

Trinity 20

“The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.”

Does God give only good things or does He also give evil things?

Do I know what is best for me? Or does God always know what is better?

Every single day—every moment—you are made to answer these questions.

And the way that you answer them will determine what you do and where you go.

If your answer is that God always and only gives what is good for you...

If you believe that God alone knows you and what is best for you...

Then you will treasure whatever He gives no matter whether it is joy or sorrow.

You will strain to hear His every word whether it is a rebuke or comforting.

You will treasure each and every command of the Lord whether it is in harmony with your desires or against them.

You will cry out for discernment to judge as God judges and not the world.

You will lift up your voice for understanding—true wisdom and knowledge.

And in doing so, you will find it. As the Bible says, *My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

On the other hand, if you ignore God's word & close your ears to His commands...

If you would rather trust your own judgement and cry out against God's...

If you are secure in your own understanding with no desire to see from God's eyes.

If you treasure the pleasures of the world more than you treasure the gifts of God...

Then, you have clearly decided that you know better than God what is best.

You are asserting that God sometimes gives evil things that you must reject.

As a result of this judgement, Scriptures reply with a judgement of their own: “You will never find the knowledge of God, faith or salvation.”

This is what the parable of the wedding feast is all about.

Jesus tells this parable in such a way as to invite your judgement on the players.

“They made light of [the invitation] and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.”

They held in their hand an invitation to the castle—to dine with the King of Kings!

They had the personal servant of the King come to bring them to the costliest feast.

But they rejected this invitation for a bowl of porridge.

They considered the good gifts of the king to be trash while they judged their own mundane existence to be diamonds and rubies.

Then, to top it all off, they replaced their affection for the King with disdain.

They seized his servants, insulted and abused them, and killed them!

And who could have such a cold and unfeeling heart as to be non-judgemental toward such an outrage? — Fools!

They deserve what they get. Because they deliberately chose it for themselves.

This is the judgement that Jesus invites you to make.

But in making this judgement against the characters in the parable, do not turn it in to a judgement of others.

For today, Jesus is not speaking to others, He is speaking these words to you.

When you trust your own judgement...

When you are content to stay in your own understanding...

When you shrug off God's commands... When you reject God's gifts...

When you shrug off His invitation and despise those whom He sends...

In all this, you reveal what you feel about His only Son who was slain to prepare today's feast.

So God's righteous judgement on those wicken men also falls justly only you.

You deserve to be destroyed and to have your own city burned to the ground.

But behold God's mercy today: Instead God is doing something remarkable.

Instead of executing His righteous judgement upon you, He has destroyed His only Son, the guest of honor and the bridegroom at His own wedding feast.

What a cruel turn of events, that Jesus the very reason for the feast, was crucified at His own wedding.

But more remarkable still, He knew that this fate awaited Him at His arrival.

Still, He did not neglect God's Word and invitation to come into the world.

Nor did He make excuses of the many wonderful deeds that He needed to do.

Although His work of healing and preaching was important, He did not allow it to be just another false excuse to miss what awaited Him at Jerusalem.

And so in going to Jerusalem, God's armies destroyed Jesus in your place.

Now today, rather than sending to you His armies to destroy you, He today sends you His servant to invite you once again to the feast.

Come to the wedding!

Come, taste the goodness of the Lord and be forgiven for your wicked neglect.

Come, repent and partake of the Crucified One so that your own sinful flesh will be crucified with Him and you will be spared eternal death.

Come, receive into your body the life of Him who rose from the dead and by this, you will receive newness of life.

Only do not make light of this invitation.

Do not put it off today and assume that it will come again tomorrow.

For God's patience and long-suffering does have bounds unknown to us.

If you reject this call and invitation right now, you crucify Christ anew and call down upon yourself the very judgement that Christ incurred to set you free.

Nor be like the man who made of show of accepting the invitation and yet did not really. He presented Himself at the feast with His body but not in true heart.

He insisted on eating the Feast of Christ's body and Blood without the repentant faith of Holy Baptism.

He came to the feast as though it was owed Him rather than as a guest of the King.

When God comes to reveal the heart, that man will be cast into the outer darkness.

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

“This is His good and gracious will—that He strengthen and keep you firm in His Word and faith until you die.” AMEN.