

Matthew 22:1-14

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Date: 09 October 2022

[0:00] Bible's going into the gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 22. Matthew chapter 22 is where we will be at. Matthew 22 verses 1 through 14. Matthew chapter 22 verses 1 through 14 will be our text. I'm excited to be here.

Many of you know, I didn't have the opportunity to preach from this pulpit last week because we were at Fall Creek Falls on our retreat. Had the opportunity to preach to the church. The church was just meeting in different spots.

So I was able to preach. Actually, I preached more times last weekend at retreat than I normally do here. But we had the opportunity to get into the Word there, but there's no place like here. And then this week, this past week, my wife and I went to a leadership conference.

So we were out of state for just a little while, got back late Friday night. But it's kind of been a whirlwind for us. But I'm excited to be back here. And it's good to be gathered together with the people of War Trace.

And there really is no place like home. You know, the Lord has called some people. He has empowered and gifted some people to minister to the cities. But when you put this guy in the city, he doesn't function too well, right?

[1:05] He's thankful. That's just not my calling. That's not my giftedness. I'm number one in a lot of cities, and it's not the right number one, right? A lot of people don't like the way I drive there. They don't like the way I get lost there.

So I get told I'm number one all over the cities. And that's okay. That's not where I'm called. It's good to be back here and to be gathered with you, getting in the Word of God together.

And it's exciting. But I think it is fitting every now and then that we go places that are out of our comfort zone. And it opens our eyes to the realities of some things.

And God often speaks to us in different settings. Because sometimes in our complacency and our comfortableness, we don't hear him as clear as we should. So I'm thankful for that opportunity.

At the close of our service, we'll have Nolan come up. But I'm also going to have Miss Tay come up. If you got here early enough and you saw the video from the retreat, Tay followed the Lord and Believers' baptism at the retreat.

[2:07] Her and Nolan came up at the same time. You say, wait a minute, it's got to be presented to the church. It was. I don't know if you guys remember that or not. But some time ago, following camp, both of them came up and shared with the church. So we had Miss Amber and Tim Loki that were baptized in the Duck River a few weeks ago.

Miss Tay at George's Hole, Fall Creek Falls. And then Nolan here. And thank you, Nolan, for choosing water that was heated. Okay.

Duck River was cold. George's Hole was awful. And I have found, and I forgot about it until I stepped in this morning, my waders have a hole in them. And it's okay. My socks are wet.

So when we jumped in George's Hole, it was a little cold. Some of them jumped in voluntarily and swam across. I don't know why. Other than they're from up north. So things are different up there.

And it may not have been as cold for them. But it was cold for me. But we rejoice in that. We rejoice in seeing people follow the Lord. If you have your Bibles, and I pray that you do, and you're open to Matthew 22.

[3:13] We're going to start in verse 1. I'm going to ask if you're physically able and desire to do so to stand with me as we read the word of God together. And we'll go down to the 14th verse there in the 22nd chapter. It says, And the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them.

But the king was enraged and sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire. Then he said to his slaves, The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast.

Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all they found, both evil and good.

And the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes. And he said to him, Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?

And the man was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[4 : 42] Verse 14, For many are called, but few are chosen. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for the opportunity of gathering together as the body of Christ. We thank you for the great privilege it is of reading and hearing your word.

We pray that through the presence of the Spirit, Lord, that you would speak to our hearts and minds. Lord, we pray that you would show us that which we need to see, that you would speak to each one of us individually, you would speak to us corporately, and that we as your people would be empowered to be used by you for your glory.

And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. Some of you know that in 2005, the man that I listened to more than any other on the radio as far as preaching wise, because when I came to Christ, I was put in a truck that had AM radio only.

And I always tell the story. The Lord was very gracious at 21 years of age and not necessarily a very strong believer. As a matter of fact, I was a very new believer. In my job, he put me in a truck that only had an AM radio, and I had to sit in that truck for eight hours a day.

I was kind of in and out of it. I was constantly moving around. So I had two options that came in good there in Rutherford County. It was either 650 or 710. So I either got to listen to banjo picking or preaching.

[5 : 58] I mean, that was my only two options, right? So it was the Super Tower of the South, 650 WSM. You should know that if you live in Tennessee. If you don't, you need to repent. You should know that.

You understand that there was banjo picking all day long, or I could listen to Moody Radio, 710 AM, 91.7 FM. But I didn't have that FM frequency.

I only had the AM frequency. So I either had banjo picking or preaching. Now, after about four hours, they just start replaying the same songs you've already heard on 650. I don't want to bust your bubble or anything like that.

There's just not that many banjo tunes. So when it came time for lunch, I would turn the radio on, and Adrian Rogers was always preaching. And I cut my teeth on Adrian Rogers preaching.

I loved listening to Adrian Rogers. I loved his way of expounding the Scripture, of opening up the Scripture. I made it my habit when I took my lunch to carry my Bible with me.

[6 : 55] As a matter of fact, I got upset when they put somebody else in the truck with me, and I would just tell them, I'm sorry, we're listening to preaching. If you don't want to listen, you can get out. This is my truck. So I listened to Adrian Rogers. You fast forward a couple of years, and now I am in the ministry, and Adrian Rogers dies in 2005.

The brother that was the interim pastor here before me, Brother Sidney Gibson, is the individual who ordained me, and licensed, or licensed, and then later ordained me into the gospel ministry. Now, Brother Sidney was a very close friend of Brother Adrian Rogers. So when Brother Adrian Rogers died, Joyce Rogers extended an invitation to Sidney.

And Sidney couldn't go. His work wouldn't let him go. So Sidney, Brother Sidney, turned around and looked at this young pastor, me, and he gave me that invitation. And in my foolishness, I didn't take it.

I didn't claim that. I said, well, I've got to go to work because I was still by vocational at that time. I wouldn't take off. I wouldn't burn a day. I didn't do it. And the reason I say it's foolishness is because the invitation from Joyce was for a friend of Adrian's to come down and go through his personal library and get out of it anything they wanted.

[8 : 11] And now, this fast forward 17 years in the ministry, I would love to have about half of his books. But I didn't do it. I didn't go down there. I said, no, I'm too busy.

And I wish somebody would have told me, you're not too busy, you need to go because it would have spared me. Later on, I went through the Adrian Rogers Pastors Training Institute and I went through all this stuff, but it would have made so much more sense to have his notes and his books and his writings.

But I wouldn't take the time to respond because, I mean, I'll just be honest with you, I didn't want to go to Memphis. I know some of you are from Memphis, but I didn't want to go to Memphis by myself to go down there and go through it, but I wish I would have because, see, there's great danger in rejecting invitations.

In our text this morning, we see, I want you to see laying claim to a rejected invitation. Laying claim to that rejected invitation. And we see Christ here in his Passion Week.

If you remember, we're making our way through the Gospel of Matthew. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In no other Gospel is he presented so much so in his kingliness, if that is even a word.

[9 : 22] Matthew writing to the Jewish people as a Jewish individual, one that was rejected by his own people, that is Matthew, because he was also Levi, the tax collector, now has a heart that burns for his people.

He is writing to the church that is in Jerusalem that is compiled mostly of Jewish individuals, and he is trying to remind them of the reality that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Isaiah's prophecy of a coming king.

And over and over and over again, he exalts Christ as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Even in his presentation, when he comes into this final week, when he fulfills that prophecy by riding on the coat of a donkey, and they're going before him and crying out, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Blessed is the Son of David. Hosanna means save us now. And he is coming. He's overturned the money changer tables. He's been there, and he's ran them out of the temple. He has declared that the temple is his father's house over and over and over again.

We have the reminder that this is the King. And in that final week, where we've seen it, it was absolutely essential, because according to the Passover feast, the lamb could not just be taken out of the field the day of the sacrifice, but rather the lamb had to be taken out of the field and brought into the house about a week before the sacrifice, so that when you offered the lamb on the Passover, that when you took that lamb, which was your Passover sacrifice, that the blood was to be the covering for your sins for the remainder of the world, that when you took it to the priest, you knew it was perfect.

[10 : 51] Right? You didn't think so. You didn't hope so. You knew so, because you had been intimate with that thing. You had looked at it. You had observed it. You had lived with it for a week in your own house, and you had ensured there was no defect, because the command and the requirement was for a perfect sacrifice.

So when Christ comes in on that Sunday, which we call Palm Sunday, he didn't just do it because it was a good idea. He did it to go public so that people could observe him, so that people could watch him, so that people could look at him, so that people could examine him, so that when he was presented to the priest, they would know he was the perfect lamb.

And that when he died, at the exact moment that they were killing the Passover lambs, read your texts, at the time of the slaughter, Christ is on the cross, and the only perfect lamb is not on the altar in the temple, but he's on the cross on the hill.

And he has proven himself for a week, and he does it over and over and over again. So it is in that context that we have him teaching here this parable.

He is teaching again about the parable of the kingdom, and he says, the kingdom of heaven is like, and he goes into this account of a king and a wedding feast. And here we see the reality, just like the parables which preceded this in the chapters, that those that we think would go don't go, but those that we see least likely to be there actually end up there.

[12 : 20] The last become first, and the first become last. And we see that just because someone should have been there at the feast, they're absolutely not there to feast, but those which we thought would never be there, in the end, when we look at it, they're there.

This is both an admonition to the religious leaders of his day, and an encouragement to those who seem to be on the outside looking in. Now to the church, who will bring the application to us, this is a challenge to those of us who think we're already in, and an encouragement to those who think we could never be there.

So we see this reality of laying claim to a rejected invitation. The very first thing we see, it's in the title itself, is the invitation rejected. The text tells us in the very first verse that Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding

feast for his son.

Now this is important to us because we're not just talking about a wedding feast. Now weddings were a great celebration. Weddings at times, during the time of Christ, would last about seven days, and there would be food after food after food after food after food being brought in, and it was just a great celebratory event, and a multitude of people would be there, and there were a lot of people. It was just really, you would throw a big feast even if you were a common man, but we stand amazed here at who it is that is extending this invitation, or rather, the origin of the invitation, because it says, a king invited people.

[13:51] See, the invitation that's rejected is not just an invitation from just any old person. This is an invitation from the king. Those don't go out every day, by the way.

Those are not commonplace. Those are not something that is publicly broadcasted. You don't have people in what we call high places or people in authority just wanting anybody or whosoever to show up.

It seems to be just a select group, right? You may can get close, but you can't get all the way close, and you can't sit down and have fellowship with them, but here there's a wedding feast being thrown, and it is the king himself who is sending out the invitation.

And this king, this person, because by the way, the invitation received really is only important as the person who sent it. Right? I mean, if we reject an invitation that may not be that important or may not be that grand, not that we want to judge people, you know, that's one thing, but if it is the king himself who is inviting us to attend, and we say, oh, we don't want to go there.

It seems that the standard is a little bit different, and we see the origin of this invitation that says, a king sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast.

[15:07] Now, did you see that? He called those who had already been invited to the wedding feast, because, see, this invitation did not go unannounced or unprepared or spontaneously.

One thing we're reminded of in this text is that there had been advanced preparation. Today, we get these things called save the date. Some people say, I don't know why you send out save the date cards.

You know, we got a wedding coming up, save the date invitation to follow. Why not just send the invitation? Well, let me just tell you, as one who has officiated a number of weddings, not a grand number, but a number, I'm thankful for the save the dates, because often I agree to officiate a wedding and I forget the date.

I'm just being honest with you, okay? I'm just being honest and I'm like, yes, I'll do that. Absolutely, I'll do that. I have right now in my office written on a piece of paper a date for a wedding next year. I was giving it a year in advance and the reason I had to go right to the office and write it down is I knew I would forget about it and I always, it always, inevitably happens, I will schedule something on a date that I'm supposed to be officiating a wedding.

[16:09] Always happens. So I'm thankful for the save the dates because they end up and I'm like, hey, honey, where was that wedding and what time is it and when do I need to be there and exactly what date is it because I need to make sure we're right.

But see, that's what's going on here. When you have a wedding in the time of Christ, it wasn't like they would just decide last minute to have a feast. There would be a pre-invitation that would go out and let everyone know there's a wedding on such and such day.

We're going to be having a great feast. All this food will be prepared. We will let you know when the food is ready. Now, for one who likes to eat, I'm thankful for that, right? Don't show up early but when the food is ready then it's time to come.

We will let you know when the food is ready. So there have been advanced preparation. So, pay attention to this. Those who rejected the invitation rejected an invitation from the king himself and an invitation they already knew about.

It wasn't like it caught them in a busy season of life. It wasn't that they weren't prepared for it. It wasn't that they didn't know it was coming. The king had told them in advance that they would be invited on a particular day and yet they still rejected it.

[17:22] It says, go invite those who had already been invited. But it says that they were unwilling to come. Unwilling to come.

They didn't want to be there and it says in verse 4, now I'm amazed by this. Again, he sent out other slaves saying. See the patience of the king here?

Now this isn't just a man, this is a king. I mean, quit making it ourselves or anybody else. A king invited people who knew about a feast to come to that feast and they said we don't want to come. And his first response is so he sent out other slaves. What patience, what grace, what mercy. For those of us that think that God our father is a big mean God and if we're not absolutely perfect and he has no time for that, he is holy and we are called to be holy as he is holy but we are also reminded of his patience with us, of his grace and his mercy.

Again, he sent out other slaves and he extended the invitation even further. Yet, they would not come and we know they don't want to go because of the very thing those that are invited on are focused on.

[18 : 41] Look at what it says. But they paid no attention and went their way. What does it say? Went their way. One to his own farm, another to his business and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them.

Now, we know very clearly that Jesus here is speaking about the prophets of the Old Testaments and what the book of Hebrews tells us, the mistreatment of those in Hebrews 11 and we see the correlation.

We even see the correlation as Jesus foretells what's about to happen to Jerusalem because when Matthew wrote this, it hadn't happened yet and when Jesus said this, it definitely hadn't happened yet that the king sent and burned the city and all these things that Jerusalem would be held accountable for their rejection of the king and their rejection of the invitation.

We see that being fulfilled in AD 70 with the fall of Jerusalem and Jesus speaks of that in Matthew 24 and following. We'll get to that later on. But what we see here is that the king sends an invitation to those who should have been expected it and he graciously resends it and their whole reason for rejecting it is because they're focused on themselves.

They went their own way to their own homes, to their own businesses because they would rather focus on their things than his thing. Friend, listen to me. The reason the gospel is rejected today is not because we have not been told about it in advance.

[20 : 09] It's not because it doesn't come from a worthy source. It's because those who often hear it are so self-focused and self-centered and more concerned about their own being than they are about the king who invites them.

Let's bring it a little closer to home. the reason we at times reject an invitation to be used by the king as believers is not the source of the invitation, it's not the advanced preparation of the invitation, it's not even the mercy and the patience of the one who invites it.

It's because when the king calls, we're too busy doing our own thing. we would rather go our own way. We would rather do our own stuff.

That when the king says now is the time, we say, well, I knew you were going to call, but I would rather do this, or I would rather do that. That's why we see so little response to the invitation, and too often the invitation is rejected.

Number two, we see the inclusion of any, because here's good news for you. Man's rejection does not nullify the king's purposes. Just because they said, we don't want to go, it didn't mean he didn't have a feast.

[21 : 25] Right? What does he say? After we see that he says that he burned those places and he was enraged at them, he says in verse eight, I love this, he says in verse eight, then he said to his slaves, the wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

The king does not say they did not think I was worthy or worthy of their attendance. The king says because they rejected it, they proved that they themselves are not worthy.

It's not that the feast is not worthy, it's that those who were originally invited were not worthy. He says the feast is ready, but those who we asked first, they're not worthy to be here anyway.

See, sometimes we get our feelings hurt and we get upset and we get all bent out of shape because we know that we have the best news in the world. I mean, it's the gospel. By its namesake, it means good news and we understand that this good news can bring life to dry bones, that this good news can radically transform and change the world, that this good news can alter the situation and all the things that go around it.

Listen, we sang a hymn a minute ago that I must tell Jesus. There's one stanza in there we take issue with. It says that he will take all our troubles away. The reality is the good news does not mean he takes our troubles away.

[22 : 38] Sometimes he just takes the trouble out of the trouble, in all these things Christ is sufficient. Sometimes in the midst of trouble, because of the good news we have a peace that passes understanding.

In the midst of trouble, because it is such good news, when we are in a painful situation, we have peace that people don't understand. Sometimes when we're in the midst of trouble, because the news is so good, it radically alters not our circumstances but who we are on the inside.

And we know we have that whether or not our faces show it or not. And I'm not so sure if you know you have it. I know I have it, so I can amen myself, and I can get a little excited myself, but I don't know if you have it, but I have it.

But we get upset when we share that with people and they reject it. But the reality is, it's not that the news is not worthy, it's that those who reject it aren't worthy. It's such good news, there are only a few that get it.

See, sometimes I think that we think that what we have is something common. We don't have, salvation is not a common thing. It is an uncommon thing in the most glorious way.

[23 : 45] And I'm not saying that the people themselves are unworthy, I'm saying that by their actions they are deeming themselves unworthy of responding to the invitation that's been extended to them.

But man's rejection does not nullify or cancel the king's purposes. He says, since those who did not come are not worthy, now go therefore into the highways and the byways.

It literally means the intersections of the road. Go to the road intersection and invite whosoever.

This is where we get the whosoever will. So we understand there is the inclusion of any.

No longer does he pick and choose who's going to be invited. The rejection of those who were previously told about it, their rejection has guaranteed the invitation to any and all.

He says, now go there since we're going to have this feast and the wedding must be full because to have an uncrowded wedding hall was to show that nobody liked you, nobody wanted to be there, nobody responded to you.

[24 : 42] It was kind of a status thing, right? So he says, go out and get people and bring them in. So he's going to ensure that the wedding hall is full. And we notice here that when this invitation is expanded, it says, so they went and they got the evil and the good and the bad and the ugly and they brought them in and the wedding hall was full.

I love this, right? That the wedding hall was full of people that we wouldn't think would be there. because when I sat down at the wedding supper of the Lamb in the book of Revelations, that wedding feast is being prepared, I don't have to look around and find people I didn't think would be there, I just got to look in my seat because when I look at my seat, I'm like, wow, I never thought I'd be here because the wedding of the king, his son, his son's wedding is full of people we never thought would be there.

What an amazing thing because the invitation here is extended to any. Good news here, man's rejection does not nullify the king's purpose but man's rejection also does not change the slaves' commission.

They were told to go invite the invited. When the invited rejected the invitation and mistreated the slaves, by the way, that word there is doulos, when they mistreated the doulos, the doulos went back to the king and said, well, they didn't want to come.

He didn't say, well, we got to do something new. No, he sent his doulos back out to extend an invitation to more people. By the way, Paul says we are the doulos or the slaves of Christ. So just because somebody rejects the message we bring to them, it does not change our commission.

[26 : 13] When they reject us, it does not change what we've been commanded to do. It does not change what we've been called to do. We do not go back to the king and say, well, they didn't want to hear it, we got to do something new. He says, then go tell somebody else.

As a matter of fact, he gives them a greater and a grander work and they have to go further to get it out. So when those that were near them rejected the message they brought to them, the king did not narrow their focus.

He actually broadened their focus and said, well, if they're not worthy of it, then you go farther and you reach farther. Friend, listen to me. The church does not stop just because people reject the message we proclaim.

The church does not say, well, we got to do something else. No, it just means we have to go further to do what we've been called to do. And that's why he says it's Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the other most parts of the earth.

Matthew 28, by the way, the great commission that has not changed. We see man's rejection does not change the king's purposes and man's rejection does not change the slave's commission.

[27 : 11] It's still the same. Now we must address the third thing. And the third thing is the inexcusable attire. So the banquet hall is filled.

People are all around the table. The food's finally going to be eaten. Everything that's prepared is going to be consumed. And there's a number of people, we can only imagine there's a number of people who said, I didn't ever think I was going to be here.

I never thought I'd eat at the king's table. I mean, you know, the evil, the ugly, the bad, the good, they're all there. The wicked. And a lot of people say, I never thought I'd be at the king's table, but here I am at the king's table.

And some people are content having an invitation to be at the king's table and they stop right there. They think that once the invitation comes, that means, hey, I can go sit down as I am. Now the king invites us as we are, but he does not call us to stay that way.

So if he meets us on a street corner in the middle of a busy day, and we're in all of our work attire and all this stuff, and he said, well, he invited me like this, this means I can stay like this, and we run to the table and sit down, we forget about this thing.

[28 : 13] We forget about the inspection of the king because it says, and then the king came in and looked around. He walked into his own banquet hall and he looked around. And looking around, he saw someone who didn't have wedding clothes on.

Now I'm just going to go ahead and tell you, Bible commentators go back and forth in this. Some commentators will tell you that it was very common practice of that day. I don't know if it's necessarily in that day, but in later days, that if a king was to invite people to attend his wedding banquet, that he would therefore provide festival robes or garments that he wanted people to wear when they got there, so that when you would get there, there would be a change of clothes for you. So you didn't have to worry about having wedding garments because it would already be there when you got there. The king provided the garments too. So you would show up and you would put it on. So in that interpretation, the only way this individual could be in there without a wedding garment was that he looked at the king's people and said, I don't want your clothes, my clothes are good enough.

So the application there is pretty easy. If the king wants to clothe us in righteousness and we say, well, my own righteousness is good enough to close our wear and look good enough. And the king says, I want you to wear this, then woe is us, right? But I also like the interpretation.

It says we can't really read that into the text. We need to read the text as it's presented to us. And the text only provides us with this information. The king himself, according to the text, sees no reason why this individual cannot be prepared and properly dressed.

[29 : 36] Whether or not the king provided it or not, we don't know. All we know is that he had adequate time to prepare, yet he decided to come as he was. He decided he didn't need to change.

Now the invitation to attend is given as he was. But the actual attendance requires preparation, requires a little work, requires a little, I need to clean up and be there.

All we know, according to the text, is the king looks at him and what he's wearing is inexcusable.

And he asked him the question. Now, our application there is pretty easy. Friend, listen to me.

We don't get invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb based on what we look like or how we behave. The good, the evil, the clean, the ugly. Everyone at the crossroads and the byways gets an invitation.

But once we have been told we are in, listen to me, once we have been told we are in, we call that in the gospel world, we call that salvation. Once we are saved, and we are saved as we are, we are.

[30 : 45] Salvation comes as we are. Once the king's servants have come to us as we are, and we have our invitation, that's forgiveness, that's mercy, that's restoration, that's salvation.

Once we are saved, woe be unto us if we try to stay as we are and go there. Now salvation is instantaneous.

I am saved in a moment. Sanctification is progressive, which means there are things about me changing the further along I go. And we are told to put on Christ and to be clothed in his

righteousness.

We would call this according to Paul, Paul says we don't use our salvation as a crutch. We don't say, well I was saved this way so I'm going to stay this way. No, we don't do that. We crucify the flesh.

Paul says, I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live. It's no longer I who live but Christ who lives inside of me. Galatians 2.20. Paul says, I have crucified the flesh. I put the desires of the flesh to death.

[31 : 45] And then he says later, I die daily because the reality is, is the invitation does not give an excuse to going as we are. Just because we're saved as we are, now we begin to as, again, we quote Paul, work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

The reality is, hey, I'm going to sit down at the king's table. You know, there's going to be a day where I'm sitting at the king's table. He has saved me. He's invited me. He's forgiven me. He's redeemed me.

He's counted me worthy to attend the wedding supper of his son. I am going to the wedding supper of the lamb. I'm going to the king's table. And if I'm going to the king's table, then the rest of my life ought to be in view of the preparation to sit at the king's table, realizing that when I'm at his table, he's going to walk in and look at me.

Because I can promise you one thing, I look at everybody that sits at my table. Now, if I invite you to come to my table, you can come as you are. But what if I tell you, we're having this great banquet and this great feast, and I catch you on a day when you're dirtiest, you're filthiest, and I tell you, listen, that day's coming, and I want you to go make the preparation.

It'd be silly for you to show up as you were the day I invited you. See, the king gives ample opportunity. But what we see is the king looked at him.

[33 : 06] Remember this biblical interpretation, and this has changed, by the way, the way I think about things. Remember I told you that every time Jesus calls someone friend, it's never good. Remember I told you that?

He called Lazarus, he called a Judas Iscariot friend. He said, right when Judas is about to betray him, he calls others friend. I don't want to say that Jesus says I'm his friend, okay?

Don't say that in scripture. I'm saying according to scripture, and the gospel of Matthew. He says, friend, how is it that you came in here without wedding garments?

And we know his guilt because he says nothing. He says he's speechless. So we have the speechless admittance of guilt.

He should have changed. As a result of the invitation he received, he should have changed. Because the invitation he was given was so great, he should have changed.

[34 : 13] Bind him hand and foot, cast him into outer darkness, and then we have this great statement, for there are many that are called, but there are few that are chosen. chosen, those that are chosen reveal the reality of their position based upon the preparations they make in light of the invitation they have been given.

Say that again. They reveal the reality of their position based upon the preparations they take in light of the invitation they have been given.

When Christ redeems us and saves us and sets us free. All are called. But those that are chosen, now that's, we're not going to get into that theological interpretation quite yet.

Those that are chosen, you know they're the chosen because their life looks different. There's a change in them. There's something new.

Where they're going is better than where they were found. And they're going to look different when they get there. Through the enablement of the king and the empowerment of his invitation.

[35 : 30] Listen, when he invites us, he equips us. And when he equips us, he empowers us. And we are empowered to look different when we sit down at his table. But it's the chosen that lay claim to the rejected invitation.

It's not a matter of where they all called. It's a matter of which ones of them were chosen. Let's pray and then we'll have a hymn of invitation. Lord, we thank you so much for this day.

Lord, I thank you for your word. I thank you for the truth of it. And Lord, pray that it would be that which examines our heart and mind.

Lord, show us where we are with you. Show us where we stand in light of your holiness and your glory. And Lord, may each one of us draw closer to you.

Walk in a rightful position of obedience and love. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Just take your hymn books out with me and turn to hymn 316.

[36 : 47] Jesus is tenderly calling us. We stand and sing hymn 316. Again, I've said this before that the Lord's leading you and you need to talk to me. I will step down.

Miss Lynn can keep playing. Congregation can keep singing. I'll step down. Hymn 316. Hymn 316.

Jesus is tenderly calling us.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.