

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**11-15-23**

**Matthew 22**

**The Parable Of The Wedding Banquet – Verses 1-3**

**<sup>1</sup>Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: <sup>2</sup>“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. <sup>3</sup>He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.**

**22:1-3** In this culture, two invitations were expected when banquets were given. The first asked the guests to attend; the second announced that all was ready. In this story the king invited his guests three times, and each time they rejected his invitation. God wants us to join him at his banquet, which will last for eternity. That’s why he sends us invitations again and again. Have you accepted his invitation?

**The Second Invitation Is Refused And The King Reacts – Verses 4-7**

**<sup>4</sup>“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.’ <sup>5</sup>“But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. <sup>6</sup>The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. <sup>7</sup>The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.**

**22:4-5** Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared.”: The king persisted in making the invitation as attractive as possible. He really wanted those invited to come. All things are ready is the message of the gospel. You don’t come to God’s feast and prepare your own meal. He has made it ready for you; you come to receive. But they made light of it and went their ways: The reaction of those invited made no sense, but it does give an accurate description of the reaction of many to the gospel. Many made light of it; others go back to their business.

**22:6-7** He was furious... and he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers: The king rightfully brought judgment upon the offenders. Not only did they reject his invitation, but they also murdered his messengers. This was a prophecy of what would happen to Jerusalem, the city whose religious leaders so strongly rejected Jesus and His gospel.

**The Third Invitation – Verses 8-10**

**<sup>8</sup>“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. <sup>9</sup>So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ <sup>10</sup>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.**

**22:8-10** As many as you find, invite to the wedding: The king was determined that he would not have an empty banquet hall, so an invitation was given to all who would hear. Those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both good and bad: When the first and second invitations were so dramatically rejected, the third invitation was made more broadly. All were invited, whether good or bad. In this sense, we can say this is a parable about grace. Those who were invited — and who came — were utterly undeserving of the invitation, much less the wedding feast itself.

## **The Man Without A Wedding Garment – Verses 11-14**

**<sup>11</sup> “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. <sup>12</sup> He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless. <sup>13</sup> “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.’ <sup>14</sup> “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”**

**22:11-12** It was customary for wedding guests to be given wedding clothes to wear to the banquet. It was unthinkable to refuse to wear these clothes. That would insult the host, who could only assume that the guest was arrogant and thought he didn't need these clothes, or that he did not want to take part in the wedding celebration. The wedding clothes picture the righteousness needed to enter God's kingdom—the total acceptance in God's eyes that Christ gives every believer. Christ has provided these clothes of righteousness for everyone, but each person must choose to put them on in order to enter the King's banquet (eternal life). There is an open invitation, but we must be ready. For more on the imagery of clothes of righteousness and salvation, see Psalm 132: 16; Isaiah 61: 10; Zechariah 3: 3-5; Revelation 3: 4-5; 19: 7-8.

## **Paying the Imperial Tax to Caesar – Verses 15-17**

**<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. <sup>16</sup> They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. <sup>17</sup> Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?”**

**22:15-17** The Pharisees, a religious group, opposed the Roman occupation of Palestine. The Herodians, a political party, supported Herod Antipas and the policies instituted by Rome. Normally these two groups were bitter enemies, but here they united against Jesus. Thinking they had a foolproof plan to corner him, together their representatives asked Jesus about paying Roman taxes. If Jesus agreed that it was right to pay taxes to Caesar, the Pharisees would say he was opposed to God, the only King they recognized. If Jesus said the taxes should not be paid, the Herodians would hand him over to Herod on the charge of rebellion. In this case the Pharisees were not motivated by love for God's laws, and the Herodians were not motivated by love for Roman justice. Jesus' answer exposed their evil motives and embarrassed them both.

**22:17** The Jews were required to pay taxes to support the Roman government. They hated this taxation because the money went directly into Caesar's treasury, where some of it went to support the pagan temples and decadent lifestyle of the Roman aristocracy. Caesar's image on the coins was a constant reminder of Israel's subjection to Rome.

## **Give To Caesar What Is His, But Give To God What Belongs To God – Verses 18-22**

**<sup>18</sup> But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? <sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, <sup>20</sup> and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?” <sup>21</sup> “Caesar's,” they replied. Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.” <sup>22</sup> When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.**

**22:21** Jesus avoided this trap by showing that we have dual citizenship (1 Peter 2: 17). Our citizenship in the nation requires that we pay money for the services and benefits we receive. Our citizenship in the kingdom of heaven requires that we pledge to God our ultimate obedience and commitment.

### **Marriage at the Resurrection**

**23** That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. **24** “Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him. **25** Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. **26** The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. **27** Finally, the woman died. **28** Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

**22:23-46** After the Pharisees and Herodians had failed to trap Jesus, the Sadducees smugly stepped in to try. They did not believe in the resurrection because the Pentateuch (Genesis— Deuteronomy) has no direct teaching on it. The Pharisees had never been able to come up with a convincing argument from the Pentateuch for the resurrection, and the Sadducees thought they had trapped Jesus for sure. But Jesus was about to show them otherwise (see 22: 31-32 for Jesus’ answer).

**22:24** The law said that when a woman’s husband died without having a son, the man’s brother had a responsibility to marry and care for the widow (Deuteronomy 25: 5-6). This law protected women who were left alone, because in that culture they usually had no other means to support themselves.

### **Jesus’ Reply: You Don’t Know The Scriptures, And The Power Of God – Verses 29-33**

**29** Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. **30** At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. **31** But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, **32** ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.’” **33** When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

**22:29-30** The Sadducees asked Jesus what marriage would be like in heaven. Jesus said it was more important to understand God’s power than know what heaven will be like. In every generation and culture, ideas of eternal life tend to be based on images and experiences of present life. Jesus answered that these faulty ideas are caused by ignorance of God’s Word. We must not make up our own ideas about eternity and heaven by thinking of it and God in human terms. We should concentrate more on our relationship with God than about what heaven will look like. Eventually we will find out, and it will be far beyond our greatest expectations.

**22:29-30** In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage: First, Jesus reminded them that life in the resurrection is quite different from this life. It does not merely continue this world and its arrangements, but it is life of a completely different order. This passage has made many wonder if marriage relationships will exist in heaven, or if those who are husband and wife on earth will have no special relationship in heaven. We are not told enough about life in the world beyond to answer in great detail, but we can understand a few principles.

**22:29-30** Family relationships will still be known in life in the world beyond. The rich man Jesus described in the afterlife was aware of his family relationships (Luke 16:27-28). The glory of heaven will be a relationship and connection with God that surpasses anything else, including present family

relationships (Revelation 21:22-23). If it seems that life in the resurrection that Jesus spoke of here does not include some of the pleasures of life we know on earth, it is only because the enjoyments and satisfactions of heaven far surpass what we know on earth. We can't be completely certain what life in glory beyond will be like, but we can know with certainty that no one will be disappointed with the arrangements (Revelation 22:1-5).

**22:31-32** Because the Sadducees accepted only the Pentateuch as God's divine Word, Jesus answered them from the book of Exodus (3: 6). God would not have said, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" if God thought of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as dead. From God's perspective, they are alive. Jesus' use of the present tense pointed to the resurrection and the eternal life that all believers enjoy in him.

### **The Greatest Commandment**

**<sup>34</sup> Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. <sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: <sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"**

**22:34** We might think the Pharisees would have been glad to see the Sadducees silenced. The question that the Sadducees had always used to trap them was finally answered by Jesus. But the Pharisees were too proud to be impressed. Jesus' answer gave them a theological victory over the Sadducees, but they were more interested in defeating Jesus than in learning the truth.

**22:35-36** The Pharisees, who had classified over 600 laws, often tried to distinguish the more important from the less important. So one of them, an "expert in the law," asked Jesus to identify the most important law. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6: 5 and Leviticus 19: 18. By fulfilling these two commands, a person keeps all the others. They summarize the Ten Commandments and the other Old Testament moral laws.

### **Jesus Answers: Loving God And Your Neighbor – Verses 37-40**

**<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."**

**22:37-40** Perfectly understanding the essence of the law, Jesus had no difficulty answering. Instead of promoting one command over another, Jesus defined the law in its core principles: love the LORD with everything you have and love your neighbor as yourself. It is clear enough what it means to love the LORD with all we are, though it is impossible to do perfectly. But there has been much confusion about what it means to love your neighbor as yourself. This doesn't mean that we must love ourselves before we can love anyone else; it means that in the same way we take care of ourselves and are concerned about our own interests, we should take care and have concern for the interests of others.

**22:40** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets: God's moral expectation of man can be briefly and powerfully said in these two sentences. If the life of God is real in our life, it will show by the presence of this love for God and others.

### **Whose Son Is The Messiah – Verses 41-45**

**<sup>41</sup> While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup> "What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?" "The son of David," they replied. <sup>43</sup> He said to them, "How is it**

then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, <sup>44</sup> "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet." <sup>45</sup> If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?" <sup>46</sup> No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

**22:41-45** The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians had asked their questions. Then Jesus turned the tables and asked them a penetrating question— who they thought the Messiah was. The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but they did not understand that he would be God himself. Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1 to show that the Messiah would be greater than David. (Hebrews 1:13 uses the same text as proof of Christ's deity.) The most important question we will ever answer is what we believe about Christ. Other theological questions are irrelevant until we believe that Jesus is who he said he is.