

# The Parable of the Wedding Feast

Matthew 22:1-14

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[Scripture quotations taken from the NASB](#)

In Matthew 22:1-14, Jesus gave the Parable of the Wedding Feast. In verse eleven we see that the king, who had prepared the wedding feast for his son, noticed that there was a man at the feast who was not wearing wedding clothes. The wedding clothes in the parable signify the righteousness of Christ, without which no one will enter the kingdom of Heaven. The king told his servants to tie the man up, and throw him outside into the darkness, where there would be “weeping and gnashing of teeth”, which signifies eternal separation from God. In the final verse of the passage Jesus said: “***For many are called, but few are chosen.***” (Matthew 22:14, emphasis added).

When Jesus said that many are called, He was teaching that many are called outwardly, or invited to the wedding feast, when they hear or read the proclamation of the Gospel message. Many are called outwardly to repent of their sins and come to Him. But Jesus then said that even though “many” are called in this way, only “few” are chosen. These few who are chosen are God’s elect, who hear not only the outward call for men to repent of their sins and believe in Christ, but through the hearing of the word of God they are also called with the inward, effectual calling of God which always results in the regeneration of those who receive it.

Many may hear the outward call of the proclamation of the Gospel message, but as Paul wrote to Thessalonians believers, he knew that God had chosen them because “our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction” (I Thessalonians 1:5). Those who receive

God's calling hear the outward proclamation of the Gospel, and it comes to them not in word only, "but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction." Here is the evidence manifested by those whom God has chosen, those who have received God's calling to faith in Jesus Christ.

As we consider Jesus' teaching in the Parable of the Wedding Feast, let us also consider His teaching in the Parable of the Sower given to us in Matthew 13:1-23. Both of these parables provide an illustration of men hearing the Gospel message, and the results in their lives of them having heard the message.

In the Parable of the Sower, a farmer went out to sow seed. The seed is the metaphor that Jesus used to symbolize the Gospel message. As the farmer spread the seed, some fell beside the road, some fell on rocky places, some fell among the thorns, and some seed fell on what Jesus described as "good ground". In each of the first three cases, no harvest was realized from the seed that was sown. Only in the case where the seed fell on "good ground" was a harvest indeed realized. The "good ground" in this parable symbolizes God's elect, who receive the seed of the Gospel message and understand it. And they are the only ones who come to faith in Christ. As a result of their genuine faith, they will bear a harvest of spiritual fruit to the glory of God (Matthew 13:23).

Even though many are called outwardly, as Jesus taught in Matthew 22:14, only few are chosen by God to come to faith in Christ. All of these chosen, or God's elect, will all be called with His effectual calling to faith in Christ, and they will all indeed come to faith in Christ. This again is what Jesus was teaching when He said: "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out." (John 6:37, emphasis added)

When Paul wrote in Romans 8:30 that those whom God calls, He also justifies, he did not say that those whom God calls are justified, if they should cooperate by making the right decision. Paul said without ambiguity and without any added conditions that those whom God calls, He also justifies. Any added implication of the decision of man being necessary is something that is not contained in the Scripture.

No one resists this inward, effectual calling of God. Many may reject the outward call of the spoken or written Gospel message, but all of those who are called inwardly by God do indeed come to faith in Him, and none who receive this calling resist it or refuse it. This is the destiny of those of us whom God has chosen

to come to faith in His Son Jesus Christ, and it is a destiny that God decided and appointed for us before the world was created.

The Apostle Peter also spoke of God's elect, or those chosen by God, when he addressed the recipients of his first epistle with the words: "To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure" (I Peter 1:1-2).

Peter addressed his epistle to those "who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father", as Paul also taught in Romans 8:29-30. For what purpose were they chosen? They were chosen by God "to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood". And God's choice of His elect was made before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4-5).

Every believer should understand that the reason we have received Christ and believe in Him is because we were ***chosen by God*** to come to faith in His Son. Our salvation did not come about because of our own will and decision to believe (Consider John 1:12-13 and Romans 9:16).

In God's time, the "seed" of the word of God was received in our hearing, and in our case, it bore fruit (Matthew 13:23). We are the "good ground" in the Parable of the Sower. We understood the Gospel message because it has been granted to us to be able to understand it, while to others it has not been granted (Matthew 13:11). By God's grace and His mercy, we have been numbered among God's elect.

God drew us to faith in His Son, and we will be raised up at the last day (John 6:44). God granted to us to come to faith in His Son, Jesus Christ (John 6:65). It was not our own good common sense or our own humility or wisdom that motivated us to come to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation to God the Father. God chose us before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight (again Ephesians 1:4-5), and in His time, He called us to faith in His Son.

We did not choose Christ, but He chose us and appointed us to bear fruit that would last (John 15:8, 16). We are among those who have been appointed to eternal life, and that is the reason we believe in Christ (Acts 13:48).

Our faith in Christ is a gift given to us by our sovereign God, and it has nothing to do with *any* works of our own, including our own perceived “decision” to believe. If our faith came about by way of our own decision, then we would be able to boast that we made the “right decision” to believe, when others did not. However, the Bible teaches that no man can boast that he had anything at all to do with his salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Just as the Apostle Paul was brought to faith in Jesus Christ on the Damascus road, apart from any decision or cooperation of his own (Acts 9:1), so also God has chosen to bring us to faith in His Son. We are among many who have been called outwardly when they hear the Gospel message preached, but by God’s grace, we are among the few who have been chosen to be brought to faith in Jesus Christ when we heard that message (again, Matthew 22:14). Our belief in Christ is not what brought about our salvation, rather our belief in Christ is evidence of a work of regeneration that God has already wrought in our lives.