



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

October 22, 2023

Pastor Jerome Enderle

21st Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: [2 Chronicles 30:1-5, 10-22](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 23 CW

Second Lesson: [Romans 11:1-10](#)

Gospel Lesson/Sermon Text: [Matthew 22:1-14](#)

God's Amazing Grace

- I. God's grace reaches out to everyone.**
- II. God's grace is rejected by many.**
- III. God's grace persists.**

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our risen loving Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen.

Have you ever been invited to something or somewhere you really never wanted to go? Perhaps you felt there was something more important, something that you would rather be doing. So you came up with a reason that you couldn't go. Perhaps your excuse was good; perhaps it was very weak. Yet you felt it was good enough because you didn't want to go in the first place.

Sadly, that's how many people in our world feel about Jesus and the message of our Savior. We tell them about Jesus, and they're indifferent about that saving message. We invite them to church and they make excuses. They have all kinds of reasons why they can't or don't want to attend church. The real reason is because God, His Word, and the Savior aren't important to them. They have other priorities in life.

You and I also have conflicting priorities in life. Our jobs, our families and friends, our pleasures and leisure can creep in and distract us from the real important priorities in life—our faith in and our life with God. When that happens, we too make excuses. We come up with a variety of reasons as to why we don't have time to hear and study God's Word more. We come up with a variety reasons why we don't have the time or talents with which to serve our God when we know we should and can. And yes, we come up with a variety of reasons why we don't share Jesus' saving Word—the Gospel of full and free salvation—with people around us.

Today, by means of another parable, Jesus explains to us God's grace. He wants us to see and appreciate **God's amazing grace**. And in the parable we'll see that God's grace is extended to all. God's grace is rejected by many. But God's grace persists.

- I. Our text is another parable Jesus tells, this time of a father who hosts a banquet for his son and invites many people to attend the feast. The banquet is free, but with the invitation comes a responsibility to attend. God Himself is the father and He is hosting a heavenly banquet for His Son, Jesus Christ.

In spite of what many believe, all religions aren't different roads to heaven. In spite of what many believe, there is only one way to heaven, and that's through faith in Jesus Christ, and faith (as we know) is an amazing gift of God's grace. We know our getting to heaven doesn't depend on our good works or our church membership. The Bible clearly teaches that all are sinners in need of God's forgiveness and grace. **"...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."** ([Romans 3:23](#)) We deserve God's wrath and an eternal punishment in hell. Yet we know that God our Savior **"...wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth..."** ([1 Timothy 2:4](#)) So He extends the invitation to attend and be part of that heavenly feast to one and to all.

God's amazing grace provides all the needs for all sinners. It offers, free of charge, thorough and free forgiveness of all sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and gives eternal life to all who accept that gracious invitation through Spirit-worked faith. The feast is a great banquet, a heavenly feast, ready and prepared for one and all through the perfect life, the innocent sufferings and death, and the triumphant resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

God has invited each of us personally to His feast of His grace and love. Everything is provided for our spiritual life here, for growth in faith and holiness of living. There's nothing that we can or need to bring, nothing for us to bring but our own undeserving, sinful selves. God's grace is an invitation to a feast in this life with the peace of mind that it brings. It's an invitation of hope for the future because of the assurance of eternal life that it gives, while worldly feasts offer only passing satisfaction and short-lived enjoyment. But God's grace offers present peace and happiness and future joy in the enjoyment that everything that God has prepared for those who love Him, those who have been called according to His grace and purpose. What is God's purpose? He invites all to that heavenly feast, to the banquet of His Son. He does this through His amazing grace.

- II. **God's amazing grace** is so rich in blessing, entrance into that kingdom so easy (simple faith and trust in Jesus as the Savior from sin, death and hell) that it's amazing how many refuse the invitation.

In the parable, when the banquet is ready, the king sends his servants to invite those who were invited to come, and come at once. But those invited refused. They beg off. They make excuses. One excused himself because he had plenty of business transactions to take up his time and energy. Another simply said and used as his excuse his duties at home with his family. They offered many excuses, but there was only one real reason why they refused that invitation. They were preoccupied with another feast. They were too satisfied with the world's riches, too preoccupied with its cares, too happy with the life they were living to be concerned about anything better or higher. Yes, there is room for them at the banquet, but there is no room for God and His love in their hearts.

How sad! The enjoyment of God's grace and feast would add restful ease to life on this earth. It would help with the possession of riches, help the businessman with his burdens without anxiety and worry, and make the happiest home even happier. Yet the fact remains that they resist and reject the invitation. They don't realize its importance and the eternal consequences of their rejection.

Jesus now in our parable shows the results of that rejection to the feast of **God's amazing grace**. We see that the servants return and gave the king the refusals and the excuses offered. God, the King, knows their excuses are worthless and useless and He's angry. God looks into the hearts and He sees ungodly wills and worldly hearts that have prompted the refusals.

The meaning of this parable of Jesus is pretty simple and clear. God's anger is aimed at the Jewish nation, long recipients of His gracious promise of the Savior. As Jesus said in the parable, God's Old Testament people had seized God's servants, the prophets, mistreated them and even killed them. The Pharisees (the teachers of the law and the priests) who were listening to Jesus tell this parable, they knew the Old Testament prophecies and they should have recognized Jesus as their long promised Savior. Yet they would not. They rejected a Savior who offered only spiritual gifts. Their hearts and minds were set on earthly things, and they looked for an earthly kingdom from the Messiah. They despised and rejected God's grace and His plan of salvation in Christ Jesus. So God, therefore, rejected them as they had rejected His grace.

Sadly, millions in our world today still reject **God's amazing grace**. They like to think that they're pretty good or that they can earn their way into heaven by the good they do and the evil which they avoid. Like the man in the parable seated at the banquet table, they think they can enter the banquet without the festive robes provided by the host, that they can come in their own filthy rags, the garment of their own self-righteous acts. They're offended at the thought that they even need a Savior, and that they need to be robed in the robe of Jesus'

perfect righteousness. So many today still despise God's grace. They reject Jesus as their Savior from sin, death, and hell, and the wrath of God remains on them.

III. But as we see in the parable, **God's amazing grace** still persists. Since the banquet is prepared and ready, God extends the message of His grace in Christ Jesus to the poor of the Jewish nation, the spiritually crippled, blind and lame. Jesus Himself took the message of good news of great joy to Galilee and proclaimed it there. Poor sinners (poor fishermen, despised tax collectors and others received) His message in faith, believed in Jesus as their Savior and became His followers and disciples.

But there is still room in the heavenly mansions, so God takes His Word and the command to bring that Word to all people. God still calls people from all nations, all tribes, all nationalities, by His invitation of grace to come and believe in Jesus as the Lord and Savior. His call is urgent and pleading, sincere and powerful. The Holy Spirit prepares the way for the preaching of the Gospel of full and free forgiveness by the preaching of the Law to show sinners their hopeless, lost condition, to point them to Jesus as their only Savior, to bring them the faith and salvation. Yes, God wants all people today to still fear His wrath and to come to Him for help and salvation.

Members of Morrison Zion, He still invites us today to be His guests, to hear His Word, to be brought to faith in Him, to become His children in Baptism, to receive comfort and strength through the Sacrament of His body and blood, and to be partakers of that heavenly feast of the Lamb in heaven forever.

God pleads and calls to all sinners. The table is set. Complete redemption has been obtained through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. And God is merciful to all sinners for Jesus' sake. If a person refuses the invitation of God's grace, it is his own fault. The Lord calls to all through Word and Sacrament, offering them the riches of His grace. As Jesus said as He concluded the parable of our text, **"...many are invited, but few are chosen."** All who despise and reject the invitation (the call to faith) will be thrown out, into the outer **darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** All who reject **God's amazing grace** in Christ will be excluded from the joys of salvation, from the eternal feast of love in heaven.

The message of the Bible is clear and simple. God sent His Son, Jesus, to live, to die and to rise again for you, me, and all people. The way to eternal life in heaven is open to one and all. We and all people receive the gracious invitation to come and partake through faith in God's Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Yet are there times when we make excuses for not partaking of God's grace in Word and Sacrament as often or as frequently as we should? Are there times when we are too busy, too preoccupied, or too happy with the world in which we live to accept and respond positively to that invitation? Our Savior, Jesus, said: ***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."*** [\(Matthew 11:28-29\)](#)

As recipients of **God's amazing grace**, may we keep the priorities in our life straight. May we regularly, gladly hear and learn the Word and receive the blessings that are ours through Word and Sacrament. May we gladly, confidently take our seats at the Lord's Table and joyfully partake of the food of life. May we give our Savior God, His work and Word priority, first place in our lives. And may we also take the invitation to the feast of God's love to everyone we know. Amen.

May God bless our meditation on His Word and may He bless us with the zeal to carry out His will. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.