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## *What Will You Wear to the Wedding of the Ages?*

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MATT 22:14

FOR MANY ARE INVITED, BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN.

How are we going to approach 2021? 2020 is finished, it's done, and we're starting a brand new year. And let's face it, 2020 was not an easy year. So this morning, I want to speak about how we can recover from 2020 and start 2021 well. Think of it as spiritual rehab. Getting back into things, strengthening ourselves, getting ready to do all that God has prepared in advance for us to do.

We're going to study one of Jesus' parables, the parable of the wedding banquet. And through this parable, we're going to see how Jesus wants us to respond to His invitation.

Pray

What is the most lavish, exuberant, extravagant event that you've ever seen?

You can tell whether an event is extravagant by how the guests show up. People will wear the most outlandish outfits to a big event. When there are these big award ceremonies, you have all these celebrities wearing crazy designer clothes which you would never wear in real life, jewellery worth millions of dollars, head pieces that double your height. What happens is that the designers, knowing how big of an event the celebrity is attending, will then create and loan out dresses and suits and accessories for the celebrity to wear. The celebrity doesn't own them, they actually get these items on loan for the night because of how big of a night it is. But the more elite and exclusive the event, the more excessive the clothes.

Today, I want to speak on the question, "What will you wear to the wedding of the ages?"

In Matthew 22:1-14, Jesus tells a parable.

MATT 22:1-14

22 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.

It's important to note that this is a big wedding.

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.'

The king prepares everything, you literally just need to show up. He forgave them for not coming in the first time, and the second time, He's telling them that everything's ready, it's all prepared, to not miss out on this amazing 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."

Or in the NKJV, it says, "FOR MANY ARE CALLED, BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN."

God has given out a call. He has made a proclamation to the entire world and has invited everyone to join Him in His kingdom. He has prepared the wedding banquet, He's providing all the goods, all you need to do is to respond to this invitation.

God wants every single person to attend this wedding banquet, He would like everyone to be there, but they just need to respond.

In this parable, we read about three responses to the call.

### 1. Reject the Call

In the parable, Jesus talks about those who had been invited, and when they were called, they did not attend. And when they were invited a second time, they either ignored it or they mistreated and killed the servants with the invitation.

They had been invited, they were called, but they rejected the call. They refused to attend. God then invites them a second time by telling them that the feast was ready for them, they didn't need to bring anything. But they didn't pay attention, they had other priorities. They went back to their normal lives.

Rejecting the call doesn't always have animosity. Rejecting the call is sometimes just a matter of priority. These servants rejected the call by going back to what was more important. Their field, their business.

The issue isn't that their field or business was important, it's that their field or business was more important. We can reject God's call simply by prioritising other things in our lives.

**Family, finances, friends, fitness and fun are all important, but not as important as your faith.**

Our priority needs to be God and His Kingdom, and everything else will be added.

Let's make sure that our faith comes first, that it has number one priority in our lives. More important than anything else, we want to make sure that God is number one.

There was a second group of those who rejected the call, and Jesus tells us that they seized his servants, mistreated them, and killed them.

This seems like a very extreme reaction to an invitation to a wedding. But the reason they reacted like this is because they were offended by the invitation. Whether it was the king, the banquet, the fact that it was the king's son, something somewhere was offensive to them.

They were offended at the invitation to the point where they mistreated and killed the servants just for bringing the invitation.

And I wonder what parts of the gospel we find offensive? Because the honest truth is that the gospel is offensive – Jesus tells us in [Luke 12:51](#) that He brings division – not that He just wants people to fight and to argue, but the gospel brings a clear standard of truth that opposes logic, culture, and society.

[Rom 12:2](#) actually tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. In other words, how are you going to respond to the gospel? Will you simply be offended by the gospel or will you be transformed by the gospel?

We can get angry and frustrated at your friends, family, and your enemies, or, as the bible tells us, love them and forgive them.

We can set our goal to be wealthy with money and possessions, or we can be generous and store up treasures in heaven.

We can live discouraged and in fear by what's going on around us, or we can live encouraged and full of faith in what God has promised us.

We can live proud and full of ourselves, or we can humble and full of God.

We have a choice to make when it comes to the gospel, whether to be offended or to change.

And if we choose to live offended, we end up rejecting the call.

They were so offended that they mistreated and even killed the servants. How are we treating the servants of God? Yes, the pastors and leaders on staff at the church, but also connect group leaders, small group leaders, people who are there to help you grow in your relationship with God. Because sometimes, our offense with the gospel or with God can cause us to mistreat our leaders and those who God has sent into our lives.

Let's not live in offense, but rather live transformed lives.

The second response we see in the parable is to answer the call.

## 2. Answer the Call

In verse 9, we read that the servants then go out and invite anyone they could find, the bad as well as the good. Jesus invites everyone. Sin is not an issue.

Everyone's invited, heaven has room for everyone, there's no limited capacity, everyone can fit.

And all these people then show up at the wedding, and in verse 11, the king sees a man who was not wearing wedding clothes. And he asks him, "How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?" The man was speechless.

Ok so here's some context. This is no ordinary wedding, remember? This is the wedding of the king's son, hosted by the king. And the extravagance of the event determines the extravagance of the clothes. And just like a celebrity being loaned a designer outfit, back in those days, when there was a royal wedding, every guest was provided a wedding robe. Every guest was given exactly what they had to wear to the wedding. Because the event, ultimately, wasn't about the guest, it was about the person getting married. And when a guest attends the wedding, they represent the kingdom because they're invited into the palace.

So this guest, having been given exactly what to wear, shows up without his wedding robe. He's not wearing the right thing. And when the king asks him, the man's speechless. He has no excuse, no reason. He acknowledges and knows what the king is talking about, He is aware of what was required of him, but he didn't do it.

He answered the call, but he didn't wear the right thing.

When God calls us, we need to put on what God's given us. We can't just show up without using what was already provided.

We need to put on righteousness. Rom 5:17 tells us that righteousness is a gift.

We need to put on love. 1 John 4:19 tells us that we love because God loved us first.

We need to put on commitment. 2 Cor 5:15 tells us that He died for us, so we live for Him.

These are just some of the gifts that God gives us.

At this wedding, the guests receive better gifts than the hosts. When you accept the invitation, you get all the gifts. Righteousness, love, commitment, these are all things that God gives us as gifts, for us to use.

When you accept Jesus' invitation, you receive all of these incredible gifts and so much more. You're clothed in righteousness, you're forgiven, you're made whole, you have a closeness and intimacy with Jesus, you're given access to the fruit AND gifts of the Holy Spirit, and all of these things and so much more, BEFORE you even get eternal life.

The wedding guest received everything he needed before he got to the wedding. He just had to put it on.

You can answer the call and still miss what God has for you.

Or, number 3, you can embrace the call.

Embracing the call means not only accepting the invitation, but taking on board and applying everything that God has given you.

You accepted the call, now put on these things to embrace the call.

We can either come into 2021 treating God and church like a thing we do, something to talk about with our friends and contemplate, or we can make a decision to embrace it. We can choose to put all of these things on in this life, before we get to eternal life.

We can commit to putting on what God has given us.

So what are you going to wear to the wedding of the ages? Because God's given you gifts, He's given you everything you need to be dressed and ready for everything this year, next year, and the years to come.