

Introduction: Since God saved me in 1979 I have found it ironic that one of the most pagan songs ever written became the greatest hit, the signature song, of Frank Sinatra's long career: '*I Did It My Way*'. What does that say about him? and, people in general? Probably that we all have a tendency to be self-absorbed and self-possessed. *** And, think about Frank Sinatra's life. Not just him, but the majority of people live lives of quiet desperation. We try it our way, and it doesn't work. The words of a friend of mine from forty years ago are just right when applied to our tendency to do what we want to do, and how we want to do it, while taking no advice from good friends or God. Whenever someone came to Stu who was over confident and said: but I'm doing this and that, he would say: how's that working out for you? *** Refusing to live life God's Way by gratefully receiving His Grace IN His Son is the main point of the parable of Jesus we are considering today. *** First, those who had been invited to a long-planned and extravagant wedding feast through a special call of the father of the groom, and king of the land, totally disregarded the call. Some people went their own way, and other people murdered his servants. *** Then, when strangers and casual passers-by filled the hall, one guest refused the gracious offer of proper wedding clothes. Presumably, he thought his own clothes were good enough and his way was right. When the host king questioned him he was speechless. Then the king had him bound and taken to outer darkness. The reason: he would not *accept God's invitation on His terms*. *** Let us now consider Jesus' parable and the *Psalm* excerpt about The Anointed (Messiah) King.

I. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a human king who planned wedding celebrations for his son, but those called twice rejected and killed his servants. (Matthew 22:1-7)

- A. Jesus spoke a Kingdom of Heaven parable about a human king having planned wedding celebrations for his son and sent servants to those called to come, and they were not coming. (*Verses 1-3*)
1. Jesus said The Kingdom of Heaven is like a human king who made marriage celebrations for his son. (*Verses 1-2*)
Multiple – good and beautiful: The word for 'make' is the root of the English word poetry. It carries the connotation of quality artistic work. The wedding is so big the king made plans for multiple good and beautiful feasts.
 2. He sent out his servants to call those who had been called and they were not coming. (*Verse 3*)
Called even to now: The invitations had gone out long ago and had remained in force until now.
Strong rejection: However, those who have been called continued to refuse to attend.
- B. Then, having planned wedding celebrations for his son, he again sent his servants to those called to come: Behold! I have prepared the dinner; but they murdered his servants. (*Verses 4-6*)
1. Again, he sent other servants, saying: You all must go to those having been called: Behold! I have made thorough preparations, come to the celebrations. (*Verse 4*)
Stronger second calling: He has his servants issue a double command to attend, and speaks of prepared meat and all that is needed for a great feast.
 2. Having disregarded, some went each to his own affairs, and the rest having taken hold of the servants, were insolently spiteful and murdered them. (*Verses 5-6*)
Self-interest: Both the farmer and the merchant chose to continue working for personal gain over attending what was in their minds the extravagant and drawn out celebrations of the ruling elite. This was their way.
Spiteful insolent murderers: The remainder of those called showed their depravity by proud violence leading to murder.
- C. The king was furious, and sent his soldiers to destroy them. (*Verse 7*)
1. But the king was made furious. (*Verse 7a*)
Fury: The actions of those who had been called for a long time out of his generosity to enjoy his feasts aroused fury in the king.
 2. And, having sent forth his soldiers, he destroyed those murderers, and their city they burned down. (*Verses 7b-c*)
Destruction and fire: He caused proud murderers to be destroyed; and, his soldiers burned everything. He treated them like foreign enemies, because that is how they responded to his gracious call.

II. The king sends more servants out every road from the city and the celebrations are filled with guests, but one who chose his own garment is taken to outer darkness and not chosen. (Matthew 22:8-14; Psalm 45:6-7)

- A. He sends a third group of servants out on all the roads entering the city and they must call whoever they find to the celebrations, and it was filled with guests. (*Matthew 22:8-10*)
1. Then he is saying to his servants: Indeed, the wedding is ready, but those who have been called were not worthy; therefore, you must all go out each road leaving the city and as many as you all may find you all must call into the marriage celebrations. (*Verses 8-9*)
Indeed ready: Everything is now fully and finally prepared for the extravagant celebrations.
NOT worthy: The first called were not worthy to attend the king's gracious feasts. Jesus may be warning the Jews who thought that, as God's chosen people, they could and should reject His call to follow Him as The King of The Kingdom, they are unworthy of Kingdom blessings.
City exits: The unique word Jesus uses for highway means the portion of the roads going through the city gates on the way to the heavily travelled highways outside the city.
Must call 'as many': The 'as many' could be strangers, possibly people from other nations, who were passing through to the city. It may foreshadow the spread of The Good News of The Kingdom to all the nations of the world (*Matthew 28:18-20*).

2. Having gone out, these servants gathered together all that they found, both evil and good; and, the wedding celebrations were made full of dinner guests. (*Verse 10*)

ALL – both evil and good: The questions here is what makes a person good in light of Scripture: They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt (*Psalm 14:3*). People are made good by God when by His grace they turn from themselves to trust Him in humble, dependent faith. I must acknowledge my sinful desire to live ‘my way’, and pray that all I do, I will do IN Christ: His Way!

Full of guests: The house is filled with all people. This describes The Wedding Feast of The Lamb (Jesus) and His Church made up of the people of the nations and God’s people (the Jews, *Ephesians 2*).

- B. The king notices a man not clothed in a wedding garment, and being asked how this was, he was speechless; then the king ordered him taken bound to outer darkness. (*Matthew 22:11-13*)

1. But, having seen to notice the dinner guests, the king saw there a man not having put on a wedding garment; and he is saying to him: Companion, how did you come here not having a garment of wedding celebration? But he was speechless. (*Verses 11-12*)

Wrongly dressed: A wedding feast host provided adequate clothing to all, especially a host king.

So the man had no excuse for disregarding his host’s terms, nor do we when it comes to God.

Accept God’s invitation on His terms

Speechless: He is wrong, so he remains quiet. This also happened when Jesus confronted scribes at the house of a Pharisee proving the lawfulness of healing on the Sabbath (*Luke 14:1-7*).

2. Then the king said to the servants: After binding him, you all must take him to the outer darkness. (*Verse 13*)

Bind: He was bound hand and foot. Two weeks ago we saw that sin binds and forgiveness sets free (*Matthew 18:15-35*).

Future darkness: His unwillingness to live by his king’s terms led to a future of eternal darkness.

This is a warning that we must live God’s way in faithful obedience to God on His terms.

Accept God’s invitation on His terms

- C. Result: Many are called, but few are chosen by The Eternal God and Anointed King who rules in righteousness.

(*Matthew 22:14; Psalm 45:6-7*)

1. Because many are being called but few chosen. (*Matthew 22:14*)

Warning-exhortation: Christ’s chosen have put on His character as clothing (*Ephesians 4:20-32*), put off their old self of doing things their way (*Colossians 3:8-9*), and have put on God’s love that holds everything together (*Colossians 3:10-14*).

2. Your Throne, O God, is eternal and the ruling rod of Your Kingdom is uprightness. (*Psalm 45:6*)

Eternal king: Only a King who is fully upright is able to rule forever.

3. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore, God, Your God has anointed You with the oil of JOY above Your fellows. (*Psalm 45:7*)

Two ways: People are either righteous by having confessed their sin to receive forgiveness and righteousness by faith, or they are wicked.

Two reactions: The eternally upright God loves those who are righteous by faith, and hates the wicked.

Messiah: Anointed is the translation of Messiah. The first God is Messiah Jesus, whose God IS Father God.

The parable groom is BOTH Jesus AND the future king. The Messiah is both Groom of His Church and King.

The groom is king

JOY: Let us desire to be the chosen people of Messiah Jesus to share in His JOY at His Wedding Feast that inaugurates the new heavens and earth. (*Revelation 16:9-10*)

Conclusion: The Kingdom of heaven is like a human king who planned an extravagant wedding feast for his son, but those called twice refused to come then murdered his servants; so, he sends still more servants out from the city in every direction to call all and the celebration hall is filled; but when a guest is questioned about not being properly dressed, he is silenced and taken into outer darkness because he is not chosen by the anointed king.

Homiletical Idea: *Accept God’s invitation on His terms*