

**Read: Matthew 22:1-14**

## The Wedding Feast of Heaven

### **Matthew 22:9**

“So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.”

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Getting an invitation to a party is so exciting! Whether it's a friend's birthday party or a cousin's graduation party, whether it's inside at someone's house or outside at a local park, spending time with your friends or family at a party is always fun. Lots of planning and preparation go into a party, and saying “Yes, I can come” makes both you and the host happy.

In today's reading, Jesus tells us a story about a party: a wedding feast that was hosted by a king. Much planning and preparation went into this wedding feast, and the king sent out many invitations. But instead of eagerly accepting the invitations, the people whom the king invited refused to come. They behaved even worse than that—they mistreated and killed the servants who brought them the invitations.

What a mess! It would have been easy for the king to give up at this point and cancel the wedding banquet. Why should he work any harder to get people to come to his wedding banquet? Instead, the king sent out even more invitations. But this time, he sent his servants out to the streets and invited the most common people he could find. These people weren't on the original guest list. They didn't look like they deserved to be invited to the wedding feast. But because of the king's great love and his desire to share his feast with everyone, these common people got to experience the joy of the wedding feast.

Just like that king, God is preparing a feast too—a perfect heavenly feast that will last forever. And just like those common people, we don't deserve to be invited to this heavenly feast. We are sinful human beings who naturally reject God's invitation. Without faith, we would also refuse to come to God's heavenly feast. But because the Holy Spirit has worked faith in our hearts, we joyfully accept God's invitation and now look forward to celebrating with him in heaven forever.

When I get an invitation to a party, I usually ask my friends if they are going. I know I'm going to have fun at the party, and I want to make sure my friends are going to go and have fun too. The heavenly feast that God is preparing is going to be better than the best earthly party we can imagine, and we want to do everything we can to make sure our friends will be there too. So don't just accept your invitation and look forward to heaven someday—tell others about the heavenly feast too. God wants as many people as possible to be there!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for Younger Children**

- Who is the king in Jesus' story?
- God is hosting a party and says you can invite someone! Who would you want to invite that doesn't about Jesus?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Sadly, why would someone reject God's invitation to his great banquet?
- None of us is perfect—we think, say, and do wrong things more often than we want to admit. What assurance does your baptism give that you aren't in danger of rejecting God's invitation to his heavenly feast?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- In 1 Timothy 2:4, we read that God "wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." If God wants all people to be saved and be a part of his feast, why doesn't everyone believe in him?
- Evaluate with your parents how often you take advantage of God's invitation to the "banquet" of his Word and why it is so important for you and your family.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, thank you for inviting us to your heavenly feast—a perfect feast that will last forever. Help us to tell those around us about this feast so that many more people will be able to celebrate with us in heaven someday. Amen.

### **Hymn: CW 213:1,3 – Forever With the Lord**

Forever with the Lord!  
Amen! So let it be.  
Life from the dead is in that word,  
My immortality.

My Father's house on high,  
Home of my soul, how near  
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye  
The golden gates appear.