

Rev. Dr. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 22:1-14 | Parables of Conflict: The Wedding Banquet
Sunday August 31, 2025

WELCOME:

- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.
- My sermon notes are in the foyer—please take them home with you.

REVIEW:

We continue our expositional study of Matthew's Gospel this morning.

We finished up chapter 21 last Sunday.

Matthew 21 is a pivotal transition in the Gospel narrative.

Because it's in this chapter that Jesus begins to exhibit peculiar behaviors.

For example, up to this point, Jesus had been constantly telling people not to reveal His true identity to others.

But in chapter 21, we saw Him ride a donkey into Jerusalem, proclaiming to the nation that He was indeed their King.

The very next day, Jesus goes to the Temple to cleanse/purify it—He makes it ready for true worship.

How does He do that?

He uses force to physically remove the money changers and vendors from the Temple, proclaiming that He is the High Priest.

We then watched with intrigue as to why Jesus would curse a fig tree—turns out that His curse was symbolic of the fruitlessness of Israel itself—proclaiming that He is indeed a Prophet.

Matthew 21 marks a pivotal transition, as Jesus reveals that He is the King, High Priest, and Prophet.

In other words, Jesus Himself fulfills those roles—all of those roles in One Person—the God/Man, Jesus Christ.

After these three events, the religious leaders are not happy.

Matthew 21:23—By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority?"

In response to their question, Jesus doesn't present His ordination papers—He tells three parables to answer that question indirectly.

A parable is a short story filled with spiritual truths.

The first parable included a *Father and His Two Sons*.

The father represented God, while the first son represented those who would believe the Gospel.

The second son represented the Jewish leaders who would not believe.

The second parable was that of the *Vineyard Owner*.

This parable was based on the history of Israel and its rejection of the prophets.

Both of these parables are disturbing, as they contain considerable conflict and violence.

Both came with a surprise ending.

That's why they are called "Parables of Conflict."

INTRODUCTION:

Today, Jesus concludes the parabolic trilogy with *the Parable of the Wedding Banquet*.

The thing about these particular parables is that they are not hard to understand—they are hard to swallow.

It's not that they are not clear—because they are crystal clear.

They are so clear and so simple to understand that the world refuses to embrace them as the truth.

Each parable builds upon itself—and the third is the crescendo within this symphony.

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet is Jesus' final lesson for the nation of Israel.

It is still Wednesday of Passover week.

Thursday evening, Jesus will have the Last Supper with His Disciples.

And on Friday, Jesus will be crucified as the Lamb of God.

Sunday morning, Jesus will be resurrected from the dead!

But before Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday take place, Jesus shares a stark, startling, and terrifying parable about the Kingdom of God.

Let's examine how this reality impacts us personally today through *the Parable of the Wedding Banquet*.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 22:1—Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables:

Matthew 22:2—"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.

Matthew 22:3—He sent his servants to summon those invited to the banquet, but they didn't want to come.

Matthew 22:4—Again, he sent out other servants and said, 'Tell those who are invited: See, I've prepared my dinner; my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

Matthew 22:5—"But they paid no attention and went away, one to his own farm, another to his business,

Matthew 22:6—while the rest seized his servants, mistreated them, and killed them.

Matthew 22:7—The king was enraged, and he sent out his troops, killed those murderers, and burned down their city.

Matthew 22:8—"Then he told his servants, 'The banquet is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

Matthew 22:9—Go then to where the roads exit the city and invite everyone you find to the banquet.'

Matthew 22:10—So those servants went out on the roads and gathered everyone they found, both evil and good. The wedding banquet was filled with guests.

Matthew 22:11—When the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed for a wedding.

Matthew 22:12—So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless.

Matthew 22:13—"Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him up hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Matthew 22:14—"For many are invited, but few are chosen."

These are the holy words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, infallible, sufficient, and efficacious Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

Your word is completely pure, and your servant loves it. (Psalm 119:140)

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 22:1—Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables:

The idea of "once more" is that this is the last time.

In other words, it's decision time.

For the past three years, people have heard Jesus teach, preach, and perform miracles.

Jesus has proved who He is—now it's time to believe.

Matthew 22:1—Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables:

A parable is a form of speech—a short story that reveals spiritual realities.

Jesus begins the Parable...

Matthew 22:2—"The kingdom of heaven is like..."

of conflict

In his first two parables, Jesus gave no introduction, saving the explanation and application for the end.

In this parable, however, He begins like many other parables.

previous

The Kingdom of Heaven is like... a mustard seed, leaven, treasure, a merchant, a large net, etc.

The Kingdom represents His clarity.

Jesus has already shown everyone that He is their king.

Now, as the king He tells everyone about His Kingdom.

This is no surprise because Jesus has been teaching on the Kingdom since day one.

The Kingdom of Heaven/God is the Lord's rule, governance, and sovereignty over all creation.

divine government

It has been well said that there is not a square inch of the cosmos that is not under the Lord's authority.

Some day, very soon, the Kingdom will be a literal kingdom.

2,000 years

But for now, *the Kingdom* is spiritual.

Matthew 22:2—"The kingdom of heaven is like a king..."

It's crucial that we know who the characters are and what they represent.

Just as the Father represented God in *The Parable of the Two Sons* and the Landowner represented God in *The Parable of the Vineyard Owner*—

This king also represents God the Father.

Matthew 22:2—"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who gave a wedding banquet...

In the ancient Near East, a wedding banquet/feast/party was inseparable from the wedding itself.

This party was a week long!

Guests stayed in the groom's home.

The father would provide all the provisions that he could afford.

The wedding feast contained countless meals, lots of dancing, and was the highlight of social life.

Now, for a royal wedding, the celebration often lasted for several weeks.

A royal wedding would be held in the palace, and the king would go to extravagant lengths to honor his son.

In other words, a royal wedding would be the feast of all feasts, party of all parties!

It's hard for us today to conceive of that because America isn't ruled by a king.

But think of our friends in England.

Many of us remember the royal wedding between Prince Charles and Princess Diana.

- Around 3,500 guests attended the ceremony.
- 750 million people watched it on television.
- It was often called the "wedding of the century."

— 61 million people in England

A monarch's marriage has always been a massive event.

How much more so with God's Son to His bride—the Church.

This parabolic wedding represents *the Marriage Supper of the Lamb*.

Revelation 19:7— Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory,
because the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has prepared herself. → Jesus/God's Son.

Matthew 22:2—"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son."

We know that the King is God the Father; therefore, the King's Son represents the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 22:3—(The king) sent his servants...

Who are the servants?

The servants represent the OT prophets.

Where did he send the servants?

Matthew 22:3—He sent his servants to summon those invited to the banquet,

God the Father sent His prophets to summon/invite the nation of Israel. to A Royal & Divine Wedding Ceremony.

In other words, God the Father has already sent out the "Save The Date" invitations.

The nation of Israel has already been pre-invited.

This original invitation came directly from God.

It was God who called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

It was God who called Moses. And it was those men who invited others.

+ **Matthew 22:3**—but they didn't want to come.

To be a pre-invited guest to the king's wedding was among the highest honors possible.

It is inconceivable that people were unwilling to come.

Who wouldn't go on an all-expense-paid vacation to visit the king? *And participate in this ceremony?*

It is unthinkable to refuse the king's invitation.

Regardless, here's the king's response, and it's just as shocking. *As Israel's attitude.*

+ **Matthew 22:4**—Again,

The shocking element here is the king's patience.

There are very few kings who were known for their humility and patience—count them on one hand (David, Hezekiah, and Josiah).

There are even fewer kings known for their humility and patience, especially after being insulted like the king in the parable.

Even David had a hard time showing restraint after being insulted (1 Samuel 25).

But this particular king is not only humble and patient—he's patient and humble after being insulted by his own people time and time again!

Just as the Landowner kept sending his servants to the tenant farmers to collect his portion of wine, the king sends another invitation.

Matthew 22:4—'Tell those who are invited: See, I've prepared my dinner; my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

The king, with great excitement and patience, provides more details.

I've got the very best prime rib, wine, and live music.

Come! My son is getting married!

Spiritually, the second invitation comes from John the Baptizer, Jesus, and the Apostles.

Matthew 3:1—In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea

Matthew 3:2—and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!"

Jesus preached...

Matthew 4:17—"Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."

The apostles preached...

Acts 2:38—Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins,

Matthew 22:5—"But they paid no attention and went away, one to his own farm, another to his business,

Time and time again, the guests dismissed and insulted their king.

They were unwilling—their refusal is more crass and insensitive than before.

They act as if the wedding were invisible.

They responded with business as usual.

They went their way—doing the everyday mundane tasks of life.

They went about feeding their own cattle, shearing their own sheep, pressing their own olive oil, and selling their own wine.

They did not care about the king or his son.

The nation of Israel is consumed not with God's glory or His kingdom, but with their own kingdom.

Think of the average unbeliever today.

They have zero interest in God, the church, Jesus, or the Gospel.

They consider themselves self-sufficient and are easily offended when you witness to them.

Now, this first group of people was somewhat polite about their defiance.

Today, they don't necessarily want the churches' doors closed; however, they don't want their ears opened either.

But there is a second group.

Matthew 22:6—while the rest seized his servants, mistreated them, and killed them.

This is the same violent behavior that was in the *Parable of the Vineyard Owner*.

While some people are indifferent to the Gospel message, others become infuriated by its message of sin, repentance, and belief.

In reality, John the Baptizer was rejected and beheaded, Jesus was rejected and crucified, and the apostles were all rejected and persecuted.

The king's patience runs out...

Matthew 22:7—The king was enraged, and he sent out his troops, killed those murderers,

We know that God is a God of patience—but His patience doesn't last forever.

Nor does his offer of the Gospel.

Does God have an army? Absolutely!

Scripture calls God "the Lord of armies/hosts"

Everyone loves the story of David & Goliath

1 Samuel 17:45—David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with a sword, spear, and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord of Armies,"

↳ worldly things

Psalms 24:10—Who is he, this King of glory?

The Lord of Armies,
he is the King of glory.

We see a glimpse of what the Lord's army looks like through the prophet Elisha.

2 Kings 6:17— Then Elisha prayed, "LORD, please open his eyes and let him see." So the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he saw that the mountain was covered with horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Back to our Parable

Matthew 22:7—and burned down their city.

There are consequences to sin.

This part of the parable is immediately prophetic.

Within 40 short years, in A.D. 70, the Romans will completely burn down the city of Jerusalem, partially fulfilling the prophecy.

The Roman general Titus conquered Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and killed over one million Jews.

It was recorded that:

Josephus - Jewish historian
 "While the sanctuary was burning, ... neither pity for age nor respect for rank was shown; on the contrary, children and old people, laity and priests alike were massacred."

Spiritually speaking, this is what happens after 6,000-8,000 years of disobedience, unrepentance, and spiritual adultery.

There is a price to pay for murdering God's prophets and His Son.

Matthew 22:8—"Then (the king) told his *Apostles* servants, 'The banquet is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.'

God's plan of redemption will not be thwarted.

The Jews were invited first, but they didn't want God—which made them unworthy.

So, God invited the rest of the world—the Gentiles.

The king continues...

- Book of Acts.

The servants were 2, 3, 8, and 10, and they were the church.

Matthew 22:9—Go then to where the roads exit the city and invite everyone you find to the banquet.'

This is the precursor to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19)

The King tells his servants to go everywhere and invite them, especially the poor, the helpless, and the hopeless.

Matthew 22:10—So those servants went out on the roads and gathered everyone they found, both evil and good.

What does Jesus mean by both evil and good?—Various degrees of morality.

From serial killers to Boy Scouts—those in prison and those who have never received a speeding ticket.

Matthew 22:10—The wedding banquet was filled with guests.

Good news! The good and bad came.

Question: Who are these guests?

The guests represent the Church. That's us!

Matthew 22:11—When the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed for a wedding.

In other words, the Lord sees us—His church.

But there's a problem.

The wedding crasher represents a false disciple (Matt. 7:15–23).

This man sticks out

The man's attire insults the king.

It is customary at Jewish weddings for all to be dressed in festive attire, with men often wearing the traditional white robe, known as a kittel.

Dressing appropriately was a common courtesy when attending such a special event.

We get that! We know you wouldn't show up to a black-tie event in shorts and a t-shirt.

Let's
Zep.

However, the question that the king has is:—*How did you get in here without wedding clothes?*

These Gentiles who have come to the wedding are poor—they are the outcasts of society.

They don't have the money to buy the correct attire.

Here's the solution

So, it's the king who must provide the appropriate clothing.

In the parable, the wedding garment symbolizes righteousness—right thinking, right living, right behavior.

So it's God who provides the wedding clothes.

Isaiah 61:10—I rejoice greatly in the Lord,
I exult in my God;—*Why?*

for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation
and wrapped me in a robe of righteousness.

But this particular man crashed the wedding. —*In other words, he's not saved.*

He's an unbeliever — a pretender.

Matthew 22:12—So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' *King*

King

“Friend”—that’s the same word Jesus used when Judas betrayed Him.

Until this point, this man had gotten away with looking like a Christian, talking like a Christian, and even serving like a Christian.

However, nothing is hidden from God’s eyes.

Next, we see the consequences...

Matthew 22:12—The man was speechless.

Why is this man speechless?

He is speechless because he knows he is guilty.

He can’t make an excuse even if he wanted to—“I’m so sorry, my tux is at the dry cleaner.”

It’s that he ^{physically} couldn’t speak—his guilt/sin crushed him.

This is a preview of the Day of Judgment.

Every person will be brought to the courtroom of Almighty God, and every sin will be made revealed.

We are told that every person will be silent before the Lord.

Psalm 76:8—From heaven you pronounced judgment.
The earth feared and grew quiet

Zephaniah 1:7—Be silent in the presence of the Lord God,
for the day of the Lord is near.

Zechariah 2:13—Let all humanity be silent before the Lord,

NT...

Romans 3:19—...every mouth may be shut and the whole world may become subject to God's judgment.

When we stand before an omniscient God who knows everything we have ever done or thought, what excuse can we give Him?

Matthew 22:13—"Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him up hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

We live in a culture that gets so angry at the thought of a God who could be angry with them.

The world thinks that a God of justice is indeed an unfair and unjust God.

The reality is God is so just and so fair that it angers us—and then we blame God for His perfect justice and righteousness. Audacity

Matthew 22:13—Tie him up hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness,

Being tied up prevents this man from reentering the wedding party again.

Outer darkness represents the reality of hell.

Hell is a place of eternal judgement.

Hell is also pictured as a "lake of fire."

However, hell is so awful that the people in hell right now could only wish they were thrown into a literal lake of fire.

Matthew 22:13—where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

"People weeping is a picture of those who heard the Gospel message time and time again but never repented and believed.

Those gnashing their teeth are the people who have always hated Jesus Christ.

Matthew 22:14—"For many are invited, but few are chosen."

Unlike the previous two parables, Jesus did not ask the Jewish leaders to comment.

He did not ask them a question or ask them to participate in any way.

Why? Because there is nothing else to say.

The three parables say everything that needs to be said.

Matthew 22:14—"For many are invited,

This is the general call of the Gospel—"For God loved the whole world!" (John 3:16).

The religious leaders were repeatedly invited to repent from their sins and believe in the Gospel message.

Today, the church continues to invite others in the same way. — *Greatest Commission*

That's why our vision for RBC is to "Share Jesus Day-By-Day."

We get that many are invited — we know God loves the world...

Matthew 22:14—"but few are chosen."

In one sentence, Jesus proclaims the mystery of salvation.

Yes, we are commanded to believe the Gospel, but how can a spiritually dead man believe—let alone hear this call?

How can a dead man do anything?

Ephesians 2:1—And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.

Man is unable, ineffective & powerless to choose God.

This is where we learn about God's amazing grace through His sovereignty.

Deuteronomy 7:6—For you are a holy people belonging to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.

Deuteronomy 7:7—“The LORD had his heart set on you and chose you, not because you were more numerous than all peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.

Why did God choose you?

Deuteronomy 7:8—But because the LORD loved you

N.t.

Ephesians 1:4—For he chose us *in him* before the foundation of the world,

2 Thessalonians 2:13—... from the beginning God has chosen you for salvation...

What's all this mean?

It means that through God's sovereignty and His choosing—you are His child. ! 😊

He chose you - and then He gave you the faith to believe.

You're an adopted child of God—you can now call him “**Abba, Father**” (Gal. 4:6)

not only that...

You are invited to the wedding! You've been clothed in Christ's righteousness!

You're going to Experience the wedding of all weddings - Jesus Christ as groom - The Church as the Bride.

Revelation 19:6—Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty, reigns!

Revelation 19:7—Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself.

Revelation 19:8—She was given fine linen to wear bright and pure.
For the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints.

Revelation 19:9—Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb!" He also said to me, "~~These words of God are true.~~"

APPLICATION:

Lined area for application notes, crossed out with a large blue X.

Revelation 19:8—She was given fine linen to wear, bright and pure.
For the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints.

Revelation 19:9—Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb!" ~~He also said to me, "These words of God are true."~~

APPLICATION:

How do we apply this parable—and the trilogy of *conflict parables* to our lives today?

Let's review, because they all go together and they all build upon each other.

In *the Parable of the Two Sons*, Jesus taught that tax collectors and prostitutes—the worst of sinners—were entering heaven before the religious leaders.

Why? Because they repented of their sin, believed the Gospel and have fruit in their lives to prove it.

In *the Parable of the Vineyard Owner*, Jesus taught the Pharisees that they are losing everything that they hold on to so tightly and cherish—their titles, their religious status, their careers—even their lives.

Why? Because they won't ^{won't} repent, ^{refuse} believe the Gospel, and submit to Jesus.

Yet, tragically, they still believe they are going to Heaven—they demand entrance into the wedding banquet on their own terms.

Today, it's not the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees who say they have a relationship with God and don't...but the nominal/token Christian today.

Jesus repeatedly called the Pharisees—*hypocrites/pretenders*.

And in today's church, we also have many pretenders.

The nominal (name only) Christian is someone who says they are a Believer, but makes no effort to prepare for the upcoming wedding.

These are the folks who refuse to do the most basic requirements of Christianity.

He thinks attending Sunday service once every few months is enough—as long as he doesn't have anything better to do.

Coming late and leaving early is acceptable.

He ignores/delays the ordinance of Baptism, yet participates in the Lord's Supper.

He refuses to become a church member because he doesn't like organized religion.

He doesn't have time for Bible studies because he's too busy—too busy building his own kingdom through his career and family. *throughout week*

He objects to biblical teachings and sound doctrine because he believes God is a God of love.

He doesn't believe in hell, because he believes he himself is so *morally remarkable* that, of course, God loves him/wants him/can't be without him.

He doesn't consider discipleship important because he's self-sufficient.

He doesn't understand that the church—the Lord's bride—is not a place to take from—but a place and people to serve. the Lord's bride

He gives with minimal effort, and yet expects the biggest reward.

Most likely, the nominal Christian prayed a prayer that was based on emotion.

Or maybe he walked the aisle, or signed a card or raised his hand stating that he believes.

But what today's parable teaches, is that this is the type of man who entered the wedding party— only to be thrown out and cast into hell— because he wasn't wearing the robe of Christ's righteousness.

This is the man whom Jesus says...

Matthew 7:21—"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

Matthew 7:22—On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?' *—self Deceived*

Matthew 7:23—Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you lawbreakers!'

Heavenly Message
I'd like to encourage you to praise God this week for choosing you to be a part of the wedding banquet. *Inviting you*

If you're not sure you're invited. Please stay behind and I'll be happy to talk with you. *Address those questions/ doubts*

PRAYER

DOXOLOGY

BENEDICTION

- 24 *"May the LORD bless you and protect you;*
 25 *may the LORD make his face shine on you*
and be gracious to you;
 26 *may the LORD look with favor on you*
and give you peace." ' (Numbers 6:24)

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