

Rev. Thomas Emery
“Accept the Invitation” Matthew 22:1-14
Salem Presbyterian Church
Sunday, October 12, 2014

Jesus told an allegorical story about a king whose son was getting married so he threw an expensive bash. Even among the poor, a wedding called for a weeklong party. Therefore, you would assume that everybody would want to come to such a party. Wrong! Lots of specially invited guests refused to come. Jesus was clearly referring to the Jewish people who had been invited to be God’s chosen people. They were to be his cradle for the Messiah, a chosen race, and a holy priesthood, designed to bless the entire world. But the Jews persecuted most of the prophets sent by God, and tragically, they rejected the Messiah when He came.

The King then extended his invitation to everybody, Jews and Gentiles, the good and the bad, the rich and the poor. It is a glorious truth that every person is invited into the Kingdom of God. Come as you are! God accepts us as we are, but loves us far too much to leave us as we are. Then comes that difficult final part of the story. The king found a fellow at the party who was not wearing the proper attire and kicked him out. You probably are thinking: if the king was tolerant enough to let anyone come to his party, why would he get pushed out of shape over what they are wearing?

TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Point One: *We must accept the invitation.*

Teaching Point Two: *We cannot come to God on our own terms. God expects us to clothe ourselves with the character of Christ’s love, not the “cheap grace” of doing what we want.*

Teaching Point Three: *Have you truly made Jesus Lord of your life by doing His will?*

THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE

“For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14 ESV).

ACTION POINT

Not wanting anyone to feel inferior, the king provided standard clothing for all the guests to wear. But this fellow in verse 11 was a rebel at heart. He disregarded the generosity of the king and decided to come on his own terms. Trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is what constitutes the proper wedding garment. If you are not humble enough to admit your need for the salvation He offers, if you are not grateful enough to accept it, you cannot come to God’s party. The only person who cannot experience God’s forgiveness is the one who thinks he has no sin. The only person who cannot be saved is that one who feels no need for a Savior. Jesus does not exclude us. If we reject his offer, we exclude ourselves. Let us humble ourselves before God and come to Him on His terms! Let us examine our lives to see if we are properly dressed.

Important verses - Revelation 22:18-19 Pew Bible p. 1133; memorize: Matthew 7:24-28, Pew Bible p. 883.