paul speaking did they stumble that's the Israelites the Jews in order that they make fall by no means rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles so as to make Israel jealous.

Now if their trespass means riches for the world and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles how much more will their full inclusion mean? And so Paul really paints that picture.

Their rejection of the gospel means that the gospel has gone forth to the Gentiles. It means blessings for the Gentiles. It means inclusion of the Gentiles into the kingdom. And he also speaks of a day in which there's going to be a turning.

We pray that that day will come soon where the Jews will repent and turn and see Christ as their Messiah. But we see that their rejection as a whole has meant blessing for the Gentiles.

[19 : 07] Again, Ephesians 3, 8-9 Paul again writing says, To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God.

I bring this up to say Paul's praising God that he gets to be an apostle to the Gentiles.

And he goes on to say to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for the ages in God.

So, Paul gets to bring to light God's plan of a mystery that's been hidden for ages. And what is the plan that God had that was a mystery hidden for ages and we are told even in God's word even for angels.

They weren't even aware of what was to come. And so, what was this great plan that God had this mystery that was revealed that Paul as an apostle to the Gentiles is bringing to light? Well, the gospel mystery is this that Gentiles would be included in the kingdom.

[20 : 19] that wasn't made clear in the Old Testament. There were times we had Nineveh, we had Rahab, we had others who were brought in but those are few and far between.

And though it's spoken that through Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed, how that would be realized was not clear to people until Christ comes. And so, Paul's making plain that this is God's plan.

So, I want to be careful. The rejection of the Jews means blessings for the Gentiles. Does that mean that God sits back and responds to man?

I mean, there are whole theologies today that are quite popular that are based upon the idea that the Gentiles are plan B. Plan A was the Jews. God failed at that.

They rejected Jesus. So, God's backup plan is to save the Gentiles. And his hope is that one day maybe he'll get the Jews back. that's not the plan.

[21 : 21] God's plan all along was that there would be rejection among his own people so that he might bring the Gentiles in. So that he might drive them to jealousy and bring in the Israelites.

But when he brings them back in, he's not bringing them back in to be a distinct nation separate from God's people. There's one people of God now. There's one nation of Israel.

And for those of you who are Gentiles who believe in Christ, you're the true Israel today. And so we have this beautiful picture. But I want you to see that their rejection means our blessing but their rejection is not outside the plan of God.

God intended even the rejection that he might draw to himself a greater people. A larger number to draw in the nations. And so Romans 9, 24 through 26 we read Paul again writing says, even us whom he has called not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles.

as indeed he says in Hosea. So Paul's evidence for the inclusion of the Gentiles is Hosea. Those who are not my people I will call my people and her who is not my beloved I will call beloved.

[22 : 29] And then Paul goes on to say and again quoting and in the very place where it was said to them you are not my people they will be called sons of the living God. And that's the promise that's to us Gentiles that we once were not a people we once were not loved of God.

But in the place where it said to them you are not my people there in that place they will be called not just God's people right? They will be called sons of the living God.

What a beautiful picture that is. And again in accordance with God's plan. Now said already but this gospel invitation is really what I understand to be the free offer of the gospel.

Look at verse 9. He says go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find. Now we talked about this some in Sunday school as we looked at Sinclair Ferguson's teaching on the whole Christ.

But the way we understand the presentation of the gospel is we are not looking to see who has a glowing cross on their forehead. And we know they are the ones that are going to be saved and we only share the gospel with them.

[23 : 37] We don't look for evidence in them. People who look like they are ready to be saved. What does it say? Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.

There is no distinguishing characteristic here. Everybody you find as many as you find go and invite them. Give them the gospel. Now maybe we don't wait for glowing crosses.

Maybe we don't imagine we are waiting for something in particular. But my guess is that as you go about your day you have friends you have co-workers you have family members and how often are we actually presenting the gospel to people?

Do sometimes we expect we assume one or two things. Either we are waiting for them to ask us some question that shows that they are interested or maybe we assume on the opposite stream that they are so wicked they won't be interested in the first place.

we know what they are living for and we think they are never going to be interested in that. As though we somehow prepare to receive the gospel.

[24 : 44] I think of Paul. What was Paul doing when the gospel came to him? He had just participated in the martyrdom of Stephen for believing in Christ and he is on his way to round up more to kill.

and God stops him in his tracks. And there is not one of us who is 99% saved and only need God to change us.

Every one of us is opposed to God and enmity with the Lord. But the gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe. So is our hope in the goodness of the person receiving the message or is it our hope in the power of the gospel?

And so he says go as many as you see I think what if we understood that to be a gospel command for us? Like Matthew 28 it's a commission we know it's a commandment go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.

But what if we see this even though it's in a parable and we can try to justify it any way we won't what if we see this as a gospel command? You're the messengers go and invite as many as you find to the wedding feast.

[25 : 54] And the question might be how many have we ignored? How many have we failed to invite? If that's God's commission to us if that's God's command to us how many have we found that we have not invited?

And notice as well the result to this those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found both bad and good. if that doesn't further solidify the idea that the gospel is to be a free offer both bad and good.

Now later the king is going to find somebody he's going to kick him out. But my understanding is it's not a part of this grouping of the bad and the good. There's one guy who snuck in we'll talk about him next okay?

But the bad and the good are those who get into the kingdom. it's those who outwardly look righteous and there's those who look like they're living for the devil. It doesn't matter. The gospel's the power of God to save all who believe.

Do we believe and trust in that gospel of power? Are we giving the gospel only to a specific group of people? Or are we freely offering the gospel to whoever we can whenever we can?

[27:17] And verse 10 I know I just read it but I want you to see in verse 10 the mission successful. They go out they gather all whom they found both bad and good so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Now again understand this parable the wedding hall is the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven we understand the kingdom and the kingdom parables is even now but in terms of eventually the new heavens and the new earth they're not going to be empty.

God's not going to fail his work. The lamb will receive the glory for those for whom he died. It won't be withheld from him but we have a part to play in bringing them into the kingdom and so we're to be inviting them and we ought to be encouraged in this work because verse 10 tells us the work will be successful.

We're not going to fail. The kingdom is going to be filled with those who are invited by ordinary people like us. Now consider that Jesus is only a few days away from the cross and then listen to his words in John 10 verses 15 to 16 he says I lay down my life for the sheep and I have other sheep that are not of this fold I must bring them also and they will listen to my voice so there will be one flock and one shepherd now there's ways in which I think Jesus is speaking of the crowd present versus the crowd not present but broadly speaking Jesus is saying there's a flock of Israel and he has other sheep outside that flock and he's going to bring them in and we can say the same is true today if we understand Israel to be God's people God has his church but there are other sheep for whom Christ has died who have not yet been brought in they will hear his voice and they will come into the kingdom and there will be one people one flock of God and so the work will be successful that doesn't mean that everybody we share the gospel with will believe not everyone will but the success rate is not based on what great sales people we are we're not peddling

Christ we're not trying to convince people we're not offering them a 60 day trial and then hoping they're not going to cancel after 60 days right the power is the gospel the power is Christ he's died for some who have not yet heard the gospel who have not yet believed and it's our task to take that gospel to them so even now as Jesus says this parable in two or three days he's going to shed his blood for those people those guests who will be brought into the wedding feast in verse 10 again it says the wedding hall is filled with guests and I think this great multitude that's described this wedding hall filled with guests is what's also spoken to us about the kingdom in revelation 7 verses 9 and 10 john writing says after this I looked and behold a great multitude that no one could number from every nation from all tribes and peoples and languages standing before the throne and before the lamb clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands and crying out with a loud voice salvation belongs to our god who sits on the throne and to the lamb and so this great crowd this great multitude who are called in from the streets foreigners and strangers the bad and the good will encompass all nations tribes and tons and one day they'll be brought into the kingdom and they'll sing the praises of the lamb that salvation belongs to him now there's one other group that's spoken of in this passage we see in verses 11 through 14

[31 : 22] I'll say one other group it's really only one other man but we could label this group those who sneak into the kingdom those who sneak in so what do we make of this one person who sneaks into the kingdom Jesus is speaking about the kingdom itself although there's definitely parallels with heaven and eternity I think we don't have to understand it strictly that way maybe one way we can understand this is to say if we think of the kingdom as the church in the world right now we could easily say the visible church the church we see will always have many false professors there will always be many in the church who say they're Christians who are not and you heard me pray earlier I don't know what we're headed for in our country but it's possible persecution is going to increase in coming years against the church and one thing persecution brings is purification those who falsely profess the name of Christ are less inclined to when it looks less like a feast when it looks like things are harder when your life is on the line

I know there are some legitimate reasons why people are staying out of the church right now during the time of the coronavirus but it's also interesting to me as things get harder for us to gather together and we think of the early church with there being threats on people's life if you're caught worshipping you're going to be put to death and there are Christians who are hiding underground worshipping in the catacombs that they might gather together and worship the Lord and it doesn't take much for us to be so fearful that we won't come out and worship now again I know there are legitimate reasons why some people are staying away and we have to respect that but at the same time as this continues on how long can we continue not to meet together as God's people if we understand that worship is a corporate worship how long can we go without participating in worship what are we willing to risk when Jesus calls us to lay there in our life and I think if that's true now with just the threats of things like a virus what's going to happen if the government does say you can be arrested you can't hold a job we don't know what's in store but it's happened in the past are we willing to stand for

Christ when things are difficult when they're hard and so the church is always going to be filled with those people who say they're Christian who aren't and when persecution comes maybe they run away or whatever but I think what Jesus is addressing here is really what we talked about before with hypocrisy with the Pharisees and the religious leaders and remember the one I keep going back to that I think is such a good example is the whitewashed tombs Jesus says to the Pharisees you're whitewashed tombs that look great on the outside but you're dead inside and so here's this man who he's at the feast and you're thinking he's part of the kingdom but he's not and what is the distinguishing factor he's not dressed appropriately for the wedding feast I'll come back to that in a second but one thing I'll say about this is you can notice in verse 11 that he deceives everybody but the king right everybody at the party is going about the party they're enjoying this wedding feast the messengers have invited these people in this guy snuck in and no one's noticed him and then look at verse 11 but when the king came in to look at the guest he saw there a man who had no wedding garment again the church is always going to be filled with false professors there will be people who will deceive us to the very end there may be people who will be members of this church who will think are saved who will look the part until we get to the judgment seat and God judges the kingdom and he can tell and so take this as a warning for all of us here while the church may be deceived God never will be deceived the king knows who belongs at the wedding feast he knows who belongs to the kingdom and so it's not enough just to trick us it's not enough to look the part to look good to be a whitewashed tomb if there's no change of heart if there's no real salvation it's not going to work right you may fool us for decades but when God judges he will know his own the land knows his own those who follow him this really is the work of Christ when he returns we're going to see this later in chapter 25 he addresses this let me just read a portion of that from Matthew 25 of

Then he will say to those on his left, depart from me, you cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. And these will go away into eternal punishment for the righteous into eternal life.

Think back to Jesus' parables of the kingdom. One of those parables he says, the kingdom is like a wheat field that was sowed. And then the enemy comes and sows tares among it.

[37 : 01] And there's no distinguishing until the reaping. And here we have that reaping, that great day of judgment. But God knows who our zone.

Some of us will be fooled by the goats. But God will not be. And so take that as a warning for you today. To examine your own heart. It's not enough just to attend church.

It's not enough to say I believe in God. It's not enough even to do all the things that Christians do if it's not accompanied by faith. If you have not placed your trust in Jesus Christ. If you're hoping to be saved by anything else other than Christ.

You're one of these false professors. And so I implore you. On the behalf of Christ. Put your trust in him. Be reconciled to God.

And the distinguishing factor as I said earlier. Between the imposter and all the other guests is what? It's the garments. It's what they're wearing. It's the wedding garment we see in verse 12.

[38 : 01] And he said to him, Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment? And he was left speechless. Now think back to what I read of Revelation 7 a minute ago. We have there the great multitude.

That no one can number from every nation. From all tribes and peoples and languages. Standing before the throne and before the Lamb. Clothed in white robes. So there's something that distinguishes all the people.

This great multitude that saved. They're clothed in white robes. But this imposter. He's not clothed correctly for the kingdom. So what is it that he's missing?

Well there's several passages that speak to it. We've already seen the white robes. Revelation 19 tells us. The fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And I think we have to understand the righteous deeds of the saints.

Even those deeds that flow out of the righteousness of Christ. And we can see that with the white robes. Isaiah 61.10 says. He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.

[39 : 06] As a bridegroom. Same language. As a bridegroom debts himself like a priest. With a beautiful headdress. And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. God has clothed me in righteousness.

And so I think we have to understand. These wedding garments. As that great exchange that we've seen in 2 Corinthians 5.21. For our sake he made him to be sin.

Who knew no sin. So that in him we might become the righteousness of God. So what's the distinguishing characteristic. Between this man and all the other wedding guests. All the other wedding guests.

Have experienced 2 Corinthians 5.21. Our sin placed on Christ. His righteousness placed on us. And if we understand that rightly. What are the white robes that the saints wear in heaven?

It's Christ's righteousness. That's the purity. The cleanliness. That clothes those who belong to his kingdom. Revelation 7 describes them.

[40 : 06] As those who have washed their robes. And made them white. In the blood of the lamb. Counterintuitive of what we understand logically. Blood doesn't make anything white. But the blood of the lamb cleanses us.

That we might be seen as righteous in God's sight. So here stands a man. Who is not depending on Christ. But tried to sneak into the kingdom. Christ isn't his hope.

He's not depending on Christ's righteousness. Maybe he's got a pretty nice suit he's wearing. Of his own righteousness. That he's worked his whole life to build. And he stands before them.

And he fools everybody else. That looks really good. You look great. You look like you belong here. Until the king comes and says. That's not the righteousness of Christ. And without that white garment.

No one can stand. No one can remain in his presence. And so he's cast out. And it's pretty drastic isn't it? Bind him.

[41 : 02] Verse 13. Hand and foot. And cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And I don't have to belabor the point. That you know that the reference to the outer darkness. Where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Consistently is hell. In God's word. So this man who. In every way tried to be a part of the kingdom. Gets thrown into hell. Because he tried in every way. Except the one way needful.

Christ. He didn't look to Christ to get in. He did it by any other way. And so we've seen really the three wedding guests.

Those who are invited to the wedding feast. What does this mean for us? Well I just have two short applications. I've tried to make application all throughout the sermon. But I want you to see first. That this feast is representative.

Of the kingdom. And points to a future wedding feast. I've mentioned some of this. I've quoted some from Revelation. But this is Revelation 19. 6-9. Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude.

[42 : 02] A great multitude. Like the roar of many waters. And like the sound of mighty peals of thunder. Crying out. Hallelujah. For the Lord our God. The Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and exult. And give him the glory. For the marriage of the Lamb has come. And the bride has made herself ready. It was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen.

Bright and pure. For the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me. Write this. Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said to me.

These are the true words of God. And so this parable that Jesus tells. Points us to. A marriage supper to come. And again. Somewhat figurative expression. But we're celebrating a marriage.

Of Christ and his church. And so we see the beauty. As this points us to something far. Far greater. And I want to encourage you. As I see.

[42 : 59] Presented to us in God's word. That let all who are thirsty come. 2 Corinthians 6.1-2. Paul writes. Then we appeal to you to receive. The grace of God.

I'm sorry. Then we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says. In a favorable time I listened to you. In a day of salvation I have helped you. Behold now is the favorable time.

Behold now is the day of salvation. I've said already how patient. Is our God. How gracious he is. That he keeps sending invitations out. And I think even now.

As I look among you. That how gracious is your God. That not because of my words per se. But because of the message of the gospel. You've heard it today. You're invited again.

Come. Be a part of this kingdom. Enjoy the wedding feast. And I want to warn you. That there are. Of these three examples. There are two groups who don't get in. There are those who reject the offer altogether.

[43 : 54] Who aren't interested. Because of the business of life. Or their preferences. And they reject it. And then there are those. Who try to get in by some other means. Again I think representative of the.

Religious leaders of that day. Who looked so good on the outside. Who fooled everyone. But inside they're dead. They didn't clothe themselves. In the righteousness of Christ. So let me ask you today.

That question. If you die. Are you going to heaven? Do you want to? Do you desire to? Do you believe yourself to be going there? Well that answers at least.

Do we belong to the first group? But then the second question is. What hope is there that you'll ever get into heaven? What hope is it that the king will receive you to the wedding feast? Our only answer is Christ.

That we be clothed in his righteousness. May he receive the glory and honor. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father.

[44 : 54] We thank you for Christ. We thank you for his righteousness. For his taking from us our filthy rides. Our self-righteousness. Even our sin.

And all that taints us. That he would take that upon himself. That he might give to us. His righteousness. And Lord we think even as we look at Matthew.

And what's coming up. That his taking upon himself our sin. Doesn't mean just that he wore it like a garment. But that he would die for it. And we're going to see in Matthew as he goes to the cross.

Him actually doing just that. And Lord we pray that our hope would be. In our dying Savior. In his precious blood that cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

And his righteousness being given to us. Lord we thank you that you are. A merciful and gracious God. We thank you for the gospel going forth to the Gentiles.

[45 : 49] Lord help us to be those messengers. Help us to take it to whoever we find. That you may bring them into the kingdom.

That they may join us for that feast. Lord let us not hoard the joy to ourselves. But share it with all who we can. That you would be glorified in that. And Lord we pray that we.

As we think about those blessings. That we would rejoice that we have a Savior who died. And imparted to us our righteousness. That we be washed. In the blood of the Lamb. We pray this in his name.

Amen. Amen.