

GET ME TO THE CHURCH ON TIME

Mathew 22:1-14

November 30, 2008 Sunday pm

INTRODUCTION

- A. Like most couples preparing for a wedding, Dave Best and his fiancée were probably worried about whether or not everyone would show up on time for the ceremony on July 6, 2008. They didn't need to worry about their friend Dave Barclay, though. He was so excited about the wedding that he showed up a year early!

When Dave Best wrote Barclay, telling him about the July 6 wedding in Wales, Barclay assumed Best meant July 6, 2007. So Barclay bought a plane ticket from Toronto for \$1,000. Once he arrived in Wales, he called Best to get a few details about the location of the venue for the ceremony. It was only then that Barclay discovered he was a bit ahead of schedule.

After a year, Barclay gave it another try. He said, "At least it assured me a mention in the wedding speech."

- B. Tonight we look at a parable where the guests didn't get there on time. In fact, they didn't get there at all.
1. This is the parable of The Wedding Banquet—Matthew 22:1-14.
 2. It's the third parable Jesus told when challenged by his critics during his final week.
 - a. The Two Sons-21:28-32.
 - b. The Wicked Tenants-21:33-46
 3. This parable illustrates the rejection of Jesus by Israel and its religious leaders.
 4. What does this parable say to us tonight?

I. FIRST, WE SEE AN INVITATION REJECTED.

- A. When Katie Hosking decided to break up with her fiancé, it was only 12 days before the wedding. Along with her parents, Katie had reserved a country club for the reception. With 150 invited guests, the cost was \$6,200. Club policy required 60 days notice for any cancellation, meaning the Hoskings were required to pay the full amount. The family decided to have a party anyway. In place of wedding guests, Katie and her parents invited the residents of the Interfaith Family Shelter to a country club banquet. More than 50 close family friends joined 40 homeless people, and together they danced and feasted on baron of beef, salmon, shrimp cocktail, fettuccine, and fruit. Strawberry shortcake replaced wedding cake. Afterwards they packed up the leftover food and sent it back to the shelter. It was enough to feed the homeless for several more days.

When it was over, the almost-bride, Katie, said, "We had so much fun!"

Kenneth Peterson, Omak, Washington; source: The Wenatchee World (6-29-05) (AP story

- B. Another wedding party was nearly called off because Israel rejected Jesus.
1. Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like a wedding party—22:1-2.
 2. Many, however, refused to come (Israel's rejection of Jesus).
 - a. Some refused because of indifference—22:3-5.
 - b. Some refused because of rebellion—22:6.
 3. Rejection of Jesus results in rejection by God—22:7 (Perhaps foretells Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D.).
 4. The invitation is extended to others—22:8-10 (Gentiles and Us).

II. SECOND, WE SEE AN UNDRESSED GUEST.

- A. The Republican Party mistakenly invited an Ohio prisoner to a \$2,500-a-plate fundraising dinner in Washington with President Bush. The invitation and a letter from Vice President Cheney were sent to Robert Kirkpatrick at the Belmont Correctional Institution in eastern Ohio. Kirkpatrick, 35, was sentenced last year to nearly three years for drug possession and escape. "I'm going to tell him that I'd be happy to attend," said Kirkpatrick, "but he's going to have to pull some strings to get me there."

John Bacon (from staff and wire reports), "Guess Who's Not Coming to a Bush Dinner," USA Today (6-5-02) p. 3A

- B. In this parable, Jesus tells us of another invited guest who couldn't come. Not because he was in prison, but because he was inappropriately dressed—22:11-12.
- C. What is the appropriate wedding attire for God's banquet? (FAITH). Its expressed like this elsewhere...
1. We must put on "Christ"—Gal. 3:26-27.
Galatians 3:26-27 ²⁶ **You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,** ²⁷ **for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**
 2. We must also put on the "new man"—Col. 3:5-10.
Colossians 3:8-10 ⁸ **But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.** ⁹ **Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices** ¹⁰ **and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.**
 3. Failure to put on faith results in God's rejection and judgment—22:13-14.

CONCLUSION

- A. Did you get your wedding invitation? Its found in John 1:12.
John 1:12 **Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—**
- B. Don't refuse God's invitation.
- C. Be sure you are dressed right, in faith!