

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 22:1-14

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen. (KJV)

Just as the king in the current Gospel, the Lord God repeatedly offers invitations to share celebratory joy with Him. God's invitations go out to all within reach of hearing the Holy Gospel.

God's Holy Church continuously offers invitations for individuals to come and see. The Church extends to believers the offer to draw near in faith and in love. Regularly individuals decline the Lord's invitations.

People choose not to heed the callings from God's Holy Church. Of those persons drawing near to God, not all remain for the duration of earthly life. Every person baptized into Christ does not continue as a faithful Christian.

The world would be much different today if all baptized into Christ remained faithful. If all baptized into Christ through the centuries were fervent, joy would be much more prevalent.

We know from the great amount of crime, depression and despair existing in the world, that dominant numbers of believers are not readily sharing their joy in Jesus Christ.

Some believers baptized into Christ fall away from the Church. Some baptized are weak in faith and remain lukewarm throughout life. A percentage of believers are faithful. A small number become fervent believers.

In the current Gospel, one person accepting the invitation to the wedding was cast out. We know from Church history there are believers put out of the Church for various reasons including evil actions.

Believers accepting the Lord's invitations share the joy with others making the same decisions. God appreciates all believers welcoming the Divine invitations. Lives are transformed when joy in the Lord is shared.

The value of accepting God's appeals comes through personal experience. Believers deeply feel the Lord's presence, appreciation and joy when accepting the Divine invitations.

Believers sense the Lord's presence in hearing and accepting the invitations. The Lord's invitations come primarily from the Church. The Lord's invitations compete for the person's attention in the world.

Individuals have the choice of saying "yes" to the Lord and experiencing joy in God's Kingdom or choosing alternatives of lesser value. Reaffirming the commitment to the Lord God is necessary for the duration of earthly life.

Individuals spurning or rejecting the Lord's invitations must live with the results. Accepting the Lord's invitations and remaining faithful leads to lasting joy and eternal life.

Individuals accepting the king's invitation to the wedding valued the king's relationship with his son. Believers embracing the Lord God's invitations value the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Individuals make decisions throughout earthly life. All decisions have results and consequences. God's Kingdom and eternal life require adherence to the narrow path, consistent discipline and commitment.

God's Church helps individuals to identify the important aspects of life and to seek them. The current Gospel makes clear to believers that not all people invited by the Lord end up celebrating with the Lord.

Where and with whom individuals choose to celebrate life reflects the person's inner values and long-range interests. Believers choosing to celebrate with the Lord show an interest in God's Kingdom and eternal life.

The time of earthly life occurs only once. Choosing to invest the time of life in God's Holy Church with like-minded believers opens endless opportunities in God's Kingdom and for eternal life.

The Holy Scriptures speak of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (1 Tim 6:14-16, Rev. 17:14, Rev. 19:16) God's Holy Church is where believers learn more about the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

Believers hear the Holy Gospel in God's Holy Church and learn about the value of accepting the Lord's invitations. Strength and wisdom come from God in the Holy Gospel and lead to definitive peace and joy.

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth, parents of St. John the Baptist. September 5/18, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic