

## The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

### The Parable of the Wedding Feast - Read Matthew 22.1-14

*You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.*

Once again Jesus is trying to show his audience the difference between appearing to live a religious life and actually being dedicated to God. He knew that too many of the Jewish religious leaders made an outward show of being pious and dedicated to religious practices but did not show a genuine love of God in their lives.

A wedding is a very important occasion for the couple getting married and for their families and friends, and at the time of Jesus the wedding feast may have lasted for several days. In this parable it is the king's son who is getting married so it is a very special event. If you were invited to the wedding of a member of the royal family would you refuse to go? I wouldn't. But in this parable the wedding guests all make excuses; they are too busy, too pre-occupied, can't be bothered. They are missing out on a wonderful opportunity and it is an insult to the king.



In the parable the king gave them a second chance to attend the wedding, but the guests made excuses. They were too busy working or running their business; some even got so angry that they became violent towards the king's servants. So the king brought ordinary people from the streets to be the wedding guests. These guests represent non-Jewish people. God invites everyone to receive the blessings of his kingdom and to share his glorious banquet. The king in the parable represents God and the guests are being invited to the Kingdom of God – but they choose not to participate. Are there times when we choose to reject the blessings that God offers to us? Do we think up excuses for not committing ourselves to God?

There is a final twist to the story. A man who was brought in from the streets to attend the wedding refused the special wedding clothes that he was asked to wear. He thought that his ordinary clothes were good enough. Imagine being invited to meet the Queen at Buckingham Palace and turning up in scruffy or casual clothes! This man is thrown out because he is too arrogant, too self-righteous to realise that he needs the gifts that are offered to him. Are there times when we think that we don't need God's blessings? Do we appreciate the gift of Jesus and the sacrifice he made for us?

#### Activities

- Use beads, threads, foam shapes or cardboard to create something special to wear that reminds you of God's love for you. It could be a friendship bracelet or a badge or a key fob. When you wear it remember that God has invited you to be part of his kingdom because he loves and cares for you.
- Imagine you have received a written invitation from God to be a member of his kingdom. Write a card to God accepting the invitation and thanking God for this wonderful opportunity.

#### Prayer

Father God, we thank you that we are all invited to be members of your kingdom of love. Help us to think about how we respond to your wonderful invitation. Amen

