Many Are Called, Few Are Chosen

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Preacher: Todd Born

[0:00] Yeah, so this morning we are back in our series of Matthew chapter 22.! We are in verses 1-14 this morning. And I just want to say it is a joy to be able to do this.

To get up here. To bring the word of God to you guys. To worship with you. To worship our Lord together. To look out and to see relationships that I've built.
To hear my son scream. I will be hearing much of that. It is a joy and a privilege to bring the word of God to you guys today.
So we are in the last of a set of three parables. A set of three parables that we've been going over in Matthew so far. While Jesus enters the temple and is giving these three sets of parables.
We are seeing that they are directed against religious leaders of Israel. And if you remember all the way back to the parable of two sons in chapter 21 verse 28.
[1:04] One of the main points drawn from that parable was Jesus exposing hypocrisy of their love for God. They pretended like they loved God.

But they didn't live like it. And Jesus explicitly in that parable condemned them for their lack of response to John the Baptist ministry. What was the central message of John the Baptist ministry? If you recall the beginning of Matthew. Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And basically Jesus said, well, you Israel, the leaders of Israel, you acted like you had honor and time for John. But you didn't listen to his message. You are hypocritical. You didn't repent. And then in the parable of the landowner, Jesus explicitly deals with the religious leaders of Israel's rejection of Jesus' own ministry.
And now that brings us back. That brings us to our passage today. So I would invite you this morning, if you would stand with me, in honor of reading of God's word.
[2:19] Matthew chapter 22, verses 1 through 14. Oh, I forgot. Does anybody in here not have a Bible? Would you like to have a Bible? Raise your hand, please. We would be glad to get you a Bible.

Okay. Matthew 22, verses 1 through 14 says, And again, Jesus spoke to them in the parable 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. And again, he sent out 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. 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 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.
[3:38] 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 outer darkness.
In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.
May God add a blessing to the reading of his word.
Please, guys, be seated. And I will then ask now for God's help. God, we come before you, Father, and we ask, O Lord, that you would open the eyes of our hearts and minds to once again this

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morning to see your glory, to see your love, to see your patience and your kindness towards us. [5:02] And Father, that we would also, Father, be reminded of the sobering reality of the judgment to come, Lord, for those who reject your message.

O Lord, draw us near. Build us up. Encourage us and draw us closer to your son, Jesus, in whom all things are for. We pray. Amen.
This parable of the wedding feast actually breaks up into three parts quite nicely for our time this morning. First, we see that the king sends out a royal call to those invited.
And those invited reject the invitation in verses 1 through 5. Secondly, we see the king sends out an invitation to all people in verses 7 through 10.
Lastly, for the final section of the parable, we'll see that the king's just response when a man in his own neglect shows up without the right attire in verses 11 through 14.
[6:05] So it's a pretty straightforward passage of what we have. Not a super complicated text before us this morning. But don't pass over this parable quickly.

Don't pass over any word of God too quickly. This text should be a startling and shocking, sobering text.
And at the same time, it should be a joyous text for us. Jesus is bringing the shock factor to help his audience see the reality of what happens when we reject his gospel offer.
God has spread his feast for us in his gospel through his son. It has cost the very life of his own son.
And he most graciously invites all to come. He makes it clear here that there are only two options. Feast or judgment.
[7:10] So if we want to feast, we must go, repent, believe, obey. When we reject the call to the gospel, it's rebellion against God Almighty.

And we deserve judgment. So what I want to invite you to come away with today is that our need is to come and receive the righteous robe of Christ so that you can feast in the goodness and the good of his gospel.
So that brings us to point number one this morning. Look with me then at verses one through four.
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 a son and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come.
The king has prepared a wedding feast, but this is no ordinary wedding feast. Not an ordinary wedding feast in what we might even think of today in our time, in our culture.
Wedding feasts often in Jewish culture lasted up to one week. And this also on top of that is a royal feast celebrating the wedding of God's son, the king's son, the crown prince, the heir to the throne.
[8:39] This wedding feast is what all of history has been making its way towards, the telos of all things. And this, my friends, is the feast to end all feasts.

As you know, a wedding feast is not a feast, is not a celebration without guests either, without those you have chosen to invite, those you hold dear, those who you love.
The king wanted this select group of people to be present, to be there. So he sends his servants to call this select group, Israel, God's chosen people, and he says, hey friends, it's time.
It's time. And they should know this, and they should be ready. It's time. It has come. The time has come to celebrate my son. But this invitation is not your simple little RSVP or like apps that we have now that send out a text and a reminder to sign up with fun little emojis on them.
This invitation though, it's a call. It is a call and a summons from the king. So when a king sends out his messengers! And he calls you to come to his kingdom, to his palace, into his presence, you come.
[10:10] In the epic trilogy, Lord of the Rings, there was a king. Why are you guys laughing? It is an epic trilogy. Go check it out. Seriously. There was a king, King Islador.

King Islador forged an oath between his kingdom and the men of the White Mountains to fight within one another when called upon. And a time came though when King Islador summoned these men to fight with him against the rising dark power of Sauron.
But these men of the White Mountains refused his summons. So King Islador, in his anger, in his fury of them, in their rebellion against his summons, cursed the men as they fled into the mountains, cursed as the sleepless dead indefinitely.

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So when a king calls, you come. Yet, in stark contrast to any earthly or storybook king, what we have here today in our text, what we see in the scriptures, the eternal king of the cosmos is not a king who is quick to curse us for all eternity, who is harsh.
Rather, here today, we see God's patient and extravagant love. My friends, the Lord our God is patient and slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love.
[11:41] How does he respond when they do not come? He sends out more servants. This time, he tells them what's on the menu.

He tells them what's on the menu, trying to coax them even more to give them another chance. See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen, my fat calves have been slaughtered and everything is ready.
Come to my wedding feast. It's kind of like when our church announces there's going to be a potluck. You know, the spread is going to be good. Boy, it's good.
You look at the spreadsheet online and you see the menu and you know it's going to be a feast and you don't want to miss out. You don't want to miss out on our potlucks here.
So just like that, you are being coaxed into our meetings. It's another way that we bring you guys into our meetings. So God here is giving us the full spread. He's revealing and giving us every chance.
[12:48] Our God is such a kind and loving God that in his forbearance of our sin, our rebellion, he chooses to share with us the menu of his glorious feast.

A feast of all feasts where he provides everything for us. All you have to do is show up. Leave your Oreos at home.
Those aren't needed at this feast as grateful we are for you guys to bring the Oreos. Just show up and he will give you all things.
As 18th century theologian and pastor Jonathan Edwards so wonderfully helps us understand even further the significance of this feast here. The creation of the world seems to have been especially for this end that the eternal son of God might obtain a spouse toward whom he might fully exercise the infinite benevolence of his nature and to whom he might as it were open and pour forth all the immense fountain of condescension love and grace that was in his heart and that in this way God might be glorified.
sounds good right? Sounds great but shockingly none of those whom the king calls shows up.
[14:18] In fact we see here some even respond with anger and hatred in their hearts terrorizing and killing his messengers 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 killed them.

Jesus here is now starting to point out to the people of Israel their indifference to God their hypocritical hearts and their unworthiness their utter unworthiness to come to be a part of the king's invitation but they paid no attention going right back to their own ways what was more important to them focusing on work going back to their homes working on their homes their businesses revealing the idols of their hearts God's chosen people are expected to share in this feast yet in their hardness of hearts they are missing it they are completely missing it they are turning away from it they are ignoring it they don't believe it think back to the Old Testament scriptures and see God's great patience and loving kindness has already done so much for his people he is sending prophet after prophet to remind them he said even since
John the Baptist prepared a way for Jesus to remind them to call them back to himself pointing to the coming of the promised Messiah to free them from their bondage of sin and shame I'm more reminded here of faithful witness of people that can get distracted and caught up and live in the church and live their lives hearing the gospel over and over and over again being surrounded by Christians being surrounded by the church reminds me of a story of one of my friends who worked in a factory for years he was sharing the gospel with a guy in the factory and he would come in and share and the guy would hear it for years upon years my friend would continue to be faithful and sharing the gospel and he would share even just how the
Lord spoke to him in his devotions that morning man I was reading in Job this morning and this really affected me man God is incredible and it was actually in that moment of him sharing about how God spoke to him to the passages of Job that this guy realized his need for Jesus and saw the glory of Jesus and repented and came to faith God it was in that persistence of him sharing the gospel to someone who had just been so hardened to the gospel who had been assumed the gospel so here!

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here we see we've seen this multiple times and most recently we see just before this one there's a warning there's a warning here that God's patience it does have an end date for us as Ed pointed out to us a couple weeks ago God's patience has an end date for those who continually reject God's invitation to come the king was angry and he sent his troops and destroyed those murders and burned their city then he said to his servants the wedding feast is ready but those invited were not worthy and you may be wondering to yourself this seems pretty severe my friends make no mistake there is no one innocent!
[18:38] before God there are no victims here the first three chapters of Romans makes that clear to us it is in the very unrighteousness that one suppresses the truth we have been revealed everything has been made known about God but in our very unrighteousness we suppress the truth of God so here we see indifference to his gospel is rejection of his gospel there is no middle ground when Brittany and I lived in the Middle East we lived in a country ruled by a very prestigious royal monarchy while speaking to native citizen out on a college campus one day he's a Muslim guy I was sharing the gospel with him talking to him about all things gospel debating whatever and I asked him at one point what would happen if you or

I were to be invited to the king's palace here but yet we would only reject his invitation but not just reject him but we would spit in his face and we would mock him and jeer at him you know what his response was he responded that that person should be imprisoned at least but I think he should be killed and I looked at my friend and I said so if we spit in the face of God the king of the cosmos by rejecting his invitation for salvation through Jesus what do we deserve he was silent he didn't have a response this should be a sobering reality that judgment is coming for all who reject the invitation and it should bring a sense of urgency even in our witness as we go out from this place to those around us and we need to be reminded the sobering reality of who we have as a
God we have a glorious God who deserves all praise and honor and glory he is the eternal king of the cosmos he is our creator and he is completely just and righteous in his judgment to condemn and to destroy all those who in their sinfulness reject his invitation continually this is a stark warning here Jesus is putting before the people of Israel those who reject who have rejected and are rejecting this invitation will justly face the judgment and full wrath of God he makes it clear that God has not held back no he has not held back anything rather he has provided everything and his loving kindness and patience has done everything for them to come this leads us now to our next point the king's invitation to all people in verses 8 through 10 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 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 now here we see the king is sending out his servants then now for a third time but this is not just to a select group of people this time it's to all people so that the wedding hall is filled with guests it's ready the first group was not worthy in what is a wedding feast again without guests so now Jesus makes it clear that the message of the kingdom of God is not only here for ethnic Israel but it is also for the Gentiles it is for all people throughout Matthew's gospel we have seen glimpses to the reality that the gospel invitation is to the Jew first but it is also to the Greek if you can remember reaching far back into our series this part of the parable is yet just an echo of what
Jesus said in response to the faith of the Roman centurion the Greek Matthew chapter 8 verses 10 through 12 says when Jesus heard this the faith of the centurion he marveled and said to those who followed him truly I tell you with no one in Israel have I found such faith I tell you many will come from east and west and recline at the table with Abraham Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into outer darkness and in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth Jesus is showing Israel in its leaders that this gospel in tation this glorious feast of the gospel is not just for a slight group of ethnic people it's not just for a certain class of people but the promise was for all it's for all people everywhere it's not just sorry it's you might even recognize the same language from the end of
[24:40] Matthew and the great commission here go therefore the king's servants go therefore out to the main roads and gathered all they could find the good and the bad and guess what happens the wedding hall is filled it's filled with guests who despite their lack of any advantage that Israel had were willing to come to the feast church what a glorious God we have that he is passionately committed to the fame of his own name that he is passionately committed to his love of his son that

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he will not stop he will not stop until the wedding hall is filled with guests from all nations for the glory and the praise of his name as pastor theologian

John Piper has famously said worship is the goal and fuel of missions exist because worship doesn't not to be confused John Piper actually on this quote has said he's been confused multiple times to think that worship just means worship nights singing songs and stuff like that so not to be accused here with that type of worship but the worship of our whole being of people coming and laying down their lives before God this is the church's primary mission motivation the glory of God to bring God all the glory and honor and praise yes people will face God's wrath and eternal judgment without the gospel and yes that should grieve us that is a good thing that aligns with God's heart not wishing that anyone should perish but that all should reach repentance but missions exist so that God is at the center that he is made famous that he is honored that he is delighted in often we can be easily tempted to a more man centric in our mission sometimes doing it without even knowing it we can easily focus more on the suffering of man with even simple phrases like millions of people are dying daily and going to hell so we must go now that can come from a good desire but it can create an unhelpful and misguided urgency and it may not seem concerning at first but when alleviating the suffering of man is not kept underneath and tethered to God's glory rather it begins to fill our mission the flight of man begins to fill our mission in prayers in the beginning you may only recognize that you are a degree off but rather as you continue unchecked this degree becomes greatly wired and you are several degrees off
God is in this for the glory of his name and the love of his people there's not a false dichotomy here so the urgency for our mission is real guys and we must go but what's comforting here is that we do not have to worry friends we do not worry in our evangelism because God and his eternal glorious love for his son is utterly and passionately committed to filling the wedding hall for Jesus so we church we can go out from this place with great joy those enjoying the feast of the gospel and we can have great hope calling all peoples rich poor black white asian good bad to come and enjoy this glorious feast in the gospel knowing that
God is faithful to fulfill his promises to fill the wedding hall not because we have it together not because we are intelligent not because we are skilled but because he has promised to do it he is fully committed to calling saving and securing a people for the glory of his son Jesus so friends take heart in your evangelism God is committed to it with you so as we move here from these verses to verses 11 14 we see that this wedding feast isn't just about being willing to go it's also about receiving it's about repenting believing and obeying which brings us to our last point here receive Christ's righteous robe but when the king came in to look at the guest he saw there a man who had no wedding garment 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 this new group of guests here who were invited to come to the feast were straight off the streets so there was no time for them to return home they came as they were pouring into the palace of the king they didn't have time to go back home to get cleaned up to take off their work clothes and to come back to the place the palace some of them most likely wouldn't have even owned or have in their possession proper attire for such a wedding it was people from all sorts of backgrounds and walks of life that were filling in putting on these wedding garments these robes provided for the wedding with eager joy to receive and delight in all the good things prepared for them but we see here there is one who came in among them who did not put on a clean new wedding garment some scholars believe that it would have been customary in the ancient near east for the king to provide these garments the proper wedding attire so Jesus here is implying that these wedding garments are provided by God himself so when the king walks in to look over his guests with joy love and affection to be celebrating he finds a man sitting amongst the guests without the proper wedding garment for this feast and says friend how did you get in here without a wedding garment it's not because he didn't know it's not because he didn't receive it not as if there was lack any lack of provision or opportunity for this man but what was the man's defense don't miss this small detail here what was the response of this man nothing he said absolutely nothing it says he was speechless this man had no care for the king or his son he made the decision not to wear it it was as to show even in
[33:25] the royal presence his contempt for the king for the whole proceedings of the feast he became he came because he was invited but he only came in appearance this great feast was

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intended to show honor and love for the king's son but this man meant nothing of that kind he was willing to eat the good things that were provided that he was surrounded with set before him but in his heart there was no love for either the king nor his treasured son every single person guys every single person will stand before the judgment seat of God on the last day where you will attend where

I will attend and every single person sins will be made known and every mouth will be stopped we will be speechless having no defense of our own but only one defense standing before an omniscient God who knows everything we have ever done every motive every thought what possible excuse defense could we ever give to him that he would not see right through so this man here was speechless because he was to give an account based on his own merit!
his own unrighteous! rags which he could not stand upon we can only stand upon the righteousness of Christ that's our only defense that's your only defense so then the king speaks to the attendants behind 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 these words in verses 14 many are called and few are chosen of course relate to the whole parable if you stand back and you look those who are called include even those who reject the king's invitation who by their refusal have proved that they were not chosen even amongst those who accepted the invitation there was one who was not chosen for he insulted the king in his own palace and showed his enmity by his own pride and disobedience to the royal requirements the general call goes to everyone the general call the gospel goes out to everyone but only the chosen hear it inwardly and receive it which is the effectual call of the gospel as the apostle
Paul draws out in his letter to the Romans as we read earlier in our liturgy many are called all hear the gospel and some even make an outward profession of faith trying to come in to partake in the feast but as we know from Matthew we know that not all who say Lord Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven but God rich in mercy will call a people from every tribe every tongue every nation not only outwardly but also inwardly by the power of the
Holy Spirit pouring out his love into our hearts changing the disposition of our wicked hearts clothing us in the righteous robe of his son Jesus the one who laid down his life his perfect and spotless life on our behalf who laid it down pierced his hands and feet that we may know him that we may delight in him that we may be in his presence but before they were unwilling to come to this feast of his son the changing of our wicked hearts now they are willing and eager and will do whatever it takes to come they will lay down whatever they have to come they will lay down their businesses their farms they will lay down their hatred to come they will lay down their pride to come and take up the full delight in celebrating
[39:44] Jesus Christ the King and if there's many things I've learned in this 36 years of my life I continually see how utterly impossible it is for me to change anyone's heart let alone the wickedness of my own heart so this is good news that it's up to God not to us this is what 19th century pastor Thomas Chalmer says and he calls the expulsive power of a new affection the only way to get rid of a wicked heart a heart that is sinful and has other sinful affections is by the expulsive power of a new affection that's what the power of God's loving grace does it makes those who are unwilling willing love to love

God to love God because God in his great love is committed to honor his son Jesus by fulfilling the wedding feast with a people who honor the son christians what comfort this brings us oh what comfort that this can bring us that we come not in our own strength but by God's own power and spirit we are welcomed not on the basis of our filthy works but only on the basis of the son Jesus and his own righteous work and we can now rest and delight in the continual feasts and all that God has done and is doing for his church but our delighting now in this feast is only a foretaste it's only a foretaste of what is to come when at the end of all time think about this with me now at the end of all time when all of heaven and earth will be made new when we
God's people will be transformed and will be made new when all of creation will be made new will be clothed in perfect splendor for what for his son Jesus for the wedding feast of Jesus and so when we get to physically attend this wedding feast of the king Michael Reeves hopefully points out to us here that we not only will be attending the wedding feast of the king but we will only have our lord and savior gird himself and have us reclined at his very table to do what to serve us to love us oh what love guys what love do we have in a king like this what a wonderful king what a loving king we have what a savior that he would lay down his life and only to pick it up again and to serve us to

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love us
Isaac Watts wrote a wonderful hymn that I want to end our time on here a hymn called How Sweet and Awesome is the Place How Sweet and Awesome is the Place with Christ within the doors while everlasting love displays the choices of her stores while all our hearts and all our songs join to admire the feast each of us cry with thankful tongues Lord why was I a guest why was I made to hear thy voice and enter while there's room when thousands make a wretched voice and rather starve than come it was the same love that spread the feast that sweetly drew us in else!
we had still refused to taste and perished in our sin pity the nations oh our God constrain the earth to come send thy victorious word abroad and bring the strangers home we long to see thy church is full that all the chosen race may come with one voice in heart and soul and sing thy redeeming grace let us pray father thank you lord for your glorious grace thank you for your love for your son Jesus and bringing us into that love oh lord lord let us live in that goodness of that grace let us live in the goodness and the freedom of that gospel of Jesus father we ask that you send us forth from this place with joy and hope that we would delight in the feast of you oh lord we pray amen

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