The Royal Invitation

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[0:00] If you would, let's go and turn in our Bibles to Matthew chapter 22.

! In modern Christianity, it is a failure in leadership in the church.
Seems like more damage really is being done from inside the church, from failed leadership, than from attacks from the outside of the church. I think we can all look at leaders who might be in it to make money rather than disciples.
We see leaders that seem to start off well, but maybe they fall into sin. And there are some churches that just seem to be busting at the seams, but all these poor people, they're coming to this church and being fed lies from the pulpit.
You really can't overstate the value of strong spiritual leadership in the church. And this problem that we see in our culture today, it's not unique to our time.
[1:23] As we look at this parable that we're going to be studying tonight, this is really the third parable in a series of three parables that Jesus was using to call out the spiritual leadership of this time.

He was calling out the failure of the Pharisees and the scribes. These scribes, these religious experts, they were the ones that were supposed to be the experts in the laws and the prophets that were pointing towards Jesus.
But in all of these things, when Jesus has finally come, they've missed it. They have missed Jesus completely. And now they are seeking again to lead the children of Israel astray with their misinterpretations and misunderstandings of the law.
And that's what Jesus is doing. Every time he pronounces these woes over the Pharisees, or he uses these parables to call out the leadership, he's trying to shine a light on their misunderstanding of what they have believed up until this point, to show them that he is the fulfillment of all these things, that Jesus is the one they have been waiting for, the kingdom that they have been hoping for, that has been prophesied.
It's here in Jesus Christ, but they have missed it. And this parable that we're going to look at today, Jesus is basically calling the leadership out on this. So if you would, let's go to Matthew 22, verses 1 through 14.
[2:49] If you would, let's stand together as we read the word of the Lord. Starting in verse 1. And again, Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come.

Again, he sent other servants, saying, Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner. My oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready.
Come to the wedding feast. But they paid no attention, and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.
The king was angry, and he sent troops, and destroyed those murders, and burned their cities.
Then he said to his servants, The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy.
Go therefore to the main roads, and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find. And those servants went out into the roads, and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good.
[4:03] So the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?

And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness, in that place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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For many are called, but few are chosen. This is the word of the Lord. You all may have a seat. Now, in this culture, it was customary for lavish banquets like this, for them to send out multiple invitations, especially for a wedding feast.
There would be an initial invite. You could look at this maybe as kind of like a save the date. They've let them know a little bit in advance that, hey, this banquet is coming. Be ready for it. And then if you were somebody who was of affluence, that had money, that had servants, that had people that could do this, you would send out servants again, on the day of the festivities, to let them know that it's ready.
The banquet is prepared. You can come now. Now, wedding feasts in this time, they were huge affairs. I mean, there were some that lasted up to seven days.
[5:27] These Hebrews, they really knew how to party when it came to weddings. And to refuse such an invite, even if it wasn't from a royal official, to refuse such an invite, it would have been an insult.

A show that you cared nothing about the person that was being married. Now, to refuse a royal invitation from somebody that was like a king or nobility, this would be a major affront.
And would have likely resulted in some sort of punitive retribution from the king, as we saw in this parable. Well, in this parable that Jesus is sharing, he is describing this similar social protocol.
And in this instance, we see somewhat of a merciful and patient king. Because again, these people had already been invited. So he did what was customary.
He sent out a second round of servants who were to invite the guests again to let them know, hey, this is ready. And when they refused to come, the king again sent out a third invite.
[6:34] This was an act of mercy and grace on the king's part. He wasn't required to do this. It was a breach of social protocol. But still, because of his grace and wanting these guests to come to the wedding, he still sent out the third round of invites.

But again, they paid no attention and they even killed some of the servants. Now, anyone listening to this parable would think this is just absolutely ridiculous.
They know the social protocol. Why would anyone do this? Why would they refuse an invite from the king? But in this crowd, the Pharisees knew exactly who Jesus was addressing.
They knew exactly who he was calling out. He was calling them out. So there was some understanding of what Jesus was trying to say here. This is a condemnation of what has already been in Israel's history.
It's a condemnation of what is currently going on in Israel's history with the religious leaders. And as we're going to see, this is also somewhat of a prophecy of what will be in Israel's future.
[7:42] Now, the main idea of this text is that all are invited to the kingdom through the gospel. All are invited to the kingdom through the gospel.

Jesus is making an indiscriminate call to the whole world with the good news that anyone who comes to him in faith can be part of his kingdom through this great invitation.
So in this parable, I think it's important to look at who all these characters are. There's been several mentioned here. The king. Obviously, this is a representation of God who is sending out this invitation to this great banquet and this loving call to become part of his kingdom.
There's the son. I think that we can safely assume that this is a representation of Jesus. In the joining of Christ with his church, it has often been described as a wedding or a marriage of sorts. And even Israel's relationship with God in the Old Testament, it was described as a marriage. Oftentimes, not the healthiest of marriage because the bride, Israel, was adulterous and chasing after other gods.
[8:58] You have the servants. These were the messengers. These could be the prophets in Israel's past that were constantly being sent out to plead with Israel to repent and turn back to God.

Also, this could be John the Baptist who was the most recent prophet in this day and age that was literally sent to prepare the way for the son of God.
And then we have these new wedding guests that we can assume are the Gentiles, the other nations, the coastlands that are talked about in the Old Testament that would hear the word of the Lord.
Other nations that were not of the bloodline of Abraham. And then we're going to finish out our sermon with talking about this unwelcomed guest that somehow made it into the wedding feast without any wedding garments.

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But from this parable, there's going to be three truths that we see about this gospel invitation. And the first one is this, that the gospel invitation demands a response. The gospel, God's invitation demands a response.
[10:03] Now, I've had the opportunity to share the gospel many times. And I'm sure that if we went through the room and talked to all of you, we would have many more stories about their times where they had gospel encounters, where they were able to share their faith and talk about Jesus to these people.

Now, in all of these stories, there'd be a lot of differences, but the conclusion would always be the same. You would eventually get to the part where there was a response to the gospel. Now, if you are here and you think that maybe your gospel efforts haven't had the effect that you want them to, or that they have been completely ineffective, I want to encourage you with this truth, that you cannot have an encounter with Jesus without being changed in some way.
As we see in this parable, you're either going to reject the gospel, you're going to reject the invitation, and by extension, your heart is going to become more hardened to the gospel, or you'll accept it with joy.
You'll submit to Christ with joy as Lord and Savior of your life. There's really no in-between. You either reject or you accept. There's no in-between that God will accept in this.
And that is why going into any gospel encounter that you have or that I have, you need to be equipped with the truth and with prayer. Messengers, servants, they have no authority on their own except for what their master has given to them.
[11:39] And us as the messengers, we have no authority and no power to change on our own outside of the gospel and what God is willing to do through us. So from our story today, I think we need to look at this first group.

These guests had already been invited once. So they knew that this day was coming. They knew that there was a banquet that was on the horizon for the king's son. And the king, again, he did what was customary.
He sent out his second round of invites. The guests were going to let the, or the servants were letting the guests know, hey, the banquet is ready. Come. Join in the festivities.
And then when they showed indifference to this invitation, the king again sent out the third round of invites. And you know the story. They ignored the messengers again and they treated some of them quite horribly and killed them.
The story cannot be a better picture, a more accurate picture, of Israel's history with God. If you can trace one theological theme through the whole Old Testament, it's this.
[12:43] That Israel cannot seem to obey God's commands. They can't remain obedient. That's the theme all throughout it. The laws and the prophets, they were all pointing to the sun.

They were all pointing to this coming of God's kingdom that was fulfilled in Jesus. And every time Israel would drift away from this trajectory, every time they would drift into disobedience or idolatry, God would send the prophets.
He would send the judges to call them back to repentance. And most of these prophets, they were either ignored and some of them even killed. And I think that this parable, again, more specifically, speaks to John the Baptist.
He was the third and final messenger that was sent out to prepare the way for the Lord. Jesus is condemning these religious leaders for their hardness of their hearts.
But when I say the gospel demands a response, unfortunately, this is the response that most people are going to meet when they share the gospel. Many times when you share this grand invitation with people, it is not going to be received with acceptance.
[13:58] Many times it takes lots of presentations of the gospel. It takes time. It takes investment in these people's lives. But unfortunately, most people are going to reject the gospel.

Now these leaders, they had the truth available to them for so long, yet still had a hardened heart. The apostle Paul, even though he was a missionary to the Gentiles, he still had a heart for his Jewish brethren.
And we see this in Romans chapter 9, verses 1-5. It says, I am speaking the truth in Christ. I am not lying. My conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

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This unceasing anguish, this sorrow of heart. This is for his Jewish brethren's rejection of Christ. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.
They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever.
[15:20] Amen. So God's invitation, it has mercifully rested on the Israelites for generations. All the way back to Abraham, whom God had chosen to make this royal priesthood through.

And this royal priesthood should have been a messenger to the world about the goodness of God. The kingdom that they had been longing for for so long was finally at hand.
God's messenger, John the Baptist, was sent to bring these invited guests into the kingdom, but they rejected him. They missed Christ. They missed it all when they rejected Jesus.
I think the question here is why did they refuse to come? Why did these Jewish leaders who were experts in the law refuse to come when the messengers had come saying, it's time.
Jesus is here. In the parable, these guests, they had plenty of lame excuses as to why they couldn't come to the king's banquet.
[16:31] And in life, there's many people that have a lot of different excuses for why they aren't coming to Christ. These are just a few that I have heard personally. Like, well, I'm just spending some time exploring right now, trying to find myself.

Well, I just had to sow my wild oats for a while. Some even believe that as long as you can get it right in the end, the end, like on your deathbed in your final days, as long as you can get it right in the end, then you're going to be good with God.
Listen, what it boils down to is this, is that we have hearts that have been hardened by sin. You have a heart that has been conditioned by sin to reject any spiritual thing of God.
Just like what Paul said with these Pharisees, they had all of this stuff that was going for them. They thought, you know, we have the law, we have the prophets, we have the covenants, the worship, the adoption.
It's all ours already. Aren't we a part of the kingdom? They had been conditioned to accept these physical things as their admittance into God's kingdom when what they were really missing was that God's kingdom is a matter of the heart.
[17:52] God's kingdom needs to be born in you. That's why Ezekiel, one of these prophets that they had rejected, Ezekiel 36, 26 through 28, he says this, God says this to Ezekiel, and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and you shall be my people and I will be your God. Kingdom citizenship is a matter of new birth that comes from a changed heart.
Now, rejection of God's call, it is also a matter of the heart. My prayer going into every gospel conversation, it's not to be convincing enough, it's that God would go ahead and do the work of the heart that I cannot do because that's where God's kingdom is going to be born is in your heart.
Now, there was a Pharisee that Jesus had a conversation with in John chapter 3. I want to read part of this conversation with you that this Pharisee was asking Jesus all these questions and Jesus said, you need to be born again and this was something that really confused him because again, you look at the Pharisees, it's all about am I following all the rules?
Am I observing all the holidays? Am I doing all the traditions? Well, Jesus says something very radical here. Starting in chapter 3, verse 1 of John. Now, there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.
[19:40] This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.

Jesus answered him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. So Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born when he is old?
Can he enter a second time in his mother's womb and be born? Again, he's thinking purely physical here. He's not thinking on matters of the spirit or matters of the heart. He's thinking purely physical, external matters when it comes to the kingdom.

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Jesus answered, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the spirit.
[20:49] Nicodemus said to him, how can these things be? Jesus answered him, are you the teacher of Israel? And yet you don't understand these things.

Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe them, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?
No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.
So Jesus was telling Nicodemus in as plain language as he could that being part of the kingdom was not a matter of physical substance. It wasn't a matter of political persuasion or geographical boundaries.
It was a matter of rebirth that starts with the heart. But unfortunately, as Ezekiel says, we have been given a heart of stone because of sin and we need God to give us a new heart of flesh.
[22:01] Now there's also a warning that comes with this text. If we go back to Matthew chapter 22 in verse 7, after they had treated the servants shamefully and had even killed some of them, in verse 7, the king was angry and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their cities.

Now I believe this verse points to two things. In Israel's history, they had rejected God time and time again. For hundreds of years, God had been sending messengers to come back and be reconciled, be made right, repent of your sins.
But they had kept rejecting these messengers and killing them off to silence them. So eventually, after they had rejected God's invitation so much, all they had left to receive from God was his wrath for their sins if they weren't going to accept his mercy.
So he sent the Babylonians and the Assyrians to their nation to burn their cities and to take them into captivity. So there was a very real judgment where God had sent an invading army to come and destroy the Israelites for their rejection of his invitations.
Now I believe this also pointed to a future judgment on Israel as well. In 70 AD, the Romans sacked Jerusalem and they destroyed the second temple.
[23:27] This is a day that is still remembered and mourned by the Jewish community and there's also still a monument to it in Rome. The Arch of Titus was built in Rome to celebrate this occasion and it still stands today.

You can look at the artwork that's been etched in on this arch and you can very clearly see relics of the tabernacle being hauled away. And Jesus even prophesied that this day would come in another part of Matthew.
In Matthew 24 verses 1 and 2 it says, Jesus left the temple and was going away when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings in the temple. But he said, or he answered them, you see all these, don't you?
Do you not? Truly I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down. So when we look at these Pharisees and we look at the disciples that were marveling of these things that they thought were God's kingdom that were physical, I think the application that we need to look at in this is that we can only look to Jesus for our citizenship into God's kingdom. There are too many people who point to past records of church membership or church attendance. they point to maybe a patriarch in their family that was a preacher. Maybe they remember a prayer that they recited as a child and think that's what saves them.
[24:58] But whenever I want to talk to somebody about salvation, I don't want to hear those things. What I want to hear is what do you believe about Jesus and what has he done in your life? That's what salvation, that's what kingdom citizenship hinges on.

Who is Jesus? What do you believe about him? Is he Lord of your life? Have you trusted in him for the forgiveness of your sins? That's what I want to hear about.

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Now these leaders had obviously rejected the Messiah. They had missed where everything was leading and Jesus goes on in the parable and now the invite is extended to all.
So the second truth here is that God's invitation extends to all. Let's read verses 8 through 10 again. Then he said to his servants, the wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find. And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good.
[26:01] So the wedding hall was filled with guests. So from the story, it can be thought that these religious elites have finally blown their shot and their rejection has forced God's hand to go out and invite other people into the kingdom.

Now to be clear, there are consequences for rejection of Christ which we'll get into here in a little bit. But this invitation to the other nations, this invitation to other people to become part of the kingdom, this wasn't something that took God by surprise.
This wasn't a product of the rejection that the Jewish people had of Jesus. This was a product of God's faithfulness to his promises. Let's look at Genesis 12, 1-3.
This was the first promise that God had made to the Jewish nation. Now the Lord said to Abram, go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.
And I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse.
[27:20] And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. So God's plan has always been to bring salvation to the Gentiles. This wasn't a new idea for God.

God's love for his creation is too great to not offer salvation for those that are lost in darkness. And he is shining the light of his son into the darkness to bring those in that would accept him in faith. God has been faithful to his promises from the first promise that he made to the first Jew and is now being a blessing to all the families of the earth through Abram's offspring which is Jesus.
So he's sending out this royal invite to all who adhere. And it's not because the original race failed to believe. It's because the son is worthy of worship and God wants his family full.
God wants his house full. So God is sending out his gospel call to anyone who would listen. You look at this parable he has sent out messenger after messenger after messenger pleading with them come the banquet is ready.
[28:36] And he's trying to show these religious leaders do you not see what you're missing? You're missing the big picture here. You're missing the climax of God's kingdom. So what is God inviting us to?

What is it that this banquet is representing? The answer is salvation. He is calling you to be saved from sin and to become part of his family part of his kingdom.
And the call is issued without discrimination here. The servants went to the main roads. They called on anyone that was there. Good and bad is what the text said. God isn't calling people who have their lives together.
He isn't calling people that meet certain expectations. He's calling sinners. He's calling the broken to accept salvation and be forgiven.
To profess Jesus as Lord and become part of a new family. A new kingdom. To receive a new identity as a child of the king. Luke 5.32 Jesus this is probably one of my favorite lines that he says to the Pharisees.
[29:47] Says I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. That's good news for all of us. He's come to call sinners to repentance.

He's not looking for people that have it together. He's not looking for the righteous elite. He is looking for people that would lean on Jesus. That would place their faith and their trust in him.
And I can't emphasize this enough. God wants his house full. His generosity doesn't run out. His mercies are sufficient for any who would come. His love is unlimited to anyone who would seek it. But it demands a response. Now the final character that I think we need to point out is this unfortunate fellow at the end here.
The banquet is full. The guests are here. The feast is ready. And then the king looks out and spots this guy that doesn't seem to be dressed for the wedding.
[30:49] Verses 11-14 But when the king came in to look at the guest, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?

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And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, bind him hand and foot, cast him into the outer darkness. And in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
For many are called, but few are chosen. So the third truth that we need to see here is that God's invitation demands righteousness.
Now the question that I've always had whenever I've read this parable, and it always comes up when I get to this part about this guest, wasn't this man invited?
Why was the king so confused by this guy's presence? The servants went out into the main roads. They invited good or bad, so why is the king surprised at some disheveled guest in his banquet halls?
[31:56] Well, if you go back to the cultural backdrop of all this, if somebody wealthy like a king was inviting guests to a wedding, or the wedding of his son, it was customary for those that were wealthy to provide wedding garments for those that were going to be attending the feast.

Kings would have garments that they would put on people as they were coming in. They would have servants that would wash their feet. Maybe even sometimes they would be anointed with scented oils.
This was all part of the wedding festivities. And for this man to make it into the wedding banquet, not having a wedding garment on, that would have to mean that he rejected those offerings that the king was giving him.
These were luxurious party favors, and the king was going to be able to spot who refused them. So who does this man represent? These are people that are trying to get to God without being clothed in the righteousness of Christ.
perhaps who Jesus was referring to were those that were depending on works of the law rather than a transformed heart to get into the kingdom. Those that were hoping they could clothe themselves with their own good works rather than the righteousness of Christ.
[33:19] God has graciously invited you to be part of his kingdom, and he is going to give you what you need to be admitted into that kingdom. And it's not going to be on your terms.

if you were going to come to Christ, if you were going to be part of the kingdom of heaven, it is going to be on God's terms, not yours. Philippians 3, 8-11, Paul said this about coming before Christ.
He said, indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. So he counts everything as loss. Paul was a Pharisee.
He was one of these people that had rejected Christ at one point in his life. that was depending on his own actions to clothe himself with his own righteousness. And he goes on, for his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him.
Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings becoming like him in his death and that by any means possible, I may attain the resurrection from the dead.
[34:40] God, did you hear what Paul was saying there? There is a surpassing worth to knowing Christ. It's a worth that transcends anything else that we could bring to the table.

And it's the only thing that matters too. When we trust Jesus as Lord and believe on him as the son of God and the payment of our sins, we receive a righteousness that we can never produce ourselves.
We have no ability to produce the righteousness that is required to enter God's kingdom. It has to be given to us. It has to be received. It's called imputed righteousness.
That is the act of God taking the righteousness of his son Jesus and placing it on you. It's not a righteousness that you have produced.
It is a righteousness that you have received. And it is this righteousness that allows us entrance into the kingdom of God to be able to experience an eternal life with God one day.
[35:51] So if you are lost, if you are somebody that has never professed faith in Christ, or maybe you're hearing this and you're thinking, I've been doing this all wrong. I've been trying to pursue this on my own.

The good news of the gospel is not that you have the ability to make things right now. It's that Jesus has done everything needed to make you right before God. And all you have to do is place your

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faith in him.
Trust that his sacrifice was good enough to atone from your sins, for your sins. You just need to accept God's gospel invitation.
The application here is pretty simple. respond to God's gospel call. For unbelievers, God has sent this invitation to you.
God has seen your sin. He knows everything about you, but he still wants his house full. He wants you in his family.
[36:59] Now this guest that had showed up, yes, he was invited. But he wasn't chosen. Many are called, but few are chosen.

So I think this brings up a really big question. How do you know if you're chosen? You know that you are chosen if you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord and are clothed in his righteousness. That is something that can only be revealed to you by the Holy Spirit. And if you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord, then yes, you are chosen. 2 Peter 3, 9 says, the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promises, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you.
I think we see that patience in the fact that God keeps sending out messengers. He keeps making opportunities to hear the gospel. That's the invitation right there. When you hear the gospel, you have received an invitation.
God has loved the world.
[38:12] He has loved you so much that he has made a way for all of your sin to be forgiven through the sacrifice of his truly begotten son.

So that through him we could have eternal life. so that we could have that righteousness that is not our own. So that when God looks on us, he doesn't see the sinful stains of the world.
He sees the righteousness of his son. That is what imputed righteousness does for us. When we receive the good record, the perfect righteousness of Christ, God sees that on us through our faith in him.
Now, if you're a believer here, there is still a response that you need to make to the gospel as well. And that response is this. You're a messenger. You are a messenger that God has sent out to call people to come to this great banquet to be part of his kingdom.
We see that in the Great Commission or in 2 Corinthians, the ministry of reconciliation that's been entrusted to us. We are the servants that are being sent out into the vineyard. We are the harvesters in the field that are ready for harvest.
[39:21] Your response to the gospel invitation is to share it. If you are a believer that has been made new, you have been given a message that is too good to keep to yourself and your response is to proclaim it.

Now, maybe you're a believer that is falling into the trap of trying to depend on works, working yourself to the bone to try to be good enough for God. We see the Galatians falling into this same trap where even though they had received the pure gospel that Paul had presented to them, they had fallen into this trap of trying to depend on works again.
My reassurance to you is this. Jesus was good enough for you. He lived the perfect life for you. Don't live a life of fear, wondering if you finally achieved this goodness that God is looking for in his saints. Jesus did all that for you. Your trust needs to be in the works of Christ, in his sacrifice, in his perfect life, not in what you can bring to the table, but what Jesus has done on the cross.
And you can live a life of freedom and gratitude and joy, knowing that Jesus has done all the work for you. God, let's pray.
[40:49] Father, we're so grateful for what Christ has done for us. Lord, that in Christ, all can receive the gospel invitation. And Lord, I pray that for anyone that is here or that might be listening, Lord, that maybe has never placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

And Lord, I pray that today would be the day of salvation. Lord, that they would not linger anymore, that they would not come up with excuses like we have seen in our parable tonight.
But Lord, I pray that you would call them, that you would save them, Lord, that they would be your children and become members of your kingdom. Lord, I pray for the believer that is here tonight. Lord, this gospel is too good to keep to ourselves. The news is too good to hide it, to put it under a basket. Lord, I pray that we would boldly proclaim it.
Lord, that we would invite people to the kingdom, not with any authority that we possess, but with the authority that you give us with your truth. Lord, we can proclaim with boldness what Jesus has

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done.
[41:59] We can proclaim this gospel invitation. Lord, I pray that we would always be obedient to do that. And Lord, we know that salvation is a work that only you can perform.

So, Lord, I pray that whenever we do follow in obedience, when we do share the gospel, Lord, that you would do the heart work. Lord, that we would see you do great things in the lives of those that hear the gospel.
And Lord, that we would see your house and your family full. And I pray for all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

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