TEACHER BIBLE STUDY

Parable of the Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus’ parable of the wedding feast is more than a simple story about a king’s rude guests. The parable reveals the King (God the Father) who seeks to honor His Son (Jesus) with a banquet. Though many people are invited to the kingdom of heaven, few will choose to come.

When Jesus told this parable, He had been teaching for three years. Many people who heard Jesus opposed Him, including the religious leaders. It was to this audience that Jesus told such a shocking story in which the attitudes and actions of the people who rejected the king’s invitation clearly paralleled the religious leaders.

In the parable, the religious leaders are represented by the guests who refused to come to the wedding banquet. They had been invited, but when the king’s servants told them the feast was ready, they did not want to come. Instead, they went about their lives—to their farms and businesses. Some of them even killed the king’s messengers!

What an insult to the king! These people had turned down an invitation to the most wonderful and joyous event they could imagine. The king would have given His best to honor his son, and the king reacted justly. He punished those who rejected him and invited others instead—those not in the city, both the good and the bad.

Likewise, God invites Gentiles into His kingdom. No one is refused based on his or her economic or social standing. The King Himself provides the required attire—robes of righteousness like those given to Joshua the high priest. (See Zech. 3:3-4.) The King rejects those who try to come by their own merit—in their own clothes—as the man without wedding clothes did.

This story reminds us that we need to be clothed in Christ’s righteousness. The kingdom of heaven is like a wedding feast for the Lamb (Jesus) and His bride (the Church). (See Rev. 19:7-9.) Those who receive the invitation to come will be clothed in Jesus’ righteousness, made fit for an eternity in the presence of a holy God.

YOUNGER KIDS BIBLE STUDY OVERVIEW

Session Title: Parable of the Wedding Feast
Bible Passage: Matthew 22:1-14
Big Picture Question: Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.
Key Passage: Matthew 13:10-11
Unit Christ Connection: Jesus taught in parables so His followers would understand how to live in anticipation of His second coming.
Welcome time
Activity page (5 minutes)
Session starter (10 minutes)
Key passage activity (5 minutes)
Bible story review (10 minutes)
Activity choice (10 minutes)
Journal (5 minutes)
Prayer (5 minutes)

THE BIBLE STORY

Parable of the Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus often told parables, or stories, to teach people about God’s kingdom. One of the parables Jesus used to teach people was about a wedding feast. Jesus said, “This is what God’s kingdom is like. A king’s son was getting married, so the king prepared a big wedding feast. The king sent out his servants to tell everyone who was invited to the banquet that the feast was ready. The servants went out and came back. They told the king that the people did not want to come. “So the king sent out his servants again. The king said, ‘Tell the guests that I have prepared a feast! I have killed the best oxen and fattened cattle. Dinner is ready! Come to the wedding banquet!’

“The servants went out, but the people did not listen to the king’s message. One man went to his farm, and another man went to his business. Some of the people even captured the king’s servants and killed them. When the king found out what happened, he was angry! The king sent out his army, punished the murderers, and burned down their city.

“Then the king told his servants, ‘The feast is ready, but the people who were invited do not deserve to come to my feast. Go out to the streets and invite everyone you see.’

“So the servants went out and did what the king asked. They invited all the people they saw—good people and evil people. The wedding feast was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man who was not dressed in the right clothes for a wedding.

“The king said to the man, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless. “The king ordered his servants, ‘Tie this man up hand and foot, and throw him out.’” Jesus ended His story by saying, “Many people are invited to God’s kingdom, but only a few are chosen.”

Christ Connection: Salvation is a free gift. We can’t earn our way into heaven. Jesus did all the work when He died for our sins on the cross. This story reminds us that we need to be clothed in Christ’s righteousness. Jesus invites us to join Him in heaven—the great wedding feast. When we receive His invitation, Jesus gets us ready by clothing us in His righteousness.
SMALL GROUP OPENING

Session Title: Parable of the Wedding Feast
Bible Passage: Matthew 22:1-14
Big Picture Question: Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.
Key Passage: Matthew 13:10-11
Unit Christ Connection: Jesus taught in parables so His followers would understand how to live in anticipation of His second coming.

Welcome time:

Arriving Activity: Napkin folding

- square paper napkins
- construction paper
- scissors
- tape

Provide a few paper napkins for each child. Let children think of creative ways to fold their napkins or shape them into different figures. Some children may want to cut construction paper strips and tape them together to make napkin rings.

Say • Your folded napkins look great! They look like they belong at a fancy dinner or banquet. In our Bible story today, we are going to hear a story Jesus told about a wedding banquet a king hosted for his son.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Dressed and Ready” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils

Guide boys and girls to complete the activity page.

Say • When you go to a wedding, you typically wear your best clothes. It would not be appropriate to show up in dirty clothes or something completely off the wall, like a soccer uniform or a swimsuit. In today’s Bible story, we are going to find out what happened to a man who wore the wrong clothes to a wedding feast for a king’s son.

Session starter (10 minutes)
Option 1: Come over game

Separate children into two teams. Invite each team to hold hands and form lines on opposite sides of the room, facing their opponents. The first team will choose a player from the other team to come over to their line. After a child is chosen, the team will call out, “The feast is ready, let (chosen child’s name) come over.” The chosen child will then come to the other team’s line between two children and say either “over” or “under.” If the chosen child says “over,” the children should lower their hands for the child to step over. If the child says “under,” the children should raise their hands for the child to step under. That child then joins that team. Alternate turns between each team.

Say •What would have happened if the kid who was called refused to come over? Today in our Bible story, we are going to hear about some people who were invited to a wedding feast for a king’s son, but they refused to come!

Option 2: Feast mural

• large sheets of white paper, 1 per table
• markers

Tip: Explain that a feast is a large meal to celebrate a special occasion. A typical Thanksgiving meal is a good example.

Cover tables with large sheets of white paper. Tell children to pretend that they are sitting at a feast of delicious food. Invite each kid to draw a plate at her place at the table. Encourage kids to draw on their plate foods they would like to eat at a feast. Allow them to share what some of their favorite foods are and why.

Say •You all have created quite the feast! Today in our Bible story, we will hear a story Jesus told about a feast. This was a special feast because it was to celebrate the wedding of a king’s son.

SMALL GROUP LEADER

Session Title: Parable of the Wedding Feast
Bible Passage: Matthew 22:1-14
Big Picture Question: Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.
Key Passage: Matthew 13:10-11
Unit Christ Connection: Jesus taught in parables so His followers would understand how to live in anticipation of His second coming.
Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Slide or Poster
- dry erase board and markers (optional)

Make sure the key passage, Matthew 13:10-11, is visible for each child, either as the slide, printed poster, or written on a dry erase board. Read the verse together.

Say • Jesus told parables or stories to teach people about God’s kingdom. This verse calls them the “secrets of the kingdom of heaven.” Why do you think Jesus called them secrets? Was it because He didn’t want people to know? No, it is a secret because it is hard to understand.

The only way we can understand what God’s kingdom is like is if God helps us understand. Jesus told parables to help His followers understand what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Encourage kids to act out the verse. Choose one child to be Jesus and allow the other children to be the disciples. The children representing the disciples will say verse 10. The child representing Jesus will say verse 11. Encourage kids to use hand gestures and facial expressions. Allow kids to take turns being Jesus as time allows.

Bible story review (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Small Group Visual Pack
- Big Picture Question Slide or Poster

Encourage the kids to find Matthew 22:1-14 in their Bibles. Help them as needed.


Use the small group visual pack to show kids where today’s Bible story is on the timeline. Review the Bible story provided using the bolded text, or summarize the story in your own words. Invite kids to jump up and say “I will come!” each time they hear the words feast, banquet, or dinner.

Say • How very sad that the invited guests did not come to the wedding banquet! But the king made sure people came to celebrate his son’s wedding. The new guests must have felt so grateful to be included. God is so kind to include us in His kingdom. We have not done anything to deserve an invitation to the kingdom of heaven. In fact, because we are sinners, we have done a lot of things that should keep us out of God’s kingdom. When we trust in Jesus to take away our sin, we can enter in. Remember the man who came to the wedding in the wrong clothes? He was thrown out. The only way we can enter the kingdom of Heaven is if we put our
trust in Jesus, He clothes us in His righteousness.

Show the big picture question slide or poster.

**Say • Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.**

**Activity choice (10 minutes)**

**Option 1: Invitations**

- construction paper, 1 per kid
- markers
  
  Demonstrate how to fold a sheet of construction paper in half to make an invitation. Children may use markers to decorate their invitations. Encourage children to write the big picture question and answer on their invitation. Kids may give their invitation to someone else who needs to hear the gospel, or they may keep it as a reminder of God’s open invitation to the kingdom of heaven.

**Say • Jesus used the parable of the wedding feast to show that many people are invited to God’s kingdom, but only a few choose to come. These invitations can remind us to tell everyone about Jesus so they can be a part of the kingdom of heaven. Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.**

**Option 2: Dress up relay**

- baskets, 1 per team
- clothing items easy to put on and take off, 1 per kid
- tape
  
  Distribute dress-up clothing evenly between the baskets and place the baskets on one side of the room. Use masking tape to make a starting line at the opposite side of the room. Form teams, and invite teams to line up single file behind the starting line. Children should listen for the signal to go. The first kid from each team will run to the basket, put on a clothing item, and run back to the end of the line. The next child in line then takes a turn, and so on. Once all the children from one team have put on clothing items, the whole team says the big picture question and answer together. The first team to say the question and answer wins.

**Say • In the parable that Jesus told, a man was thrown out of the wedding feast because he was not wearing the right clothes. The man in the wrong clothes reminds us that the only way into the kingdom of heaven is through Jesus! Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.**
Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

- Journal Page, 1 per kid
- markers or crayons
- Bible Story Coloring Page

Distribute each child’s journal page provided with this session. Instruct the kids to draw a picture of someone dressed for a wedding. Writers can write the big picture question and answer or the key passage.

Say • Let’s review our big picture question and answer one more time. Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the coloring page provided with this session. Pray, thanking God for allowing us to enter His kingdom. Pray for each child by name, asking God to give the kids hearts to respond to God’s invitation and that He might make them faithful to share the invitation with others.

Dismiss to parents – Make sure to check security tags when dismissing children.
Jesus Taught with Parables
The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.”

Matthew 13:10-11
Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven?

Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.
Dressed and Ready

Instructions: Draw a line between each person and the place he or she is likely headed.
Parable of the Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14
Today we will be tasting/touching/sniffing:


Please notify the leader if your child should not participate.

Instructions: Print this poster. You may laminate it and reuse it throughout the quarter. Use a dry erase marker to fill in the necessary information. Display the poster where parents and kids can see it before class.
The **Gospel**

**God’s Plan for Me**

gospel – *noun.* good news. the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation.

**God Rules.**
The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. *Genesis 1:1; Revelation 4:11; Colossians 1:16-17*

**We Sinned.**
We all choose to disobey God. The Bible calls this sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God’s punishment of death. *Romans 3:23; 6:23*

**God Provided.**
God sent Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It’s something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. *John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9*

**Jesus Gives.**
He lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God’s family for eternity. **This is the best gift ever!** *Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 2:8-9*

**We Respond.**
Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He’s already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus. *John 14:6; Romans 10:9-10, 13*
Invite kids to list below names of friends or family members they would like to invite to a party. Review the parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22:1-14. Ask kids how they would feel if their guests refused to come to the party. Remind kids of the big picture question and answer. Pray that they, their friends, and family members would receive Jesus’ invitation to the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus Taught with Parables

Parable of the Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14

Preschool
Key Passage: Matthew 13:11
Big Picture Question: Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven.
Christ Connection: Heaven is like a great wedding feast, and Jesus invites everyone to come. Jesus makes a place for people who say yes to His invitation, and they can be with Him forever.

Kids
Key Passage: Matthew 13:10-11
Big Picture Question: Who is invited to the kingdom of heaven? Everyone is invited to the kingdom of heaven, but few will choose to come.
Christ Connection: Salvation is a free gift. We can’t earn our way into heaven. Jesus did all the work when He died for our sins on the cross. Jesus invites us to join Him in heaven—the great wedding feast. When we receive His invitation, Jesus gets us ready by clothing us in His righteousness.