

"Welcome to the Wedding Feast"

14 October 2018

Little Trinity Anglican Church, Toronto

Discussion Questions

(take as many as you want, in any order)

Read Matthew 22.1-14; Ephesians 5.15-21

1. How do you interpret the first half of the Gospel parable (vv.2-11)? What's happening with the sending of the servants, the excuses, the killing of the servants, the judgment of the king, the second call for guests? Are we meant to understand this in light of Biblical history? What does all this tell us about "the kingdom of heaven" (v2)?
2. How do you interpret the second half of the Gospel parable (vv.11-14)? What does the "wedding garment" symbolize? If guests were enlisted from the proverbial "roadside", how would they be expected to have on hand the fancy clothing expected for a wedding? Alternately, if the king provided clothing for the guests, why isn't this man wearing it? Does how you interpret the "wedding garment" help explain why he receives such harsh treatment? What do you make of the "outer darkness" ?
3. The sermon suggests that St. Augustine was right in interpreting the "wedding garment" as Jesus Christ himself. Scripture elsewhere uses this metaphor. See (for example), Romans 13.14, Galatians 3.27. What does it mean to be "clothed" with Christ? And how might that fit with this parable?
4. Elsewhere in Scripture, Jesus refers to himself as the bridegroom and his followers/people/church as the bride. Do you think this parable is about the union of Jesus with his people? What does it mean to think of the "kingdom of heaven" as being "married to Jesus" ? If you think of the wedding

garment as Jesus, what does it mean to be both wearing Jesus and marrying Jesus? (Keep in mind the sermon's reminder that Jesus happily – and frequently – employs mixed metaphors.)

5. Is the wedding now? In the future? If future, what does anticipation of it mean for us today? Where do you get “foretastes” of our union with Christ?
6. The sermon suggests that the parable was intended to critique the religious leaders of Jesus' day, who, though good people, had lost sight of what it means to be “chosen by God” – and that this critique can easily be applied to the church in our day. What do you think it means to be “chosen by God” ? How should that understanding shape our sense of who we are and what we do as God's church? What is Jesus most concerned with for us?
7. If you take this parable seriously how should it affect your life?