



Who doesn't love getting a wedding invite? The story Jesus tells is about the greatest party, the best wedding feast, the kindest and most generous of invites.

Jesus speaks to them in parables as we've seen; stories that highlight their failure as leaders. 21v43 gives the greatest shock. In 21v45 they know that Jesus is talking about them. Jesus tells the final story of his kingdom and the parable that exposes the reason why they have failed. It's the final nail in the coffin.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law make two huge mistakes and ones that people in 2016 across the world, in East Oxford, Cowley and MRC make - people reject the invite - so make sure you:

1. **Don't reject the invite** (22:1-10)

Jesus tells the story: The King organises the wedding banquet and servants are sent to call the invited guests to the feast - the invites have already been sent. The king is God, the son is the Lord Jesus and banquet is the kingdom of heaven - a familiar picture to Jews of the day. After a second visit from the servants those invited still refuse the invite. The Jews had a prior invitation since Mount Sinai where the covenant was made, since then the prophets have spoken plainly pointing to the time of Jesus, John Baptist has been reminding them and yet again the Jews have rejected the invitation.

V5; some just ignored the invitation. Other things in life seem to crowd out his importance. 'My field or my business' It's apathetic indifference.

V6; some were openly hostile towards the invitation. They mistreat and kill the servants.

2. **Don't ignore the dress code** (22:11-14)

v11-12 The king now enters the hall for the feast and spots the man not wearing wedding garments. What do we expect might happen next? What do we want to happen?

v13 The King orders that his servants takes the man out and execute him. Surely an overreaction? But this is the serious point. Jesus has spoken of hell before in parables - where the unrighteous and wicked go. Throughout the OT God's invitation to his people has always required a dress code to enter Gods presence - righteousness, holiness & perfection. Isaiah 64v6: describes the current situation - there is no-one good enough for God. No-one clean enough to enter his presence.

For the man in the parable to rock up in the wrong clothes means to spurn Gods provision of the right clothes. The man thinks he's OK in his own clothes - he thinks he's not sinful.

Here are some questions arising from this passage for you to consider.

Matthew 22:1-10

1. Where do we witness apathetic indifference to the invitation to consider Jesus?
2. What are some of the reasons that people today give for not engaging with Christianity? Don't guess - Can we share real life stories?
3. Where we see apathetic indifference around us how do we continue to engage in bringing the invitation of Jesus?

Matthew 22:11-14

1. How do we see people making the same mistake today as the man in the parable??
2. When are we as Christians in danger of making the same mistake?
3. What do we constantly need to do to prevent us slipping into this dangerous way of thinking?

The invite is so generous but it's based upon saying 'no' to self and 'yes' to trusting in Jesus. It's his death which are provide the royal robes that He clothes us in.

1. How does Isaiah 61v10 help us grasp & marvel what God has done in the run up to Easter Weekend.
2. Who are you going to share this magnificent invitation with this Easter?