

The Twentieth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Matthew 22:1-14  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

## Call Them That Were Bidden to the Marriage Feast

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Sermon Text:**

“And + Jesus answered and spake again in parables unto them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, who made a marriage feast for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage feast: and they would not come.’”

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank Thee that, all things being prepared for our salvation, Thou didst call us to the marriage-feast of Thy dear Son, the Bridegroom of our souls; and we beseech Thee, cleanse and direct our hearts, that we may not reject Thy gracious invitation, but willingly follow Thy Word and, being clothed by faith with the garment of righteousness, obtain eternal life with all Thy elect; through the same Thy Son, + Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, in the Trinity season, this season which we are in currently, there are two Gospels that contain a wedding feast. The first comes on the Second Sunday after Trinity Sunday, which we did not hear this year, because that Sunday was the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, Apostles. The second Gospel reading that contains a wedding feast in the Trinity season is the one which we hear today. There is one at the beginning of the Trinity season and one at the end. But the differences do not end there. At the wedding feast at the beginning of the Trinity season only the good end up at the wedding feast. That wedding feast has no end. It is an eternal wedding feast. Therefore, that wedding feast depicts the eternal wedding of the Lamb in His Kingdom which has no end. It shows the eternal victory celebration of our Lord + Jesus, Who conquered sin and death, and took to Himself as a Bride, the Church.

At that feast many were bidden, but made light of it, and did not come. But the guests that did come, that received the invitation and did not make light of it, enjoyed the eternal feast. That is why the wedding feast at the beginning of the year, from the Gospel of the Evangelist St. Luke, shows the eternal feast where only the good enter in. The wedding feast that we have today from the Gospel of the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew, however, shows a wedding feast into which both the good and the bad are invited. All who excused themselves from attending the wedding feast are evil, but not all that enter in are good. This wedding feast depicts the times that we are in now. It shows the condition of the Church. This place that we are in today is the wedding feast into which we have been invited. We have been invited into the Church, to receive the gifts of the Lord God. The Lord God gives us His holy Word which feeds our sin-sick souls. He gives us His blessed Sacraments, which are signs and seals of His grace and mercy toward us. These means of grace distribute to us forgiveness, life, and salvation. These means, by the working of the Holy Ghost, impart to us faith. This faith clings to the

works and merits of the Lord + Jesus. This faith gifted to us clings to the invitation that has been extended to us on account of the Lord's suffering and death in our stead.

But not everyone heeds the invitation. There are many that are consumed with the things of this world. They view their lives in this world as more important than the eternal things. The things of this world will pass away, but the eternal things will never pass away. This does not stop, however, some from refusing the invitation to come to this wedding feast which we are at today. Some hear the invitation and return to their farm, that is, they return to their earthly toils, not giving thought to the fact that the toils and stresses of this life will pass away when this life is over. All of their striving and worry for the toils of this life will not matter on the day of their death. Others hear the invitation and return to their merchandise, that is, they returned to their longing for worldly riches brought about by their worldly labor. Neither of them takes heed of the incarnation of the Lord + Jesus. Neither of them cares to come to the Church and receive the gifts won by the incarnated Lord.

There are others still that just refusing, or ignoring, the invitation is not enough. They must persecute those who are inviting them to the wedding feast. They are so evil that they do actual work in order that the ones doing the inviting are treated shamefully and killed. They are so evil that they cannot just ignore the invitation but must persecute and kill those who are inviting them. They actively rail against the Church, and those who would deliver them out of the net into which they have been snared; the net of sin which leads to their eternal destruction. Our Lord + Jesus in the parable for today reveals what happens to these evil people who refuse the invitation, and persecute and kill His prophets and preachers. The Lord will send out His armies and will destroy those murderers, because they are of their father the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning, and He will burn their city, for they will endure the eternal fires of Hell on account of their unbelief, and rejection of the invitation from the Lord God.

But the Lord God in His grace and mercy, continues to invite those who would come to the wedding feast. Our Lord God is abundantly generous. He keeps on inviting those who would come. He continues to send out His servants, His Prophets, Apostles, and Preachers, to invite those who would come to the wedding feast. They are sent into the "partings of the highways," that is, they are sent everywhere. Not just the main roads, but the byways and off the beaten path roads. The ministers of the Word of the Lord God are sent to everywhere and anywhere there may be someone who would heed the invitation and come to the wedding feast. And the servants do that which the Lord God commanded. They do that which the King of the Son bids them do, so that, they gathered into the wedding feast as many as they find, both the good and the bad. For the servants cannot see the hearts of those who come to the wedding feast, only the King of the Son can do that. But they continue to invite them to the wedding feast, so that the banquet hall is filled with guests.

The Church on earth is full of wedding guests. But not everyone that enters into Church, or joins the Church, is worthy of the invitation. There are some who heed the invitation to come, but their hearts still remain without faith. They still cling to the things of this world. They, like those who ignored the invitation, are still concerned with their farm and merchandise, they are still concerned with their earthly toils, and their riches in this life. They give the appearance of being in the Church, but their hearts are far from it. They live their lives with only one foot in the Church, but their hearts reveal their true devotion. They are without wedding garments. They are truly without faith, even though they put on an outward show of being in the wedding feast.

These can easily be ascertained by those who are observant, for their only devotion to the Word of the Lord God and to prayer is only seen when they are in Church, or when it is convenient for them to do so. They put on the face of a Christian at Church, but as soon as they walk out the door they leave behind all semblance of being a Christian. No one who would encounter them away from this place would have any indication that they are a Christian, they do not daily study God's Word, they do

not daily and often pray to the Lord God. Their whole life is not about the life of the world to come, but about the life in which they currently live. Therefore, these are no different than the ones who ignored the invitation, or those who actively sought violence against the ones who would invite them.

This is why the actions of the King toward the man who was at the wedding feast are so harsh. There are those who would excuse this man, for he was after all at the wedding feast. But the King, the Lord God, does not tolerate unbelief. He does not tolerate a half-hearted Christianity. He does not tolerate those who want to keep one foot in the Church, but have their heart firmly planted outside of the Church. Therefore, as we wrap up the Church's year, as we come to the end of the Trinity season, we get this warning to remain faithful unto death. For the man found without a wedding garment, has his hands and feet bound, and he is tossed out into the outer darkness, where there will be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. These unbelievers, who tried to give the appearance of being a Christian are tossed away from the Light of the world, from the loving arms of our Lord + Jesus. There they will experience for all eternity both tears of sadness with their weeping, and the gnashing of their teeth as they are filled with anger at themselves for neglecting that which was in their grasp.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us hear what the Lord + Jesus tells us today in this parable of the wedding feast. For those who heed the invitation, and come into the wedding hall, get a foretaste of the eternal banquet here in this place today. We get to receive from our Lord's abundant grace and mercy. We are gifted by Him with faith, and with the remission of our sins. Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also eternal life and salvation. At the beginning of the Trinity season, we heard of the wedding feast that has no end, which only the faithful are in attendance. Today, we hear of the wedding feast which we are currently attending, this wedding feast to which we are invited each and every Sunday. This feast prepares us for the first feast we heard of at the beginning of the Trinity season. This weekly feast is a preparation and training for the eternal feast which we will enjoy when our Lord comes and invites us into that eternal banquet.

For our Lord God, by the working of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace, clothes us Himself with the wedding garment of faith. He puts on us His righteousness. We are robed in the righteousness of the Christ, through the waters of Holy Baptism. We wear these white robes to this altar where we receive our Lord's true and substantial Body and Blood given to us in bread and wine. At this wedding feast, our Lord God, shows us His abundant generosity. He shows us His grace and mercy. For we are unworthy to be invited to come to this great wedding feast, but our Lord in His mercy has invited us, so that we can come to this place and receive a foretaste of the eternal banquet that will be ours when we leave this earthly life. Let us then give Him thanks and praise. Let us as St. Paul wrote to the Church at Ephesus in our Epistle for today, praise Him with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts. For our Lord has delivered us from sin and death, and has invited us to be with Him for all eternity robed in the wedding garments in which He has clothed us. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

#### **The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ

+ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*