

## September 13th, Membership Eligibility Part 2 in the series 'A New Community'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

What comes to mind when you hear the word 'community'?

READ Matthew 22:2-14

**22** Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: **2** "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. **3** He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

**4** "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

**5** "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. **6** The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. **7** The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

**8** "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. **9** So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' **10** So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

**11** "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. **12** He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless.

**13** "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

**14** "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

### Q) Who do the various individuals and groups in this parable represent?

King=God the Father

Son=Jesus

Servants=OT Prophets who hundreds of years earlier had warned Israel and Judah of God's coming judgment at the hands of Babylon and Assyria.

1st group invited: Israel

Additional servants: His disciples and those who would spread His message in years to come.

2nd group invited: The Jews *and* the Gentiles

**Q) Why do you think Jesus used the example of a wedding banquet to represent the Kingdom of Heaven?**

**Q) What is the reaction of the first set of invited guests in the parable?**

**Q) What kinds of reactions can we expect from this second round of invitations to the banquet?**

**Q) Reread verses 11-13. What gets the man tossed out of the banquet?**

Read the following two verses, Isaiah 61:10 and Colossians 3:12.

Isaiah 61:10

I delight greatly in the Lord;  
my soul rejoices in my God.  
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation  
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,  
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

**Q) How do these two verses complement each other, and give us an understanding of what to wear to the wedding banquet?**

A. Talk about salvation and sanctification. Guide the members of the group through both verses, discussing how God clothes us with the garments of salvation and righteousness, and how due to/throughout the process of sanctification, we are to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

READ 1 John 3:9-10

**9** No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. **10** This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

**Q) Does this mean that the moment we become a Christian, we never sin again?**

A. No, 1 John 1:8-9 "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

**Q) What is John getting at then, when he writes "Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child."**

A. Christians have a longing to do what is right. They may fail, but that longing is within them because the Holy Spirit lives within them. Talk again about sanctification.

**Q) Why do you think John puts emphasis on loving our brothers and sisters?**