

Everyone's Invited

Part 1 of the *The Week That Changed Everything* Series

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Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

"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.'

"But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them.

Matthew 22:1-6

The reasons people refuse the invitation:

- Unwillingness
- Apathy
- Hostility towards God

The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.'

Matthew 22:7-9

Rather than shut the door, God in His love & grace opens it even wider.

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.

Matthew 22:10

Worthiness to attend has nothing to do with who you are or what you've done; it's determined by how you respond to the invitation.

What makes this invitation so amazing is that...

- You can't earn it.
- You can't lose it.

What makes the party even more amazing is that...

- You go from being an invited guest to being an adopted child of the King.
- When you make mistakes or fail, your standing with the King doesn't change.
- The King is an actual person to be enjoyed not a religious system to be learned.

Next Steps

- If you've put your faith & trust in Jesus but have never shared this, let someone on our prayer team know or check the box on the connection card, leaving your contact info so we can call you and celebrate with you.
- Take some time with your spouse, children, friends, or small group & answer these questions:
 - Read Matthew 22:1-10. Why do you think the different groups responded to the invitation so differently? Of all the groups of people in this story, who do you relate to the most & why?
 - What are some of the ways you try to earn the gift of salvation?
 - As followers of Jesus we're now inside the banquet, so to speak. Would you say you're experiencing the rest that comes with the King's love & acceptance or are you still trying to earn His favor hoping you won't make a mistake?
 - Is your Christianity about enjoying the King or about learning a religious system? Explain.