

The title for today's message is: **What Are You Wearing?**

Jesus said: ***For many are called, but few are chosen.***"

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Here in our text for today we see God sending out invitations for a big event, such as a big wedding.

And in doing so, we can also see God comparing you, and me, to His actual Bride.

Yes, you and me are His bride. And in today's gospel lesson, Jesus likens us to the guests, who were invited to the wedding feast.

Like any wedding feast, one needs an invitation. But unlike other invitations, God's invitation is for anyone who will come, His, is an open invitation.

His, is not in the form of a Hallmark Card, or e-mail. No!, His is just out there, assuring us that we have been invited to His Son's wedding feast.

Now, weddings take a tremendous amount of time, money, and effort to prepare for, at least for big weddings.

And by the time you rent the wedding hall, the limo, and purchase the cake, the tuxedos, and the wedding dress.

You're not only absolutely exhausted, but in a lot of cases you're financially burdened, to the point you're eager to get it all over with.

So, in a lot of ways the joy, and the excitement you had for the big day, is gone, and in a lot of cases even before it gets started.

Now, according to the parable, in preparation for the King's sons big wedding feast, the king sent out his servants to tell those who were 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.'

The picture Jesus wants to draw from this parable is that of salvation, which is comforting, to say the least, don't you think?

The oxen, and fattened calves, have already been sacrificed, the meat is cooked, its hot, and ready to eat.

Now, if we look at this parable in the way Jesus wants us to, we can see that in the wedding hall, there's a huge table.

Which has been set to feed many, many people, of course, this is symbolic of Jesus feeding the masses.

So, after years, and years of preparation, making sure the time was right, God was finally ready to set into action, the salvation of the world.

And after approximately thirty three years of life on this earth, the sacrifice of the lamb was ready to be made.

Look, there's nothing else that needs to be done. Once and for all, no other preparations are needed.

Okay, lets look at the guests, that is those who were invited by the King to be present at the wedding feast.

At first the king invited all of his supporters, closest friends and those who were on his staff.

But that's not who ended up attending. There was a problem, these folks decided not to come, and they were giving all sorts of excuses.

So, what happened, what does the King do? He orders his servants to go out in the streets and find anyone to attend the feast.

Jesus said: And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Can you imagine, if you were the wealthiest person on earth, with enough money to feed the whole world, three times over.

Inviting anyone you run into, to your son or daughters wedding feast, both good and bad people? Probably not!

Yet, the king didn't seem to care who attended the feast at this time, that is, as long as he, or she had blood running through their vein's.

God works in the same way, He too, has invited anyone who is willing to come to His Son's wedding feast, just as the King in the parable did.

Look, God loves you, and me, and everyone in the world, past, present, and in the future. Why else would He have sent His only Son, to the cross?

We don't have to bring anything, or have any sort of credentials. Nor do we have to be better than anyone else.

We don't even have to wear special clothing either, in fact, we can be naked, and lying in a gutter. God loves everyone.

The wedding feast will in fact be full of people from all walks of society, both high, and mighty, low, and dirty, good, and bad.

Look, there's no other way to read this parable, other than to read it as God wanting all people to be saved. But, many won't be saved?

We know this because at the end of the parable, Jesus says: For many are called, but few are chosen."

Chosen for what? Again looking at this parable through the eyes of God, we see that the those originally called, or invited, were the Jews.

And as we know, many of the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah, so they “paid no attention to the invitation.”

Jesus said: But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business,

Perhaps they thought, “they didn’t have time to be partying, no matter who the party is in honor off.

Look, the fields need prepared, businesses needed attending to. In their minds, business was more important, than a wedding feast.

Most of us have probably been invited to a wedding, or a social gathering, that we feel obligated to go to.

All because of our association with the person, or persons, but we too really don’t want to go.

So we conveniently “forget about it,” or, throw the invitation in the trash because we feel we’ve got better things to do.

Now, Jesus continues with the parable saying: the rest (those who were first invited) seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.

This seems incredible, why would anyone do such a thing to someone who simply asked you to come, and enjoy a wedding feast?

Well, if we understand the attitude of those who were originally invited, maybe we can better understand all this. They were arrogant people.

Remember who invited them, it was the king, not just anyone, and these arrogant people didn’t like the king, and his influence over them.

Their attitude is an obvious reflection of the same attitude, the Jews had towards the Old Testament Prophets.

All we have to do is look at how the Jews mistreated Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah and many other prophets as well.

And, since Jesus is speaking here primarily to the Pharisees, and the chief priests, the parable goes to those who were brought up in the Word of God.

It speaks for itself. It's true, work is very important in our society. We accumulate plenty of bills, and credit cards, that need to be paid.

We're a "busy" society, and make no mistake about it, we like it, it makes us feel important, and needed.

And in the midst of all this, God invites us to His wedding feast, a feast of love, compassion, forgiveness, and salvation.

We taste it, in the Word of God, and we enjoy it, in worship, and we drink it, at the Lord's Table.

We eat of it, in Sunday School, and It tastes good, in fact It quenches our thirst for love, and holiness, and best of all, its free.

So, what does all this come down to? The final question, some might think, is, "how badly do we want it?"

It certainly seems to say, If we ignore, or turn down the invitation, were damned, but if we accept the invitation, and attend, were saved. Not so.

Just look at the final part of the parable. When the king came into the hall to greet his guests.

Wee told wright off, he noticed one man there, who wasn't wearing the wedding garment that the king himself provided for all his guests.

The king asked the man how he got into the hall without wearing the wedding garment, but the man didn't answer.

So, the king had his servants throw the man out into the outer darkness. Now you might be wondering, what is the outer darkness?

Well because of what Jesus said next, we can safely say that Jesus was talking about Hell itself.

Jesus said: In that place (meaning the outer darkness) there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Now Jesus ends His parable with even more words that are very reviling. He said: For many are called, but few are chosen."

Meaning our salvation depends on our belief in God. All peoples have received the invitation to the feast to come, but not many will attend.

Look when we come to God's wedding feast for His Son, first we should read the invitation, the bible. Then enjoy the food of the feast, our Lord's body and blood, and be Baptized.

Then ask yourself, "Are you wearing the wedding garment which God Himself has provided you? And if your not sure, listen to what Paul says.

Paul describes the wedding garment in Galatians chapter 3: He said: for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (meaning the wedding garment)

Another words. You and I don't need to worry about whether we're worthy of the invitation, when we're clothed in Christ.

Just know that God wants you here, at church, and He wants you there, the wedding feast, in heaven. To Him we say in faith, “not my will, but thy will be done.”

Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.