

The Lectionary: In it the church celebrates the mystery of faith, the life, death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is used among Methodists and other Christians so that congregations hear the whole message of Scripture.

A Parable: An earthly saying with a heavenly meaning. If we are just told something we tend to forget, but if we are told a story we remember its hidden meaning.

Have You Accepted God's Invitation?

Matthew 22:1-14

Jim Stahler

11:00 AM Service October 9, 2011 – Laity Sunday

Paraphrase the Scripture: Wedding feast for son, Servants told all that were invited, nobody came, other servants told the guests, but nobody came, everybody was too busy. The messengers were abused, the King had the perpetrators dealt with, and their city burned. The King told the servants to find other guests. The banquet hall was filled with all kinds of people. When the King arrived he saw one man not properly attired. He had him removed. (For many are called, but few are chosen)

This parable has 2 meanings. Describe a wedding of today. This parable mentions only what we would call a reception. Today we send 1 invitation; the parable mentions that 2 were sent. (1 to announce the celebration, and another to notify that the celebration was prepared)

Today we call the caterer; when this parable was written the proper animals were selected, and then prepared accordingly. Ages ago God's chosen people disobeyed God. Today, they choose not to follow Jesus.

So, the invitation went out to the public inviting sinners and gentiles ***who never thought they would get an invitation***. Jesus's parable did not contain the destruction of the city, but Matthew put that in to show what happened to those who refused to recognize the Son of God.

This means to us that the invitation to God is a joyous as a wedding feast. What does this mean? Happiness is happenings; joy is Christ (Write that down in your sermon notes. If you get nothing else from this message get that plus my love for Christ.) Winning a sporting event makes us happy; helping our neighbor brings joy to our life.

It is to joy that the Christian is invited, and it is the joy that he/she misses if they refuse the invitation. Sometimes our lives are so hectic that we forget about eternity. When we are born; when we will die, we have no control over, but it is that part in the middle called living, that we have control. Today, by the grace of God we are invited to the feast, or the kingdom just like the people that were invited to the King's wedding feast. This is the first meaning to the parable.

The second meaning to the parable has to do with the King throwing out the man that was not dressed properly. STOP! Why pick on that poor person?

The meaning has nothing to do with clothing. God does not care if we worship in Wrangler Jeans or a 3 piece business suit. What God does care about is that we as sinners repent our sins, and try to improve our lives. Let us use this parable to prepare us for the Kingdom. We are sent the invitation. We accept the invitation. We lead our lives to be acceptable to enter the Kingdom. Amen.