

Hymn number 122, the words on the screen. Come Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire. Let us, thine influence prove, source of the old prophetic fire, fountain of light and love.

Come Holy Ghost, for moved by thee, the prophets wrote and spoke. Unlock the truth, thyself the key, and seal the sacred book. And so on, we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

Come Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire.

[20 : 07] Let us die in the truth So is all the old poetic cry A gem of light and love A holy ghost torqued by me The prophets old and small A holy ghost that could by self-been But still the sacred book It's man by wings, celestial dove Good all our nature's light On earth is borders

Spitted through Unleavened and every light For through himself we then shall know If thou within us shine And stand with all thy sins below The depths of love divine Let's pray as we come back to the passage Holy Spirit we pray as we have sung That you would help us That you would inspire our hearts

That you would move within us And help us to see The truth about ourselves Help us to see the truth About our need of Jesus And the truth also that Jesus is the saviour The only saviour of sinners So as we sang we simply pray that you would Unlock the truth And unseal the sacred book That we may know more of you as our God And as our saviour And as our king We pray this in Jesus name Amen Matthew chapter 22 If you could have that open In front of you That would be helpful The parable of the wedding feast And for those who weren't here this morning We were looking at the first part of this

This morning And we're looking at part 2 This evening So in the morning We thought about point 1 and 2 Point 1 was salvation So as the parable begins Jesus paints this picture Of an amazing wedding feast A feast that is to be provided by a king for his son And so we have this amazing picture Of the wedding feast To usurp all wedding feasts And it's a picture of salvation The lavish provision Of God And salvation We can fast forward To Revelation chapter 19 as well Where we have this picture of heaven As the marriage supper of the Lamb And so the first thing we see As Jesus begins to tell a story As he's painting this picture Of salvation God's salvation

The second thing we saw this morning Taking us from verse 2 into verse 3 Is the invitation So the king The king being God Sends his servants The prophets With this invitation To come to the wedding feast And so this invitation It goes out widely And there is the desire On the part of the king That the salvation The feast that he is offering Would be received That the invitation Would be accepted And that's as far as we got This morning Just took me a bit longer To say it than that So what happened next Salvation Invitation Well The next thing That happens in this parable Is there is a rejection A rejection On the part of those Who were invited They reject The invitation

[25 : 12] To come to this wedding feast Verse 3 The second part of it Says They would not come The king sent his servants Verse 3 To call those Who were invited To the wedding feast But they would not come And note the Precision of the words there Jesus did not say That they could not come He said they would not come There is a flat out rejection Of the invitation On the part of the king And just thinking about that picture How would you respond In the face of blunt And brazen rejection If you At great expense To yourself Decided that you would

Put names on a list And you would approach These people And say I would like you to come To the wedding feast For my son And you got this blunt response I will not come How would you React to that Well I expect You and I would Be inclined To respond By saying Well fine Don't come It's your loss And that's the end Of the conversation That's likely What we would do If we got a Short Terce Rejection note From somebody That we Invited to A family wedding We would simply say That's fine If you don't want to come You don't have to come You'd withdraw the invitation

That would be The reasonable thing to do That would be What we would expect But that's not What this king does The next point Is persuasion And that takes us Into verse 4 Again He The king Sent other servants So we've had the first Lot of servants Who have gone out With these invitations They've received A blunt rejection And the king sent Other servants Saying Tell those Who are invited See I've prepared my dinner My oxen And my fat calves Have been slaughtered And everything is ready Come to the wedding feast And this is an amazing picture Because remember The one who is doing The approaching here The one who is doing The persuading here Is the king And he sends out

Servant after servant To persuade The people He has invited To come And enjoy The most amazing Wedding feast And it seems like Such a Strange And bizarre And unrealistic Picture That the king The one who is Exalted Would condescend Over and over again To a people Who are

Ungrateful And unworthy And yet When we think About this For a moment That's the story Of salvation I often go back To that Line In the Christmas carol Which always Sticks with me It says He Jesus King Jesus Came down To earth From heaven Who was God And Lord Of all And it takes us To John chapter 1 As well Where we think About the word Becoming flesh Condescending And dwelling Among us In order to Offer us And to cure For us This gift Of salvation And so We see This people Who are offered The salvation That God Invites them To receive And they Reject it And then God the king Comes With this Persuasion To say to these people Will you not Reconsider Everything's done Everything's provided

[30 : 18] This is the Most amazing Thing that you Could be Offered And receive Will you Will you Not reconsider Your decision And when we Think about The people We just think Why would They be so Foolish Why would The people In this Parable Be so foolish As to not Accept What Is offered To them Why would They deny Themselves What is so Cruelly Good for Them I mean There's no Cost There's no Entrance Fee That they're Not being Asked to Do anything They're just Being asked To come And to Enjoy all That's Provided Why would They respond This way To this Generous Good Loving Gracious King And yet

When we Take another Look at This parable We remember What James tells Us about The Bible So often What we're Seeing As we look Into the Pages of Scripture Is a Reflection Of ourselves And we See that In this Section Because when We think In terms of The gospel Breath In the Gospel Jesus Says Come To me And if You come To me I will Give you Forgiveness Of sin I will Give you Rest for Your souls I will Give you Peace I will Give you Joy I will Give you Contentment I will Give you Everything Your soul Longs For And yet As we Think about Our lives Those of us Who are Christians We can Think back With regret About how

Long it Took us To come To Jesus Even as he Kept on Calling us And there May be some Here tonight And you Have heard Jesus call You and You are Hearing Jesus Call you And still You're Hesitating Still you're Rejecting Him But even As we Think about Our lives And our Experience As Christians Is it Not true That we Continue to Be slow To come To Jesus Because we Don't just Come to Jesus to Have our Sins forgiven And then We're done We are

To come To Jesus Day by Day by Day by Day For Strength And for Grace For Wisdom And for Courage And for Direction For Cleansing And yet We are So prone To wander From him Rather Than to Come to Him And yet Still he Calls Still he Sends Messengers To us To Persuade Us To come To him To come Back to Him And maybe That's a Word for A Christian Tonight Who's been Drifting And who's Here but Who feels Cold and Far away

And in This passage This evening We hear The king Saying Come back To me Come back To me So in These verses We have A high Definition Picture Of the God Who is As we Sang Rich in Love And slow To anger Because even Though his Invitation Is rejected He continues To call He continues To persuade He continues To say Will you Not come And receive What you Need And what I Want to Give And we

[35 : 21] Think well Surely now Surely now After this Second round Of messengers Have come And told them About the Lavishness Of this Feast Surely now These people Will accept The invitation But as we Read on We discover And know That they Continue to Reject the King That's the Next point Point five More rejection There's a Second round Of rejection And as we Look in On this We get Some insight Into the Reasons That the People give For rejecting The king Why do They reject The king And why do They reject The king's Invitation Well there's Two reasons The first

Reason On the Part of Some is They were Just apathetic They weren't Bothered And the Second reason The second Group that's Identified here As rejecting The king They're Antagonistic They're angry In the Response To the King So first Of all There's The apathetic The call Goes out The invitation Goes out But it Says in Verse five They paid No attention And went Off One to His farm And another To his Business So we Think back To that Day The congregation That Jesus Was speaking To Who were The apathetic Well it Seems that The majority Of the Crowd Were apathetic Because the

Majority of The crowd They quite Like to Listen to Jesus And they Were amazed And they Were entertained When he Performed Miracles They liked It when Jesus Provided a Free lunch For thousands Of people They liked It when Jesus Healed Their Sicknesses When they Were struggling But when Jesus Said I Want you To take Up your Cross And follow Me I want You to Seek First my Kingdom I want You to Love me With your Whole heart And soul And mind They paid

No attention You've got A small Group of Twelve We're Following Maybe a Few More But the Majority They paid No attention They said We're too Busy For this We've got Farms To go To We've got Businesses To run And so Off they Went Back home Back to Work That was The apathetic That was The majority And then There's the Antagonistic And we Find them In verse Six And these Are the People Who in Verse Six Seized His Servants Treated Them Shamefully And killed Them So As we're Trying to Figure out Who's Who in This Parable Who are The Antagonistic In This Story Well It's The Religious Leaders Who are The Antagonistic Ones Because These Are the Ones Who had Heard What the Prophets Of God Had Said These Are the People Who were Experts They were The PhDs In the Old Testament Prophets They had Heard The Invitation Of God Over And Over Again Through Prophet After Prophet Saying Come To Me Look To Me And Be Saved But They Would Not Look They Would Not Come And Now They Are Standing In The Presence Of The One Whom All The Prophets Were Pointing To And They With Anger And Antagonism Rejected Jesus So that's The Nature Of The Rejection That Was Happening As Jesus Addressed The Crowd On That Day And You Know That Kind Of Rejection Is Still Happening Today It's Happening Outside Of This Room And It's Likely Happening Inside This Room Just Now As Well There Are Many Who Are Still Apathetic Apathetic [40 : 25] Towards Jesus Happy to Receive Help In a Time Of Need But Too Busy For Jesus Most Of The Time you know there's work and there's kids and there's school and there's sport so all these things packed into life and truth be told all these things if we look at our schedules seem to come above and before Jesus that's that's a picture of apathy towards Christ and apathy is rejection so many still are apathetic towards Jesus we have to ask God to search our hearts to see if there is apathy in our hearts so that if there is we will repent and there are also others who are antagonistic and you can perhaps think of some even now who are in your world and week by week or conversation by conversation as you speak to them about Jesus as you tell them about the gospel as you ask them to come to church they get harder and harder and more and more angry and there's a growing antagonism towards Christ it's a scary thing to see actually I sometimes see it even standing here

I see it happening as the word goes out week by week some hearts soften some faces open some hearts harden and the faces go dark so there's rejection of the king what does that provoke in the king well we're told in verse 7 that it provokes in the king anger we've already noted that the king in this parable he is patient and he seeks to persuade those that he is invited to come even though they defy him even though they reject him even though they say

I will not come to your feast he doesn't strike them dead he doesn't send in the armies he comes back to them with that persuasion he is slow to anger but what we see here is that persistent rejection of the king will lead ultimately to anger and in verse 7 we're told the king was angry after the second round of rejection the king was angry and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city and Jesus in the telling of this parable is warning the religious leaders of what will happen if they do not repent he's given them the opportunity in that moment to repent and he's also warning them this is what will happen if you don't repent this is what will happen if you persist in your rejection one commentator Ross says we have a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem which took place in AD 70 to just 40 years later all that Jesus warned of in verse 7 became reality as judgment struck

Ross goes on to say those who were first invited to the wedding feast proved unworthy they were either indifferent to the invitation verse 5 or hostile verse 6 judgment fell upon them all and we should note as we move towards the conclusion here that we should not overlook the fact that God is a God of patience and he is a God of grace but he is also a God of judgment and if we reject him whether it's through apathy and can't be botheredness or whether it's through a hard-hearted angry defiance there will be judgment unless we repent so let's be warned of that that's what Jesus is doing in this parable for these religious leaders so there's more rejection we see that in point 4 is that where the story ends well thankfully it's not where the story ends because the next point is compassion verse 8 then he said to his servants the wedding feast is ready but those who were invited were not worthy so we need to ask the question here who were those who were first invited to the feast of God's salvation and the answer to that question is it was the Jewish nation they were the first to receive the offer of salvation and at the very front of that line were the Jewish religious leaders and everybody including themselves thought that they were great

and revered men of God but Jesus tells them and he tells everyone who's listening that they were not worthy in spite of their reputation in spite of the office that they had in spite of all their religious qualifications Jesus says they were not worthy of a place at the wedding feast of the king and what was true of them is true for all of us when it comes to meeting God's entrance requirements none of us are worthy it's good for us to note that as we approach a communion when it comes to meeting [47 : 43] God's entrance requirements we are not worthy because we're all sinners and some of us are rough and raw straightforward sinners it's evident for people to see and some of us are a bit more sophisticated religious sinners and we're a bit better at hiding our sins but Romans chapter 3 verse 10 tells us that none is righteous none is worthy not one we are all unworthy of receiving a place at God's wedding feast in heaven if we're looking at ourselves so what happened next in this parable did the king having declared all these people to be unworthy did the king call his servants back in and give them instructions to cancel the wedding feast did the king say to his servants what we're going to do now is we're going to take the budget right back and have a small family only reception well that's not what we read here at all the king in verse 9 says go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you can find and those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found both bad and good so the wedding hall was filled with guests and what we're seeing here is the compassion of the king that's what's shining through this whole parable we're seeing the compassion of the king he has this feast he has this provision and he wants to share his goodness he wants to share his mercy with all this is a picture of the gospel invitation it's a picture of God's salvation it goes out to all yes

I went out first to the Jews but I went not just to the religious Jews I went to the rough and ready Jews but I didn't stick with the Jews it didn't stop there the gospel invitation the offer of salvation went from the Jews to the Gentiles that's where it was about to go it would be carried over the borders of Israel and it would go to all nations it would come as far as Scotland and the good and the bad of all nations would receive the invitation to come to Jesus and to be saved and!

God I am sick of having the same conversation over the years with people saying I'm not worthy enough to come there's no one who's worthy to come that's what we're seeing all through this that there's no one who's worthy to come there's no one who's righteous so how can we come to God how can we come to the Lord's table what encourages us to come well I'll tell you what encourages us to come the compassion of God it's not about what's in us it's about what's in him and David understood this remember after David sinned with Bathsheba and he's away from the Lord for a year and then suddenly through the prophet David's eyes are opened and he sees his sin and he repents and as he comes back to

God what is he appealing to within God as he makes his return where he's appealing to the compassion of God he doesn't come to God saying please listen to listen to some stuff about me and all the promises I'm going to make this is how he comes to to God in Psalm 51 and at verse 1 after thy love and kindness Lord have mercy for thy compassion is great blot out all mine iniquity and so we see the compassion of God as this parable continues and I wish in some ways that this is where the parable ends but actually it's not where Jesus ends this parable it's not where Jesus ends this story because the last point in the parable is condemnation because we see a man in the last section of this parable being condemned verse 11 but when the king came in to look at the guests he saw there a man who had no wedding garment so we have this picture in our mind's eye of the wedding celebration and we know even in our culture that there's a certain way to dress when it comes to a wedding you know you don't turn up at a wedding wearing your shorts and your flip flops people spend a lot of time and people spend a lot of money choosing the right wedding outfit now in that context it was common for a king not only to extend an invitation to a wedding but also to provide the wedding garments that would have to be worn at the wedding so that's the situation and if we just hit pause for a second we need to ask the question what do the wedding garments represent in this story and one commentator

Hale tells us the wedding clothes represent the righteousness of Christ with which we put on by faith all who come to the banquet must be clothed in Christ righteousness connects with Romans 13 and verse 14 the apostle Paul says clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ so the garments that we're seeing speak to us about the righteousness the perfection the sinless goodness of Jesus that's the clothes but in this story we have a man who is not clothed as he should be with the wedding garments you could say he's trying to come in to this wedding celebration on his own terms in his own way and the king verse 12 said to him friend how did you

get in here without a wedding garment and he was speechless then the king said to the attendants bind him hand and foot and cast them into the outer darkness in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for many are called but few are chosen and that's where

[56 : 22] Jesus ends the parable it's not exactly ending on a high positive note but he ends it here I suppose so that there will be impact and there will be shaken into thinking about what this truly means so what does this mean is this a parable about someone being thrown out of heaven that's what some might be thinking is this a parable about a man who's been thrown out of heaven well no it's not they can't be that can't happen we're speaking the commentator says do not put this scene in heaven for certainly no one will enter heaven without Christ's righteousness so if it's not about heaven what's this about well this is about those who profess outwardly to know God and who may have their name on a membership list but who have never trusted

Jesus remember Jesus is locked at this stage in a dialogue with religious leaders who claim to be men of God who held office in the church but they did not believe in Jesus they did not submit to Jesus and Jesus is telling the story to them on that day but it still applies to us on this day one commentator says this man represents all those who outwardly respond to the gospel invitation and come into the church but they do not come with faith in Christ these are the ones who come with an outward profession of faith but their real trust is not in the finished work of Christ on the cross as we finish let me just say what you already know but it needs to be said over and over again the only way we can be saved is through believing in Jesus and accepting all that he has done for us on the cross!

we can't save ourselves by our good works we cannot save ourselves by sitting in a building and putting our name on a list of a church we cannot save ourselves by being affiliated with a denomination we can only be saved by believing in Jesus and accepting all that he has done for us on the cross if we don't do that we are like this man in the parable and we will be condemned and that comes through so strongly in perhaps the most well known chapter in the whole Bible John chapter 3 verses 16 to 18 it says for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life for God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through whoever believes in him is not condemned because whoever believes in him is not condemned but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God so next Sunday morning! God will sit at the Lord's table and the question to finish with is what should we wear?

[60 : 57] What should we clothe ourselves in as we sit at the Lord's table and the answer is we clothe ourselves in the righteousness of Christ as we come to the Lord's table we don't come clothed with our own good works because Isaiah tells us they're like filthy rags we come rather clothed in the finished work of Christ on the cross and we don't come to the table telling Jesus about all that we are doing in our lives rather we come remembering all that he has done in and through his death we come to the table saying nothing in my hands

I bring simply to thy cross I cling naked come to thee for dress helpless look to thee for grace and if we come that way we can sing as we will in a moment no condemnation now I dread because Jesus and all in him is mine let's sing that as we close mission praise 33 mission praise 33 that Charles Wesley how man can it be that I should gain an interest in the saviour's blood died he for me who caused this pain for me who him to death pursued amazing love how can it be that thou my God should die for me we'll sing the whole of this hymn to God's praise song what can be as I should be an interest in the saviour's blood mighty for me who roses came for me who live to death pursue always in love of God in me that thou have my love should die for me!

amazing love God in me! the love my God should die for me!

Smiths me all the immortal guys who can explode this strange design Let our God all that angel lights in choir no more.

[65 : 13] He let his Father so now up, so free so when the light is blazed.

Emptied himself from all my God and led for Adam's helpless race.

This mercy of women's and grief for all my God divine.

This mercy of women's and grief for all my God divine.

Oh. Oh. I changed the law, my heart was free.

[66 : 41] I rose, went forth and followed thee. I changed the law, my heart was free.

I rose, went forth and followed thee. O condemnation, now I dread.
Jesus and all in heaven is mine. I am in my living head.
I'm bold in righteousness divine. O thy approach, eternal throne.
And with the wrath you rise my own. O thy approach, eternal throne.
[67 : 48] O thy, Lord, and through Christ my own. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the
love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, be with us all now and
forevermore. Amen.