

The Rejection of the Messiah Results in Judgment

Matthew 22:1-14

(The following text is taken from a sermon preached by Gil Rugh.)

1. The Parable of the Wedding Feast
2. The Invitation Was Extended
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In the closing days or hours of a person's life, especially if the person knows that the end of this life is coming, the things that he says and does take on special significance. In Matthew 22 the subject is the closing days of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus was giving His concluding remarks to the nation Israel in light of the fact that His crucifixion was only days away. At the end of this time, He withdrew and spent His last hours with His disciples to prepare them for His coming death. In the Gospel of John, chapters 13 to 17 describe those final hours of Christ with His disciples.

This section of the Gospel of Matthew is zeroing in on these final days where Christ was ministering to the nation Israel and preparing the nation, if you will, for His coming death. In Matthew 21 Christ focused attention on the bankrupt, spiritual state of the nation Israel. The nation professed a relationship with God and professed to know and love God; but the nation was empty on the inside and did not know what it meant to be forgiven and cleansed and have a personal relationship with God.

The leaders of the nation challenged the authority of Jesus Christ in Matthew 21:23-27. Jesus turned that around to reveal their spiritual condition. They were not really interested in who Jesus Christ really was. They were not really interested in knowing if He had been sent from God. They were simply interested in discrediting Him before the people so that they might dispose of Him.

Christ began a series of three parables in Matthew 21:28 that revealed the empty condition of the nation Israel. This was a decadent, spiritually rebellious people in spite of what they professed. The first parable was an account of two sons: one professed to obey his father but disobeyed. The other son was rebellious and would not obey his father but then came to change his mind and submit to him. The son that professed to obey his father, but never obeyed, pictured the nation Israel and its leaders.

Then Christ told the parable of a vineyard which had been entrusted to vine-growers who would oversee the vineyard and be responsible for cultivating it and nourishing it so that it might produce good fruit. The vineyard represented Israel and the vine-growers represented the leaders

of the nation Israel. But just as the vine-growers did not tend to the vineyard and return the fruit to the owner, the leaders had not developed and cultivated the nation spiritually. The result for the leaders would be the judgment of God.

Matthew 22 begins with the third in this series of parables, all of which focus attention on the spiritual emptiness of the nation Israel and the resulting judgment which that spiritual decadence necessitated.

1. The Parable of the Wedding Feast

In the parable of the wedding feast, Christ first emphasized the persistent rejection of the nation, indicating that God had continually over the years graciously invited the nation Israel to come to His wedding feast. The nation had just as persistently rejected that invitation. The result of that rejection was judgment. The invitation then would be expanded to include not only the nation Israel but also all peoples from all nations. Christ closed this parable by a solemn revelation that even though all are invited to that wedding feast, only those who meet the requirements that the king has set down may partake of it.

This parable draws a contrast between the loving, gracious patience of God and the obstinate, persistent rebellion of sinful people. There is a glimpse in this parable of the character of God revealed in breadth and fullness. Many people today have a hard time coming to grasp the fact that God is a God of love, mercy and grace and that He is also a God of anger, wrath and judgment. Yet both aspects of the character of God are brought together in this parable. You do not really understand God and you do not really perceive the fruit of the character of God if you do not see Him as a God of anger, a God of wrath, and a God of judgment as well as a God of love and mercy and grace.

The parable begins in Matthew 22:1, 2, **“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.’”** The subject of the parable is the kingdom of heaven. This is a reference to the earthly kingdom prophesied for Israel in the Old Testament, as it always is in Matthew along with the parallel reference “the kingdom of God.” This refers to the Kingdom over which the Messiah would rule and reign with Jerusalem as its capitol. Jesus began the parable by saying that He would reveal some truth related to the kingdom which God will establish on this earth.

Jesus told them He was going to draw an analogy between a wedding feast and the kingdom. This would be a picture that would fit together for the Jews, because the Old Testament also draws the analogy that the kingdom that will be established by God on earth can be compared to a feast or a banquet. In Isaiah 25 the earthly kingdom, the Millennial Kingdom when Christ will rule on the earth, is pictured. Isaiah 25:6 describes it: **“The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, aged wine.”** Isaiah described a banquet, a feast in which all the peoples will share and partake.

When Christ said the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a wedding feast, that would not be new material for the Jews. He was comparing it to the feast like Isaiah did in Isaiah 25. The same

picture is used in connection with the second coming of Christ to earth when He will establish that kingdom on earth. Revelation 19:9 says, **“Then he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.””**” The earthly kingdom of Christ is pictured as a marriage supper or a wedding feast.

2. The Invitation Was Extended

In Matthew 22, the king pictures God the Father; the son pictures Jesus Christ; and the guests who will be invited are the nation Israel. **“And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. Again he sent out other slaves saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited, “Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast””**” (Matt 22:3, 4). In biblical times when a king gave a wedding feast, invitations were sent out well ahead of the event. The specific time and date were not given, but the guests were to reserve this period of time on their calendars. Then there was a little more flexibility; when all the preparations were made and everything was finally prepared, the servants would go out and tell the guests that the feast was ready and they could come.

That is the picture in this parable: The invitation had been given; the nation had been told that the kingdom would be established, and now it was ready. John the Baptist had come and announced, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”** Jesus had come with His disciples and invited the nation to the kingdom that He would establish. But the response of the nation had been to reject this invitation. They rejected the message of the Old Testament prophets. They rejected the invitation of John the Baptist. They rejected the invitation of the Messiah Himself.

The end of Matthew 22:3 says they were *unwilling* to come. The gracious invitation of this king was ignored. They were not interested; they were unwilling to come. Remember that the invitation on the part of the king was an act of grace. He was not obligated to invite anyone. However, when the king in that context gave the invitation, the guests were obligated to accept. To refuse the invitation of the king was to indicate that you were no longer submissive to him, that you no longer recognized his sovereignty. The king graciously extended the invitation without obligation on his part. But when the invitation had been given, those invited were under obligation to accept and come.

The patience of this king was evident. After they rejected his initial invitation, Matthew 22:4 says he sent out other slaves with more urgency, *“Come! I’ve prepared it; it’s for you! I want you to partake in this feast!”*

3. The Response of the Invited Guests

The response of the guests is in Matthew 22:5, **“But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business.”** They paid no attention. They were indifferent to the invitation of this king. They had other things that were more important to them than attending a wedding feast. They were absorbed in the affairs of this life. One had to go attend to the farm; and one had to tend the business. They didn’t have time to think about a

wedding feast. They didn't have time to give attention to spiritual truth.

This is basically the way people are today. Most of the people are just indifferent to spiritual things. Their life is full, and they are busy. They don't think they have time to think about heaven or to be occupied with spiritual things. Men are occupied in their business. They have things on their mind that they think are too important to make time to come to church or give attention to the Word of God. They may say that they appreciate the invitation, but they think that their life is too full. They are just indifferent, and they go their own way. It is amazing how the people of this world are absorbed with the things of this life. What they think is really important is whether the business is successful or whether they achieve their goals. They have not really stopped to think about what really matters in light of time and eternity.

This was not a new problem in Jesus' day either. Centuries before Jesus Christ, Jeremiah addressed the same kind of situation in Jeremiah 9:23, 24: **“Thus says the Lord, ‘Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,’ declares the Lord.”** God says not to be absorbed in your business, in your riches, in your intellect! Don't boast about those accomplishments. If you want something to be proud of, something that really matters, then you need to know God and understand Him as the God who is a God of justice and righteousness. That is what is really worthy of boasting about. That is what really matters in life and not only in life but also in eternity.

Some people were indifferent to the king's invitation. Then there was another group mentioned in Matthew 22:6, **“and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them.”** Keep in mind that when the invitation was given you were obligated to come! There was no longer any neutral ground. When the king extended to you the invitation, you were in rebellion against him by your refusal. Those who were actively hostile to the king and manifested that hostility to the king in abusing his servants represent the religious leaders of the nation. The religious leaders always, over the centuries of Israel's history, led the way in persecuting the prophets and the servants of God, right down to John the Baptist and the role that the religious leaders had in his execution. They also had a role in the execution of their own Messiah.

This is an important reminder. Most people are just plain indifferent to the message of Jesus Christ. They are absorbed in their life, in their job, in their house, in the things of this world. Then there are the religious leaders who are actively hostile toward the message of Jesus Christ, standing in opposition to the truth of God and attempting to distort the truth of God and corrupt the Word of God. It is important to remember that the strongest opposition and the most open hostility to the message of Christ will come from religious people and, particularly, religious leaders.

4. The Judgment of the Invited Guests

What was this king to do? He persistently and graciously asked the subjects to come to this wedding feast. In rebellion they ignored him and even persecuted and killed his servants. There was only one option left for him: to bring judgment on those people. Matthew 22:7 says, **“But**

the king was enraged, and he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire.” There was an end to the patience of the king. He was long-suffering in dealing with rebellious people, but there came a time when that long-suffering ended and those rebellious people were brought under judgment.

The immediate application was the destruction of the nation Israel and the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 under the Roman General, Titus. To give you some perspective, historians record that there were one and one half million Jews who died under the occupation of the Romans. That would have been a great percentage of the nation, and this terrible catastrophe was brought on the nation by their refusal to accept the invitation of the King, their refusal to have Jesus Christ as their king. That rejection, that persistent rejection, culminated in judgment.

That is the pattern that Scripture consistently sets down. God is a God of grace and He is a God of love, mercy and patience. But persistent rejection of His grace always results in judgment. So He is a God of mercy, but He is a God of wrath. He is a God of love, but He is a God of anger. He is a God of justice and righteousness.

In Matthew 22:8 it says, **“Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.’”** According to Matthew 22:3, they were unwilling to come. And the king says they were unworthy to come to the feast! They were unfit because of their unwillingness.

Jesus said in Matthew 10:37, 38, **“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”** That is the same word, *“is not worthy of Me.”* So those who put family before Him are not worthy of Him, and those who put their jobs before Him are not fit for Him. I must come to recognize that I am a sinner and Jesus Christ is the ONLY hope! As such, He supersedes everyone and everything! Until a person comes to recognize that and submit to it, they are unfit and unworthy of Jesus Christ.

In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas were preaching the truth of Christ to the nation Israel. The nation Israel rejected the truth and blasphemed God. **“Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles’”** (Acts 13:46). If you repudiate the word of God, you judge yourself unfit or unworthy of eternal life! In Revelation 16:6, the same word is used in the context of the awful wrath of the judgment of God on sinful rebellious people, it is announced, *“They are worthy of the judgment of God.”* The New American Standard Bible says **“they deserve it.”** The word translated *“deserve”* is the exact same word translated *“worthy”* in Matthew 22:8. They were worthy of judgment, and they were unworthy of eternal life. They were unfit for the presence of God, but they were worthy of judgment because they were unwilling to come to Him. They rejected His word.

5. The Invitation Was Expanded

In judgment the guests were destroyed. What of the wedding feast? The king had promised a

feast, and he had prepared the feast; so there would be a wedding feast! So the invitation was expanded beyond those rebellious guests. **“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”** (Matt. 22:9, 10). The wedding feast would take place. There would be guests to fill the feast. But the invitation went to all peoples in all places to come to the feast.

Since the subject of the parable was the kingdom of God, the earthly kingdom, the time period in view is important. The time period Jesus was referring to is that period of time known as the Seven-Year Tribulation preceding the earthly kingdom of Christ, a yet future time. During that seven-year period, the Gospel of the kingdom will be announced again to the world. People will be encouraged to repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The Messiah will be returning. It is important to be prepared for His kingdom. That is yet to come. Those gathered then will be from all nations of people in all walks of life.

Jesus talked about the gospel going to the whole world in Matthew 24. The time frame of Matthew 24 is that seven-year tribulation period, and in that seven-year period the good news concerning the earthly kingdom of Christ will be the subject of proclamation. Jesus is speaking in Matthew 24:14, **“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”** And when the end comes, **“He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other”** (Matt. 24:31). At the climax of that seven-year period, the angels will go out and gather believers from all over the world to go into the Wedding Feast of the Lamb.

In the Book of Revelation, chapters 6 to 19 deal with that period of time leading up to the second coming of Christ to earth, the Seven-Year Tribulation which is after the Rapture and before His second coming to earth. Revelation 7:9 says, **“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands.”** These people are identified in Revelation 7:13, 14, **“Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’ I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”** These are the martyrs from the tribulation. They come from all peoples and all nations. As the Gospel of the Kingdom is preached throughout the world in those terrible days, multitudes will believe and many will be executed for their faith. But many will survive and go into the wedding feast in their physical bodies. Those who are martyred will be resurrected and will go in their glorified bodies.

During that seven-year period, the eternal Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ, is going to be proclaimed throughout the world to every people. **“And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people”** (Rev. 14:6). This is the same group of people being called out. God will be gathering a people for Himself and for the kingdom that He will establish.

In Revelation 19 Christ has returned to earth to have the wedding feast! **“Then he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb””’** (Rev. 19:9). The millennium will be established at this point. The application for us today is that the message of the Good News of the Gospel is to be going out to all people. Jesus Christ is inviting people to come to the wedding feast. The Spirit of God is inviting people to come. God the Father has issued His invitation that men and women everywhere might come and believe in Him and experience His salvation.

The closing invitation is in Revelation 22:17, 20, **“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.. .He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”** The invitation goes out from God to all people to come. The people He initially invited persistently refused, but in His grace He opens that invitation to all. But there is one other thing that must be noted.

6. The Terms of the Invitation

There is a solemn note in this parable in Matthew 22. Lest there be any misunderstanding, this expanded invitation does not mean that anyone can come on their own terms. It means that everyone is invited, but they must come on the king’s terms. They must prepare according to the instructions, if you will. They must meet the qualifications.

Note what happens in Matthew 22:11-14, **“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.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”** This is a very awesome and solemn warning given by Jesus Christ.

At this point in the parable, everyone was invited to the wedding feast but only those who were properly clothed would be accepted. The practice of the time was that when you were invited to the king’s feast, he *gave* you the appropriate garment as you came in. The king thus ensured that everyone, regardless of their station, would be dressed properly in his presence because they were provided the garments for the feast.

The point here is that this man rejected the provision of the king, and he knew it so he had nothing to say! The king asked this man who had come into the wedding feast, **“How did you come in here without wedding clothes?”** The man was speechless. He did not have an answer. He might have said, *“Well, they just grabbed me off the highway! I’m a poor man, a beggar; and they said, ‘Hey come to the wedding feast’ and I jumped on the cart and here I am! I had no time to go home and get changed; besides I don’t have anything to wear anyway!”* But there was no answer. Many, you realize, had come from the highways, but only this one man was unclothed or not clothed properly. The background for this in the Old Testament will verify the fact that everyone was invited, but you were required to wear the proper clothes to be accepted.

The wedding garment is a picture of the righteousness that God gives us in His salvation. Again, this would not be a new concept or a new thought to a Jew. Isaiah 61 is a passage that talks about the kingdom that the Messiah will establish on the earth and over which He will rule. Note Isaiah 61:10: **“I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.”** Just as the bride and the bridegroom are properly attired, so for those in His kingdom God has provided a garment of salvation. He has wrapped them in the robes of His righteousness. What a beautiful picture!

Just as the king in this parable graciously invited all to come to his wedding feast, and then as they came, he clothed them in the beauty of his garments, so the Lord clothes the believers in the beauty of His salvation, the beauty of His righteousness. The Jews knew from Isaiah that they would have to be clothed by God in His salvation and in His righteousness if they were to share in the kingdom that He would establish.

7. Refusing the King’s Terms

But this miserable man refused the garments of the king and sat in his rags at this feast as a testimony of his rebellion. His garments are described by Isaiah in Isaiah 64:6, 7, **“For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf. And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on Your name.”** God sees our righteousness as filthy garments, literally referring to a woman at her time of month, a menstrual rag polluted by blood.

This obstinate man stood out! He was unacceptable at the feast. What kind of place would this wedding feast be if everyone came in their rags? Did you ever think what kind of a place heaven would be if everyone came there on their own terms? What if those who hated God and rebelled against Him and who would not have the free gift of His righteousness were going to be at His wedding feast on their own terms? It would be an unlivable place. You see it in places of the world today where authority has completely broken down. Refusal to submit to leadership results in an unlivable society. What kind of hell would heaven be if people were there on their own terms? If those who said, *“I will not believe in Jesus Christ. I will not bow the knee to Him and have Him as my Savior. I’m going to heaven on my own terms,”* were allowed into the kingdom, that would turn the kingdom of God into hell on earth. It would be unlivable, unbearable place.

The king, in his graciousness, invited these guests. In his love he provided the beautiful garments required, at his cost! And a stubborn, obstinate sinner would not have them. Is it any wonder he must come under judgment?

This picture of the garments that God provides carries through the New Testament as well. Christ is speaking in Revelation 3:4, 5, **“But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments.”** He says there are some who are worthy of eternal life, to walk with Him in the beauty of His garments. Those who overcome receive the white garments from Christ. John identifies the overcomer in 1 John 5:5, **“Who is the one who**

overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" You become an overcomer and get the garment of God's salvation by believing in His Son, Jesus Christ. You must recognize your sinfulness and your unworthiness and place your trust in Christ alone as the One who loved you and died for you, the One who was raised from the dead a Victor. When you believe in Him, your rags are stripped off and you are clothed in the beautiful garments that Christ has provided.

In the message to the church in Laodicea, it indicates that they thought they were all right. They had an attitude much like the indifferent Jews of Jesus' day. They thought they were rich. Jesus said they did not realize they were spiritually bankrupt before Him. **"I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed"** (Rev. 3:18). You must secure from Him the garment of His righteousness at no cost to you because He paid it in full with His own death on the cross.

Revelation 19:7, 8, says, **"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.' It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."** But wait, I thought the fine linen was the righteousness of God, His salvation. And it is! **"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come"** (2 Cor. 5:17). When you become the recipient of God's righteousness, that transforms your life and your life becomes molded to conform to His character. His righteousness becomes characteristic of your life so that the garment of His righteousness is molded together with your righteous obedience to Him. They are not separated; they are inseparable. You have imputed righteousness from Him, and that results in righteousness in the life that you live in submission to Him. So where do you get this? You get it from Jesus Christ when you walk in faith trusting Him as your Savior.

8. The Judgment of Outer Darkness

Therefore, the one who does not have the wedding garment is saying, *"I do not need your provision for me. I can make it on my own. I'm every bit as good as you are."* And the problem with that is every one of us is only fit for hell! This attitude results in judgment: **"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.' For many are called, but few are chosen"** (Matt. 22:13, 14). The invitation goes out to all, but few respond. The sovereign control of God is seen in this. The word, *chosen*, is the word for elect. God has sovereignly drawn out from this rebellious multitude a few for Himself that they might believe and be saved.

The destiny of those who were unwilling to come according to Matthew 22:3, those who were unworthy according to Matthew 22:8 because they are unwilling, and those who were there without a wedding garment because they would not have God's provision according to Matthew 22:12 is awful! They are cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. This refers to hell. There are only two alternatives: accept the invitation to come to the feast of the king and put on the garment He provides or be sentenced to the eternity of hell.

This tells two things about hell; hell is going to be a place of intense loneliness and intense suffering and a place of darkness. In other places in Scripture it says that hell is the blackness of darkness. Some people say, *"Oh, I don't mind going to hell; all my friends are going there."* That may be so; there will be a lot of people there. But there will be no fellowship in hell. There will be no personal relationships in hell, because one of the sufferings of hell will be intense isolation in the blackness of darkness forever. And in that intense isolation, there will be such agony that people will be weeping and grinding their teeth in the intense suffering that they deserve. They have judged themselves unworthy of eternal life because they would not believe in the message that was proclaimed to them of Jesus Christ.

Whose fault is it that they are in hell? God's graciousness has been extended again and again and again. If you hear this message and spend eternity in hell, who will you blame? You have heard that God graciously says He would love to have you come. He has made every provision for you to come. He has provided a garment with the beauty of His own righteousness for you at no cost to you, please come! But you spend eternity in hell; whose fault will it be? Where else are you fit to spend eternity but hell? Is it any wonder Revelation 16:6 says, **"They deserve it."** They are fit for judgment because they persist in rejecting God's gracious, persistent, patient, loving invitation.

Heaven would not be heaven if it were filled with people like that. The kingdom of God on earth would not be the kingdom of God if it were filled with people like that. You judge yourself. What are you fit for this morning? Paul says that if you reject the word of God, you judge yourself; in other words, you decide for yourself that you are unworthy and unfit for eternal life. What an awesome decision.

The joyous, glorious, banqueting of God's presence awaits! But because of my stubborn, arrogant rebellion, because of my indifference, I would spend eternity in hell. Anybody who hears this message and who spends eternity in hell deserves every moment of it, even as awful as hell is. And as awful as it is to say that, you are worthy because God has done all that He can. The gracious invitation continues: Come. No charge! No cost!

What will your excuse be? *"I didn't hear what he was talking about, I was thinking about business matters. I wasn't paying attention to what went on that day; I had other things on my mind."* One thing everybody ought to give careful attention to is the invitation that God gives to salvation in Jesus Christ because there is no other hope, and there is no alternative. Either you believe and come to His feast or the blackness of darkness is reserved for you forever. The tragedy is that many are called; few are willing because they are unworthy. Many are called, praise God for His grace. Few are chosen.