

sermon study guide

Speaker: Ashwin Ramani

Date: November 21/22 2020

Sermon Title: The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like... Part 10: The Parable of the Wedding Feast

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Which kind of invitation do you prefer, and why: spur of the moment, or a month in advance?
2. How have you experienced God's invitation into relationship with Him? What was your initial response?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 22:1-14

3. Describe the various responses to the King's wedding feast invitation. What do we learn about the King's character from his reactions to each?
4. Verse 14 says, "For many are invited, but few are chosen." What is required of a person to move from being "invited" to "chosen"? What does it look like to put on your wedding clothes and attend the wedding feast (see Revelation 7:9)?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. How have you seen people in your life respond to the invitation to the King's great "wedding feast"? How do people's responses today mirror those in the parable?
6. What is one step you can take this week to extend the "wedding feast" invitation to someone in your life? What might extending the invitation look like?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Who in this parable do I most identify with? Am I slipping into apathy or resentment in my response to God? Do I want to live life my own way? Or am I putting on the wedding clothes and experiencing anticipation, celebration and joy when it comes to God's grace-filled invitation?

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

4 "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

5 "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9 So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' 10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12 He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless.

13 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

14 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

sermon study summary

The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like...Part 10: The Parable of the Wedding Feast

November 21/22, 2020

Pastor Ashwin Ramani

In this parable, there was a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. The king in this story is a reference to God. The son is a reference to Jesus. The banquet symbolizes the great feast that will take place when Jesus comes back for His bride. This parable shows us the different responses people have to God's generous invitation to be part of His kingdom.

"But they refused to come" (v. 3). Those who were on the guest list made a willful decision to refuse the invitation. They did not want anything to do with the king. Similarly, this is how some people today respond to God. They outright reject the gospel.

"But they paid no attention and went off" (v. 5). In the parable, the king was patient. He gave the guests another chance by sending his servants imploring the guests to come. The guests however showed apathy. They were so busy with their own affairs that they despised their loyalty to the king. Similarly, some people today are consumed by the trivial stuff of life. Rather than working their schedule around God, they try to work God into their schedules. They make all sorts of excuses such as "when my life is less busy, I will have time for God."

"The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them" (v. 6). Some of the guests were hostile and violent to the king's servants, and this caused the king to be enraged. Today, the gospel and God's servants are being persecuted, and God's wrath and just judgment are on display. The parable continues with the king commanding his servants to go and invite anyone they can find to fill the banquet hall. This speaks to the commission the church has today – evangelism, to invite people to be part of God's kingdom.

"But... not wearing wedding clothes" (v. 11). After the servants brought the guests in, the banquet hall was filled. The king then noticed a man without proper wedding clothes and had him thrown out. In those days, it was customary for wedding clothes to be sent along with the invitation; therefore, the man had no excuse. In this story, the wedding clothes signifies the garment of righteousness. The moment we place our faith in Christ, an incredible transaction takes place. The dirty garments of sin that we have are replaced with the righteousness of Christ. The wedding guest wearing a costume of his own signifies self-righteousness, hence he was thrown out of the banquet.

To summarize, verse 14 says "for many are invited, but few are chosen." The invitation is open to all but not many respond in the right way. Some are unwilling, some are apathetic, some are hostile, and some rely on their self-righteousness. How about you? Have you accepted God's invitation to join Him in His kingdom by trusting Jesus Christ alone as Lord and Saviour?