

Come to the Feast!
(Turnpike Wesleyan – April 25, 2021)

Scripture Text: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus also told them other parables. He said, “The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited. But they all refused to come! So, he sent other servants to tell them, ‘The feast has been prepared. The bulls and fattened cattle have been killed, and everything is ready. Come to the banquet!’ But the guests he had invited ignored them and went their own way, one to his farm, another to his business. Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them. The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. And he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren’t worthy of the honor. Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see.’ So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests, he noticed a man who wasn’t wearing the proper clothes for a wedding. ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how is it that you are here without wedding clothes?’ But the man had no reply. Then the king said to his aides, ‘Bind his hands and feet and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Introduction

Imagine this morning how you would feel if you planned an expensive, elaborate wedding **reception**; sent out all the invitations well in advance, even sent numerous reminders about this big event as the banquet date drew nearer and then, **nobody** comes!

Perhaps you now can sense in a small degree the **heartbreak** of God as so many reject His offer of salvation - which is an invitation to the greatest wedding banquet of all time and an invitation that has been **extended** over and over again.

From Old Testament prophecies to New Testament proclamations, God has **earnestly** and **tenderly** beckoned us to the banquet.

Today's Scripture passage has several truths to teach us ... together, let's uncover them this morning.

Central Truth - Everyone is invited to God's Wedding Feast.

God plays no **favorites**! God's gift of grace is not for a select few or for any particular denomination (as surprising as that might sound). No one person or religion has a **corner** on God's grace.

Everyone is invited ... that is great news for us gathering in this place today. No one is **left** out. Hear His words from II Peter 3:9 ... "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

The Bad News - Not everyone will attend the banquet.

Did you note the response of those that received this invitation initially? Their excuses ranged from being too **busy**, too **occupied**, too **distracted** and too **self-centered**.

One of the lessons of this parable is that we all can **exercise** our freedom to **refuse** the invitation and sad to say, this happens a lot.

Everyone will have to make an **appointment** with destiny ... where you spend that destiny solely depends on what you do with God's invitation.

Don't Be Fooled - There is only one appropriate wedding garment.

So, what was the **issue** with this guest? Didn't he come just as he was from off the highways & byways of a sin-sick world?

This particular guest deliberately and purposefully disregarded the **One Condition** for entering the wedding feast - salvation.

He tried to enter the banquet through either his own good **merit** or according to his terms/conditions. Whichever it was proved very **costly** and insufficient.

Also note that when the man was questioned about his attire that "he was **speechless**." He had no valid excuse to offer.

It appears that this man had a strong self-will and wasn't about to be told what to do or what to wear. Romans 13:14 tells us that "we must clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ." Anything else spells **doom**.

Wrap Up

I realize that there are those in the church today that still try to make it to God **their** way based on their achievements and labors. I realize that there are those in our community that even though they know right from wrong will continue to participate in a lifestyle of sin **ignoring** God and His invitation. I realize that all around us are those who are apathetic and indifferent to God's **requirements** for the banquet.

Heed the words of I Peter 4:17-18 ... "For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin with God's household. And if judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God's Good News? And also, if the righteous are barely saved, what will happen to godless sinners?"

For us here this morning, I just want to say, "Jesus is **calling** - pick up the phone and **answer!**"