

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

HIDDEN ON PLAIN SIGHT UNCOVERING THE KINGDOM

"Parable of the Wedding Feast"

April 13, 2025

Scripture Passages: Matthew 22:1-14

INTRO

What's the best party you've ever attended?

Weddings are often filled with food, laughter, music, and beauty—but what if Jesus said that the kingdom of God is just like that kind of celebration?

In this parable, Jesus compares God's kingdom to a royal wedding banquet—and it's not just about who's invited. It's also about how we respond.

So what does it look like to truly say "yes" to the invitation—and to show up dressed for the occasion?

STUDY AND REFLECTION

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet (Matthew 22:1–14)

A king throws a lavish banquet to celebrate his son. He invites guests—but they refuse. Some ignore the invite. Others even attack the messengers.

So the king invites everyone—the good and the bad. The banquet hall fills.

But one guest isn't wearing the wedding clothes, and the king asks why. When the guest is speechless, he's removed from the celebration.

Jesus ends the story with this line: "Many are called, but few are chosen."

KEY PERSPECTIVES FROM THE PARABLE

1. The King – The Great Inviter

"God doesn't coerce. He invites."

The king prepares everything—food, clothes, celebration—and simply asks people to show up. His heart is generous, persistent, and patient. He keeps inviting, even when others refuse.

Reflection: How have you seen God patiently invite you into deeper life with Him?

2. The Responses – No, Yes But, and Yes And

NO – Self-Righteousness:

Some invited guests simply reject the invitation. Their expectations of the "kingdom" don't match the king's reality. Like the religious leaders Jesus addressed, they were confident in their own righteousness—and offended by grace.

YES, BUT – No-Righteousness:

The improperly dressed guest says "yes" to the party—but "no" to participation. He wants the perks without the transformation. He comes on his terms, not the king's.

YES, AND – True Righteousness:

This is the full response. Accept the invitation and receive the attire. God provides the robe of righteousness—and when we wear it, we live fully in His joy, grace, and purpose.

Reflection: Are you resisting, halfway engaging, or fully embracing life in God's kingdom?



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3. *The Wedding Clothes – Provided, Not Earned*

"Grace is unconditioned—but not unconditional."

In the parable, guests are expected to wear wedding clothes provided by the king. It's not about earning entrance—it's about receiving and responding. The clothes represent a life changed by grace.

Reflection: Are you trying to show up in your own righteousness—or putting on the robe God offers?

APPLICATION

God is not just throwing a party—He's inviting you.

You don't have to earn a seat at the table. But you are called to show up with a heart ready to be transformed.

Grace invites us in. Grace clothes us. Grace empowers us to live the good life.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does this parable change the way you think about the Kingdom of God?
2. Which of the three responses (No, Yes But, Yes And) do you relate to right now—and why?
3. What might it look like for you to "put on" the wedding clothes in your everyday life?
4. Who in your life might need to be invited into the banquet? How can you extend that invitation?

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Ask God to reveal:

- Where you may be resisting or half-stepping into the life He's inviting you into.
- What it means for you to wear the wedding clothes of righteousness this week.
- Who you can personally invite into the joy of the Kingdom.

Thank God that He keeps inviting—even when we turn away—and that He provides everything we need to fully participate in His good life.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

- *The Divine Conspiracy* by Dallas Willard
- *The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg
- *Desiring the Kingdom* by James K.A. Smith