

Sermon For Sunday October 11 2026

God's Call Provides All – Matt 22:1-14

Today, Jesus' parable, another in the line of Holy Week parables we've studied in the last several weeks, aims to address these feeling of incompleteness that are natural to our human condition. Jesus is very clear that nothing that we need is missing, because God's call provides all that we need.

Jesus' parable has a lot of the same markings of the two that came before it, as he's speaking to the religious leaders of his day who were going far astray from what God had taught and directed them. We've heard him call to those who think they are stable and fine but are depending on the totally wrong things. We've seen Jesus plead with the leaders to abandon their self-righteous thoughts and embrace him in repentance for the forgiveness that they so desperately need. We've also seen that this pleading has largely gone ignored.

And so this parable starts similarly. The king is providing a wedding feast for his son and has a guest list. But the people on the guest list are too busy to come—they have work to do. Like the tenant farmers last week, some of the invited guests go so far as to kill those inviting them to come to the free, luxurious meal.

And so, after dealing with those violent invited guests, the king states (in a tremendous understatement), **“The wedding banquet is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.”** And so he sends his servants to the streets to find anyone and everyone they could to invite them to the banquet. And that's exactly what happened. **Those servants went out to the roads and gathered together everyone they found, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.**

What standing did these people have in the kingdom to be invited to such an ornate affair? None. What had these people done to deserve to be in attendance at such an amazing event like the prince's wedding? Nothing. Why, then, were they brought to the banquet? Because of the king's reckless and baffling love and generosity.

You see where we fit into this parable, right? You and I are those people that were not on the guest list. We didn't deserve to be anywhere near the palace, we would rightly be in the “bad” category of the **both good and bad** description because of our sin. We had no good standing with God, no honor in his family, no place with him. We were the rebellious trash of the kingdom.

And yet he called. He's called us at different ways and at different times. Perhaps it was the waters of baptism from a time that we can't even remember where he adopted us, put his name on us, forgave our sins and gave the faith to trust him. Maybe he used a friend who invited us to go to church with them. Maybe it was a mailing we received or a knock at our door. Maybe it was internet-based worship or other explanations of God's love and forgiveness. Regardless of how it happened, God called us by his Word. Whether we've known his love and forgiveness for minutes or for decades, God's undeserved love called us to be with him, to come to the wedding feast, without any merit on our part.

Jesus made sure this happened. When we did not deserve him, he died for us. He took everything that separated us from God, left us out on the street, divided us from his amazing, eternal banquet—and he dealt with it, in full in his body on the cross. Jesus died to pay for my sins and yours. Jesus died for my selfishness and your self-indulgence. Jesus died for my prejudices and your anger. Jesus died for my laziness and your apathy. Every sin of thought, word, and action that you and I have ever committed is gone in his blood shed for us.

And this is the call of the servants to the people in the streets. “Come, you do not pay, you do not earn, you do not provide. Just come and enjoy what the king has provided for you.”

And this becomes even clearer in what happens next, but because of distance of time and culture, we need to fill in few blanks first. A regal affair like the king's son's wedding would have been opulent and fancy to a ridiculous degree. As such, there would have been a dress code. But this wasn't like an invitation to gathering that you and I might have gotten in the past (and maybe will sometime again in the future) which would direct the dress code to black-tie or business casual and it's up to us to meet those requirements. The king would have been providing the necessary clothing for his guests, especially when he's inviting so many people outside of the normal, regal circles. It's something akin to being given a blazer to wear at a nice restaurant or a mask where masks are required for entry. You need to meet a certain threshold, but the host will meet that threshold for you.

We need perfection to enter the wedding banquet of eternal life. We need to be adorned with a flawless life. And that's exactly what God provides. Jesus gives us the perfection we don't have on our own and desperately need. His perfect life is ours. So now, God sees you and me as having the same life that Jesus lived, not our lives filled with sin.

Which then brings us to that one guy at the wedding feast: **But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wearing wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless.** Here’s the totally confusing scenario: this man is invited to the feast and is given the required clothes for the party by the king. He evidently refuses them and then tries to enter and be accepted with his own clothes. Even if he had beautiful clothes, they wouldn’t have met the king’s regal requirements for the event. They wouldn’t have coordinated; they wouldn’t have been right. But he insisted that he wear them.

This is any of us who would try to get into heaven by our own merit—any percentage. If we think our faithfulness in coming to church, our good works that we’ve done, the bad things we’ve avoided, the amount “better” we are than our neighbor or the celebrity or the politician, if we think our life in any way contributes to our being able to sit in God’s eternal wedding banquet, we are this man sitting in our own clothes. We have rejected the robe of righteousness that Jesus freely provides and have seen fit to depend on ourselves on our own works. And if God were to come up to us and ask what we think we’re doing, we would be similarly mute and powerless to make any defense. God demands perfection, provides perfection, and our lives, no matter how good we think they might be, are not perfect. Our dependence on ourself rejects our Savior and his forgiveness.

So don’t think of yourself highly—rejoice in your Savior abundantly. You do not need to provide a life well-lived to enter heaven. You *cannot* provide a life well-lived to enter heaven. The only option you have is to depend on Jesus’ mercy and forgiveness, the results of his life and death in our place. And Jesus gives that mercy and forgiveness freely to all. You have the certainty of eternal life not because of you, but because of your Saviour. You will be seated at that eternal feast in the right clothes because you will be—and *are*—clothed in your Savior.

Because of his unending and undeserved love for you, your eternal King has called you to the wedding banquet. You did not deserve it or earn it, but he freely provides all that you need. You will be safe and protected with him forever because he has forgiven you. Thanks be to God!

Amen.