LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 22 (Part 1) :1-14

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Wouldn't it be cool if we could put something through the ventilation system that we would all inhale and instantly be forced to tell the truth on every particular level? I take that back. It wouldn't be so great. Only in some cases would it be really good. I wouldn't want to know what some of you think about some things.

Why is he wearing that or something? But if only to answer the question, how have you responded to Jesus Christ? Sometimes you can tell. Somebody is very outward in their response, positively or negatively, but there are other people who kind of tend to blend in and just become a part of the body of Christ and have never actually really truly embraced or received what Christ has done for us on the cross. And that's the part that kind of challenges my heart a little bit.

The parable that we're looking at here today in Matthew 22 deals with how we respond to the invitation that we have received from Christ. Jesus is speaking to the people in parables and he says the kingdom of heaven can be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son and he sent his servants to call those who were invited, but they wouldn't come. Well, again he sent other servants saying to those who are invited, see, I've prepared my dinner. My oxen, my fat calves have been slaughtered. 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 his servants, treated them shamefully, and in some cases even killed them. And the king was angry and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. And then he said to his servants, look, 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 good and bad. And so the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there was 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. And then the king said to the attendants, bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness, into that place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen. Pray with me. Holy Spirit, open our hearts to the ministry of your word.

Teach us, fill us, direct us, give us understanding. Just as we sang today, we need you every hour. In Jesus' name we pray, amen. This is frankly one of my favorite parables because it gives an interesting picture, as I've already said, of the many ways that we do respond to the invitation of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it tells of a king who is preparing this grand feast for his son who is being wed.

And he invites people to come. And we see in here how these people respond. But as we look at these, I think we're going to find that not only is Jesus talking to the nation of Israel, which he has been doing. This is the third parable now that he's told, speaking to the religious elite of Israel who had for the most part rejected him. We know there was a few minor exceptions to that.

But for the most part, Israel, as far as their religious elite went, had just decided that we've got to get rid of this guy. First they just tried to make him look stupid, then they decided to figure out a way to actually get rid of him. But even though Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders of Israel, there are some great and important things for you and I to see in these verses in terms of how are you responding to the gospel. The first thing that we see, and we'll put these things up on the screen as we go. But if you look again in verse 2, it says, 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.

It says, but they wouldn't come. That's it. The first thing that we're going to put on the list here as far as the way people respond is that they simply ignore the invitation. They just refuse to come. And there's no reason, you'll notice, that's stated here as to why the people didn't respond to the invitation that was being given by the king.

It's hard to understand because it was a pretty big deal to get an invitation, a royal invitation, to come to a royal event. I mean, that was a very honoring thing to happen. For you to receive something like that would be a big deal. It's a big deal for people to get an invitation to come to Christ too, to receive all that he has done and so forth. And it's hard for you and I to understand why people would just shrug that off.

But they do because it's just not important to them, sort of a thing. I remember years ago, I was talking to a guy in my office back when I had an office. I don't have an office here at the church anymore because it's hard to get things done here. But anyway, I was talking to this guy in my office and I don't remember why he came. I think he came to talk about relationships or something.

I think it was a girlfriend issue. And as we were talking, I sensed that this guy did not know the Lord. And so I started, I thought, you know, I'm going to share the gospel with this guy. And as simply and as succinctly as I could, I talked to him about what Jesus did on the cross and how he needed to receive the forgiveness that is in Christ and so on and so on and so on. And I stopped and kind of took a breath to see, you know, how he was going to respond.

And he just kind of went, huh. And just proceeded to keep talking about what he was talking about before. Didn't even mention anything. Other than just kind of like, oh, okay. And just didn't connect, you know, some people just ignore the invitation because typically they don't understand why even the invitation was given.

And for those people, we need to pray for them that they would have what I like to call a revelation of sin. You know, it's pretty tough to convince somebody to come to Christ if they don't think that they need to. You know, I mean, if there isn't really any sense of any personal lack or they don't even recognize sin in their lives as being really much of an issue and they're convinced, you know, I'm a good person or whatever else, because they're comparing themselves with their neighbor. And you start talking about Jesus being the savior and they're kind of like, they may not even say it, but they're kind of like, savior? Why do I need a savior?

What do I need to be saved from? And so it's just kind of like, whatever, I guess there's people out there that need to be saved. Well, God bless them, you know, sort of a thing. But as far as they're concerned, it's just kind of a non-issue. They just ignore it.

You get an invitation and it's just kind of ignored. But you know, the writer of Hebrews said it best, and I think this is so powerful. In Hebrews chapter two, he said, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? You know, what he's basically saying here is if you're drowning, you know, and somebody comes along and it's the only person that's coming along and they throw you some kind of a flotation device to pull you up on board and to save your life and you reject that. It's like, well, what's left?

How shall we ignore such a great salvation? This is all there is. The Bible says there is, there's only one way to be saved. There is only one name given under heaven by which we must be saved. The name of Jesus Christ.

That's it. There's not two ways or three ways or five ways, you know, and so how, what, what, what, how, how, how are we going to escape if we ignore the salvation that has been offered? You know, you, you don't ignore what God does and, and, and just go on with life. Verse four, look what it goes on to say

again. He sent other servants, he said, tell them, you know, I've prepared my dinner, my ox and my fat calves have been slaughtered.

Everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast. But they paid no attention. One went to his farm, another went to his business and so on and so forth. Couple of things I want to bring out about this.

First of all, did you notice that the king said, it's all prepared. Did you catch that? Did you see that in there? Do you know that that's a characteristic of the gospel? It's all prepared.

What was the responsibility of the people? All they had to do is come. But there is such a mindset with so many people that I've got to get my life in order. You know, you invite people to church, hey, you want to come to church? They're like, well, you know, there's some areas of my life that I'm kind of working on.

And once I kind of get those things dialed in, I'll start coming to church. As if the people who come to church have life dialed in. All they got to do is meet us and find out that's not the case, right? Come on, you guys, right? Yeah, thank you.

I thought I was the only one. You know, but yet people have this tendency to kind of think, you know, that somehow church is for people who are put together. They need, they feel the need to bring something to the table. You know what the king says to the people in the invitation? It's all prepared.

This is not a Minnesota thing. We did potlucks in Minnesota. You didn't come together and have meals except that it was potluck. This is not what we're doing here in the kingdom of God. God prepares the whole shooting match and he just says, come and receive.

That's the first thing that I really like about this. The other thing that this tells us here is what other sort of response that we have to the Lord. Did you remember the very last comment that Jesus made in this thing? He said, many are called, but fewer chosen. That's really the summary of the entire passage.

Many are called, but fewer chosen. Why are few chosen? Well, we already saw in one case it's because they just ignore the invitation. They're called, but they just ignored it altogether. But the second thing is given to us in these verses.

Did you notice? And let's put the second thing up on the screen here in case for those of you who are taking notes. The second thing is some were too, they were too busy with life and business and stuff. It says that the invitation went out and the king said, it's all ready you guys. By the way, you know, back in those days, they would give invitations in a strange sort of a way.

They would invite people, first of all, without giving a date. If a king was going to have a feast or a banquet or something, he would first send out a message to the people and say, we're having a big bash. But nobody would ask when or because they knew that the date hadn't been set yet and that later on they would receive a message saying that it was all prepared. So nobody really knew. They weren't all that, you know, we do that thing, save the date.

We send things out. And that's fine. Cause you know, we're very calendar oriented and, and, and very, you know, sort of a thing. But you know, back in those days it was kind of like, Hey, we're having a party, you know? And nobody would think to say when if, because if you did, they'd say when it's ready and you didn't know exactly when it was going to be ready.

So they'd send out this general invitation and then the servants would go out and just say, it's already, it's okay. It's good. We're good. You know, and there's no refrigeration, there's no, there's no, you know, well, maybe we'll do it tomorrow instead. It's like, it's ready, come and receive and so forth.

And what did they do? Says that some of them went to their, their, their, I got stuff going on. I just bought a field and you know, I got things going on, you know, just kind of busy, you know, sort of a thing. It's easy to get busy, isn't it? It's easy to let work become kind of just this very, just this enormous, huge thing in our lives.

And you know, God doesn't have any problem with hard work at all. In fact, the Bible has a lot of good things to say about working hard, being very diligent, diligent about what you do. But you know, work was never meant to eclipse our attention that we would otherwise give to God. And yet it's interesting. And people amaze me.

I mean, I'm, I'm, I'm kind of a student of human nature just because that's the position God's put me in. But I'll, I'll see people, I'll run into people at the store or at Walmart. I guess Walmart's a store, isn't it? Seems like a zoo most of the time, but I guess it qualifies as a store, you know. But you know, I'll, I'll run into people and if they haven't been to church, and usually I don't know if they haven't been to church, but, but they're aware of something going on in their lives.

And so they'll see me in the store, Oh, pastor. And they're kind of immediately like, Hey, we've been busy. That's the first thing they'll say to me sometimes. It's like, we've been, and I go, good. And I'm thinking to myself, why are you telling me this?

Because it's, you know, I didn't, I, I see you, but sometimes I forget which time I saw you, you know? But anyway, it's this instant sort of a thing in people's minds where they, they, they immediately throw out,

well, we've been really, we've been really busy. Real busy at our house, busy, busy, busy. And I'm kind of like, yeah, okay. What a dumb thing to say.

Sorry if you've said it to me. I don't remember if you did, so I'm not talking to you personally. But that's really a dumb thing to say just, you know, because you know what, nobody should be too busy for God ever. I'm sorry. You know what I mean?

It's like, I know life gets busy, but you either got priorities in the kingdom of God or you don't. And I have learned, and I think you probably have too. You make time for the things you think are important. You know, you make time. And so I'm not trying to be critical.

I'm just saying that's just the way it is, you know, so, but here, what we see in this situation is, is, and this is the second reason why people are called, but not chosen because we allow other things in life to crowd out the invitation. We allow other voices, other exciting events and things to crowd out the reality of what God is doing in our lives, and we're just so busy, you know, we're so just focused on our lives that Jesus comes along with the best offer of a lifetime, and we're just busy. I mean, wouldn't you love to have it on your headstone? He was busy. You know, wow, he's not busy anymore, you know, but anyway, you know, I mean, our, our busy-ness can, can become such a preoccupation that it becomes unhealthy for us, you know.

Remember, remember what Jesus said, let me show you a passage from Luke. This is a great passage. Luke 17, he says, just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage right up until the very day that Noah got up into the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all, basically. And likewise, he says, just as it was in the days of Lot, they were eating and drinking and buying and selling and planting and building right up until fire, you guys remember the story of Lot, fire from heaven fell and literally consumed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

And they were just, I mean, somebody was probably in the middle of making a deal. Here's the money and the thing, and, and they just, they were too busy to notice something's going on, you know. The next reason that few are chosen is found in verse six. Look with me there. It says the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully and killed them.

Now these are the people that we don't have a hard time knowing how they feel about the gospel because they usually threaten our lives. But you know, this is the third reason we'll put it up on the screen here for you. Others resisted the invitation with violence, even resorting to murder. And you know, this is

probably one of the toughest things for you and I to understand as believers, how somebody could hear an invitation that goes like this, hey, just got a little invitation here for you. God sent his son to die for you because you see sin had separated you from him.

So he sent his son to die on the cross in your place. And if you will receive him and what he did for you on the cross, you'll receive forgiveness of sins, the promise of everlasting life, and you will be, get this, a child of God. And I don't know about you, but that's the best offer I've ever had. And it's almost incomprehensible for you and I to imagine that someone would meet that sort of an invitation with a violent reaction or even think to themselves, I got to get rid of that person. They need to die.

Going around telling people they're forgiven, offering eternal life, kill them all, sort of. And you're like, what is the deal with that? Well, it's not just the invitation you see that they're rejecting. They're rejecting the whole issue of change. Here's what John tells us about it.

This is an important passage. He says, this is the verdict. Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness, bottom line, instead of light. Why? Because his deeds were evil.

And it says that everyone who does evil absolutely positively hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. See, that's the problem you see. You and I are walking around telling people they can be forgiven. And what that does is it brings up the issue of why people need to be forgiven. And when we bring up the issue of why people need to be forgiven, it brings up the issue of our evil deeds.

And people don't want us to bring up the issue of their evil deeds. They don't want to have that brought into the light so that it can be seen. They want to live in the darkness as crazy as that might seem I was talking to somebody just before the service here about how This time of year is one of the toughest for me when we're in one of these inversions And we don't see the sunshine for days now. We're supposed to see the Sun here by Tuesday if we don't I'm moving Flat out. I'm gonna pick up every we're going we're leaving.

I don't know where we're I'm gonna go where the Sun shines Maybe just temporarily up to the mountains. I don't know. I gotta have the Sun don't you don't you love to just be in the light? Oh, I can't imagine somebody wanting to live in the darkness It's just a big fat drag But it is the fact of the matter and it's why some people even though they are called they are not chosen and They respond with Violence and how does the Lord respond look at verse 7 in your text? It says the king was angry and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city and by the way, it's just a little too coincidental I think

to see this verse and not see it as a prophetic statement about what was going to take place about 35 to 40 years from when this statement was given and that is the fall of Jerusalem Because about 40 or so Years from this this moment when when when when Jesus is telling this parable The Roman Army will come to the city of Jerusalem and break it down and burn it to the ground Because they rejected the offer violently Rejected the offer that God held out to them this offer of great love and great Tenderness and so forth and You know we deduce from these verses that rejecting God's forgiveness is a choice to choose God's wrath instead Not crazy.

Sometimes people will say to you or say to me You know, I just have a really hard time believing in a God, you know who just pours out his wrath on people. Listen wrath is Just God's reaction to sin. Okay, God can't abide sin you and I can he can't he's a holy righteous pure God and sin cannot Darkness cannot be where light is and he just he can't he can't abide it Wrath is the holy Righteous response of God toward sin, it's just It's just what it is But you nobody nobody has to have wrath poured out on them You have to choose it and you have to choose it by rejecting the alternative by rejecting the offer The invitation you have to refuse it. You have to say no. I don't want that Thank you, but no, but you have to understand something people When you refuse the offer the invitation you choose wrath, that's all that's left There is no third choice Okay, and God doesn't want to pour out his wrath on anybody God says even in the Old Testament.

He says do I take delight that people should die? Do I delight in doing the of course not? He says he says live receive what I have and live You know God has just he's poured himself out that we might live We have to we have to say to him No, I don't want that and if that's your decision God is going to respect it Even Though he may be horrified at it he will respect it because it pleased him very much to give you a free will and He's not going to take it away Because to remove that that ability to to reasonably Rationally make decisions and to choose for yourself is what sets you apart from every other living being Human beings are the only ones who reason and And and come to a conclusion and that's why God says in the Old Testament come let us reason together Though your sins are as scarlet They shall be as white as snow come Let's talk about this. Let's think it through. Let's reason it out, you know and then we come to The people who did respond look with me at verse 9 in the text It says go therefore did I read the rest of it?

I you know what? I didn't reverse a he said to the his servants the wedding feast is ready But those invited are not worthy so he says 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 they gathered all whom they found both good and bad. And so the wedding hall was filled with guests I have to kind of snicker and smile a little bit when I see this statement about good and bad because it's a statement a reference point for you and I to

understand who is invited into the kingdom of God to whom the invitation goes out and And and for my own part. I happen to lump myself into the bad part and I am so thankful That God has given the invitation to bad people That they might come to him and find forgiveness and that he might change and transform our hearts and our minds and make us Christlike Blows me away that he would do such a thing But he does and it's amazing but you know the religious leaders of Jesus's day would have snickered and been snide about that whole concept of of Those who are unworthy being invited actually to come in to a royal sort of a feast situation They didn't think those people had any chance. They thought that because of their keeping of the law They were the ones who were going to be accepted, you know, that's why Jesus told that story about the the the Pharisee who was Standing and praying in the temple and he's like, oh god I'm just so thankful for all the things you've given me and then he sees this tax collector standing nearby Who's also praises most of all God.

Thank you that I'm not like him. Oh To be like him fodder for hell Fuel for the fires of Hades, you know, thank you God That and and and Jesus said in the story that the the tax collector was standing and he wouldn't even lift his head to God He just he had his head down. Oh god, he beat on his breast. Forgive me God for I am a sinner Jesus said one of those men walked away forgiven that day And it wasn't the Pharisee But you see that's the way the Pharisee saw people that's the way they looked at people They believed that people were born in sin to the point where they they could never get out It was only by them lifting themselves up and keeping the law and so forth that they were able to do that And Jesus tells this story. He says that those those who originally received this invitation.

They weren't they they weren't worthy And so who did he go get He got the rabble. He just told the service just guys just go out and find people just go find Anybody that's us by the way in case you didn't know we're anybody and and we're those people and he just gathers them in and brings them in and and how good he is and I'm so glad because I was hopelessly born into sin and Jesus Christ gathered me up with his grace and mercy and tenderheartedness and Washed my sins away, and I'm just I'm so delighted by that and then and then we come to this final section Which will give us the last reason why some people may be called But are not chosen look again in verse 11 and following it says when the king came in to look at the guests He saw there was a man there who didn't have any wedding garment He said to him friend How did you get in here without a wedding garment and and he was speechless now? You might be reading this he kind of thinking well. You know what's all that about well in this story? because the the the king is inviting people who are poor and and they're just kind of the the everyday common people they No way in their entire life would they have something to wear to this grand of a of a feast and so Graciously the king gives them a garment to wear it gives him clothes even you know we talked about

how he even prepares the whole feast and they don't have to bring anything even provides the clothes how cool would that be you know and He but he finds this man as he's walking around at this feast who doesn't have wedding clothes on And he says to him How did you get in here without a wedding garment, and it says the man was speechless well What is the wedding garment?

What is you know a parable is a is a picture of things? Well the wedding garment is something you know obviously it's something you put on It's a picture of what he gives us when we truly come to Christ. It's a picture of righteousness Right-standing with God Okay, he gives it to us, and we put it on like like a robe It's it's interesting to me that when unbelievers talk about us Christians. They like one of their favorite terms for us is self-righteous oh you self-righteous Christians which tells you right there they don't understand right because there's no such thing as a self-righteous Christian doesn't exist in fact the reason we're a Christian is we had no righteousness we had to come to him for it you know that's why we came in the first place we came to him we said I got nothing I have literally nothing except the sin that I need to be forgiven from and that's my unrighteousness so we come to him we receive forgiveness and what does he do he clothes us in his righteousness so now the father sees you in the righteousness of his son Jesus Christ isn't that a trip and the enemy loves to come to you especially when you've messed up tries to convince you that because you've messed up God now sees you differently that is a lie from the pit of hell my friends God sees you as he's always seen you since you came to him and that is robed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ that's how he sees you he literally sees his son's righteousness when he looks at you and and do you think that your sin is going to take that away do you think he's going to kind of you know when you sin or you mess up you go up give me that back you can't have that now till you till you clean up we didn't get the robe by cleaning up in the first place he cleaned us up right he gave it to you when you were at your worst that's when he gave you the robe of righteousness he clothed you with it is it's a wonderful passage Paul talks about this this what we call imputed righteousness in Romans chapter 3 love this passage but now he says the righteousness of God has been manifested or brought to light then it apart from the law it's not about keeping rules and regulations although the law the prophets talk about it they bear witness to it but he says no no no no this righteousness of God comes how through faith in Jesus Christ to all who really work hard to clean themselves up oh wait a minute it doesn't say that does it it says to all who guys say it aloud everybody at all who what there you go it's by faith it is a righteousness imputed by faith right now you mess up your righteousness is still there because it's imputed by faith not by works it doesn't come by law your righteous standing is through the blood of the Lamb and that remains even though we mess up from time to time we come to him we say father forgive us but you know what the righteousness is still there I'm still righteous before my father because I'm not wearing my righteousness I'm wearing his righteousness it's imputed to me not earned you know it's really interesting

this whole thing about this this robe of righteousness is not only mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament it's mentioned in connection to a wedding in the same way Jesus is telling this parable it's in Isaiah chapter 61 and it goes like this he says I will greatly rejoice in the Lord my soul shall exalt in my God look at this why for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation he has covered me with the robe of righteousness oh I like that as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels I have been adorned with the righteousness of Christ and so have you if you've received it but see this last section of verses here in this parable is meant to be given as a warning you see because there are some who would come in among us and the church you know is open to anybody we don't you've never noticed we don't grill you on you when you're coming through the door and ask you to give the date you know when you came to the Lord and to show proof of the fruit of your salvation and we did this you know it's open to everybody you come in and sit down and have a seat and hang out right so there are people who come to church every week sometimes and then and they and they sing the songs and they have a Bible in their hand or whatever and something but something's different about them if Jesus to walk among us he might look to someone and say wait a minute where's your robe where's your garment I've provided a robe why don't you have it on and did you notice the man was speechless on the day that we stand before God there will be no excuse given because there will be no excuse because it was free all you had to do was receive it that's all so what excuse you gonna give when something was free I couldn't afford it didn't cost you anything in the first place I couldn't find it you come to me to get it how about maybe I didn't want it it's not really an excuse and he will be speechless the time is still available to all of us to dawn that robe of righteousness but you see it has to first come with the understanding that what I am wearing apart from Christ are filthy rags and that's not an easy thing to admit people don't you like to admit that you know I always talk in church about sin I was trying to make people feel rotten actually that's not true but we do need people to understand that it is because of sin that Christ came in the first place if if sin wasn't an issue there would have been no reason for Jesus to come none because he came as Savior if there was nothing to be saved from you don't need a Savior but the fact that he came shows that there was a need for him to come and that need for you and I is forgiveness you need forgiveness I need forgiveness we recognize that in and of ourselves we are dressed in filthy rags that in fact that's the best I've got that's the best you've got to and you know what that isn't going to get you in to the wedding feast that that that that isn't going to cut the mustard you must dawn the robe of righteousness and to do that you have to humble yourself and say Lord I need your forgiveness I need the life that is in Christ I need to be made righteous by the blood of the Lamb so you see this this passage is a very important thing that we look at even though again it was given primarily an essential I won't say primarily but it was given specifically there for the the the elite leadership of Israel and because of their rejection of

Messiah it is a reminder to you and I of the many ways that people respond and why in fact some people are called but in fact are not chosen and we need to look at a passage like this and we need to say you know what I am not going to ignore this offer of life I am not going to become so engrossed in the business and the busyness of of this life that I just don't even have time to think about God I am not going to become obstinate and violent when someone approaches me with with a message of the gospel of Jesus and I am not going to refuse his per provision of righteousness that robe of righteousness I want everything that he has for me amen I hope that's your heart I hope there's not one person here today who has turned him down I hope there's not one person who is thinking to themselves you know this is all good and fine but I'm gonna just wait I'm gonna wait till a little bit later on in my life and what's a dumbest thing anybody could have you don't know how long your life's gonna be you have absolutely no idea today is the day today is the day that you and I need to respond to the king because the invitation has gone out come it's all prepared it's all prepared you don't need to bring something to this thing that of your own doing you just come and you receive what I've given you and you will have eternal life you