

Advent Parables

The Wedding Banquet

TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture

"6 "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you." – Matthew 7:6 (ESV)

"And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, 3 and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. 4 Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast."' 5 But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, 6 while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. 7 The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. 8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' 10 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. 11 "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. 12 And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 For many are called, but few are chosen." – Matthew 22:1-14 (ESV)

"3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." – 1 Timothy 2:3-4 (ESV)

"I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." – Revelation 7:14 (ESV)

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Start Talking: Find a conversation starter for your group. (15 Min)

- What do you enjoy about weddings?
- What's the best excuse you've ever given to get out of something?

Head: Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking. (10 Min)

- Read Matthew 22:1-14. What happens after the invited guests refuse to go to the wedding banquet? Why would the King do that?
- Read Matthew 22:11-13. Why was the man not wearing wedding clothes thrown out? Would it help your interpretation of this passage to know that the garments would have been provided at the door? *Perhaps this is an example of Matthew 7:6.*
- Read Matthew 22:14. What does this mean?

Heart: Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness. (10 Min)

- Read Ephesians 1:13-14 and 1 Timothy 2:4. Double Predestination is the idea that God chooses who to save and who not to. Single Predestination says that God invites all to be saved in Jesus, but some reject him and are damned. What doctrine does the parable teach?
- The wedding clothes are a metaphor for being clothed with the righteousness of Christ (Romans 13:14, Galatians 3:27, Revelation 7:14). What is the parable saying about our need for Jesus and the "scandal of particularity" of salvation through Jesus? (*John 6:68*)

Hands: Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week. (10 Min)

- Jesus is the culmination of God's plan to provide salvation from sin. Read the Christmas story as a family or with friends this week, and reflect on how the kingdom of God came down to earth for us.
- Who is someone you know who needs a place to go for Christmas? Who can you invite to Christmas Eve service?

Start Praying. Be bold and pray with power. (15 Min)

- For suggestions on structuring prayer time, see the *Group Prayer Ideas* page in this packet.

Trios: Split into same-gender groups of three. (15 Min)

1. What's a passage of scripture that has impacted you this week? Read it to the group and explain why.
2. Is there anything God is leading you to repent of?
3. How's your weekly 3-2-1 challenge going? (*3 Conversations with New People, Learn 2 Names, Make 1 Meaningful Connection*)
4. Who is one non-believer that you need to reach out to this week?
5. What's something you'd like someone else to check in with you about this week?
6. Pray for one another.