

Matthew: Many Are Called

Discussion Guide for August 15 & 16, 2026

Summary

Jesus tells the Parable of the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-14), the third in a series of parables addressing Israel's rejection of Him as Messiah. A king prepares a wedding feast for his son and invites guests who refuse to come -- some out of misplaced priorities, some distracted by the cares of the world, and some out of anger. The king then opens the invitation to everyone on the main roads, filling the wedding hall. But one guest is found without a wedding garment, a gift the king would have provided, and is cast out. The parable points to the gospel: God's invitation into His kingdom is extended to all people, but it must be received on the King's terms, clothed in the righteousness only He can provide, not earned by our own effort.

Ice Breaker

Think of a time you turned down an invitation to something meaningful, whether because you were busy, distracted, or upset. Looking back, was your reason a good one? What would it have cost you to say yes instead?

Key Verses

1. Matthew 22:1-14
2. Revelation 19:9
3. Galatians 3:8
4. Isaiah 61:10

Discussion Questions

1. The king sends two rounds of invitations, and both times the guests refuse. Why do you think God is patient enough to keep inviting people who have already said no, and where have you experienced that patience in your own life?
2. The parable names three reasons the guests missed the feast: misplaced priorities, the cares of the world, and unresolved anger. Which of these three do you find yourself most tempted by right now, and why?
3. Pastor John Piper's quote suggests it isn't "the gross sins of the flesh" but "the endless snacking at the table of the world" that most often keeps us from God. Where do you see that playing out in your own daily rhythms?

4. The king's invitation goes out to "both bad and good" once the original guests refuse, meaning no one is excluded on the basis of being unworthy. Is there a part of you that struggles to believe you're truly welcome at God's table? Why?
5. The guest without a wedding garment is punished not for being uninvited, but for trying to attend on his own terms rather than the king's. What does it look like practically to try to approach God on our own terms rather than through what Christ provides?

Life Application

This week, take an honest inventory of where your "yes" to Jesus is being crowded out, whether by busyness, work, relationships, or lingering hurt or anger toward God. Write down one specific way each of those three areas (priorities, worldly cares, unresolved anger) shows up in your life. Then bring that list to God in prayer, not to earn your way back into His favor, but to receive again the invitation and the covering He has already provided through His Son.

Key Takeaways

1. God's invitation into His kingdom is patient and repeated; He does not give up on people after a single "no."
2. The things that keep us from God are rarely dramatic sins; more often it's misplaced priorities, worldly distractions, or unresolved anger that quietly pull us away.
3. God's invitation is extended to everyone, meaning no one is too far gone or too unworthy to be included.
4. No one can enter God's kingdom on their own merit; we come clothed in the righteousness Christ provides, not what we bring ourselves.
5. God is both a God of mercy and a God of justice; His grace is real, but so are the consequences of rejecting His invitation.