

Sermon 4-21 and 25, 2010 Revelation 7:9-17 I Wear a White Robe!

Dear Righteous in the Lord:

How do you feel when you are invited to a wedding? Do you say...

- Great it will be a time of joy and excitement
- Great it will be a time of seeing family and friends
- Great it will be good to share in food and fellowship

I believe that most of us are excited about receiving that invitation in the mail for a wedding.

As believers in Jesus, you and I have been invited to a wedding.

- The wedding feast of the Lamb in God's kingdom.
- We (church) are the bride, Jesus is the groom
- God the Father invites us to this heavenly celebration
- God the Father invites us to live with Him forever in heaven

Jesus once told a parable about this wedding banquet. He said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come..."

Matthew 22:1ff

In Jesus' day a wedding celebration would last for several days. Before the wedding there would be two invitations that would be sent out.

- The 1<sup>st</sup> would be sent out several days before the feast so the guests could properly adjust their schedule. I.e. "Save the Date" post-cards today
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> would be sent out a few hours before the feast so that the guests could be ready for the hour
- The king would send out his servants with the 2<sup>nd</sup> invitation and they would say to the guests who were invited: "Come, to the festival for all things are ready!"

Jesus says the same to us in Revelation: “Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come...let him take the free gift of the water of life.” Revelation 22:17

You all have been invited to the feast in heaven. But Jesus says in Matthew that some refused the invitation. Jesus said: “But they paid no attention and went off -- one to his field, another to his business.” Matthew 22:5

- Some made light of this invitation and went their own way
- Others mistreated the kings’ servants who came with the invitation

Why would people refuse this invitation? Why would they refuse to enter a place of...

- Peace
- Joy
- Eternal glory
- Fellowship with the Lord and others in Christ

Those invited and who enter the wedding feast must have the proper wedding garments on. Jesus says in Matthew: “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes...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.’” 22:11,13

If we are going to enter the wedding feast in heaven we must have on the proper clothes. We must wear...

- The robe of righteousness
- The robe of holiness
- The robe of perfection
- The white robes

This is the picture we see in Revelation. We see those who were invited to the wedding feast in heaven. They were wearing the proper clothing. They are wearing the white robes. V9

The book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John in the year 95 A.D. It was a time of severe persecution by the Roman empire upon the believers in Jesus. It was a time of terror and trial for those who would call themselves Christians because they would not worship the Roman emperor Caesar. Believers know that they are only to worship Jesus as Lord.

The Apostle John wrote Revelation by inspiration of the Holy Spirit to give the believers of his day courage and strength as they persevered under this time of persecution. John shares with them a vision he was given of heaven. He reminds them of the glory that is awaiting them at the end of their lives.

John says he saw: "...a great multitude that no one could count...standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes..."

Revelation 7:9 Besides wearing white robes John also describes these people as...

- Holding palm branches in their hands (common in celebrations)
- Worshiping around the throne of God
- Serving the Lord day and night
- Being protected by the Lord as with a tent
- Never again experiencing hunger, thirst, scorching heat or tears

This is what awaits us who wear the white robes!

How do I get this white robe? How do I receive this robe of righteousness? How do I enter the wedding feast of the Lamb of God in heaven?

**God gives us this white robe.** God gives us this robe of righteousness. We enter the wedding feast in heaven NOT with our own righteousness, but with the righteousness of Jesus.

The Bible says:

- "For God has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness..." Isaiah 61:10
- "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Galatians 3:27

- “Faith is credited as righteousness.” Romans 4:5
- “Righteousness comes from God...Christ is the...righteousness for everyone who believes.” Romans 10:3-4
- “Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ --- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.” Philippians 3:9

The white robe we wear is not ours. It is Christ’s robe of righteousness which he gives to us. The Bible calls this **the Great Exchange**.

- Jesus takes our sins upon Himself – He took our place on the cross and died for us.
- Jesus gives us His righteousness, His perfect life, He kept the Law of God for us.

In Revelation, the Apostle John had the Great Exchange explained to him. John says: “These in white robes --- who are they, and where did they come from...These are they who have...washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

The Bible says only three persons are able to wear white robes...

- Jesus
- Angel
- You and me in Christ

How did we get our white robes? The Apostle Paul says: “...Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.” Titus 2:14

We are saved...

- Not by good works, but to do good works
- By Jesus work on the cross
- By Jesus’ blood in which we have washed our robes – His blood washed away our sins

## **You are a disciple of Jesus because you have been...**

- Baptized by water and the Word in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Taught by the Word of God the way of salvation John 14:6
- Taught the bad news Romans 3:23; 6:23
- Taught the good news Romans 3:24; John 3:36
- Continue to grow in faith and knowledge of Jesus II Peter 3:18

As Peter Waldo who preached...

- Look to Jesus!
- Listen to Jesus!
- Learn of Jesus!

When bankers are trained to learn the difference between a counterfeit bill and a real one they are told not to waste time studying the counterfeit; they study the real thing until they know it upside down, backwards and forwards. Then when a counterfeit bill comes along it stands out like a sore thumb. In like manner, we must study the real thing---Christ and his life. Only then shall we continue in the truth.

In the book of James we read: "...Humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you." 1:21

**"Ultimately, it is not a matter of how often we go through the Bible, but how often the Bible goes through us."** Henry Weston

Because of our sinful flesh and the sinful world around us we will battle with sin every day. The Apostle Paul himself said: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." Romans 7:15

When you struggle with sinful thoughts and words and actions remember this from Romans 8: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the...Spirit of life set me free from...sin and death." vv1-2

**Stay in the Word.** Psalm 40:7-8 “I desire to do your will, O my God; your law (Word) is within my heart.”

Dear Lord, in full surrender at Your feet, I make my consecration vow complete; my life I yield to You; therefore, there shall be no rival, no refusal, no retreat. –Stephen Olford

To You, O Lord, I leave the management of all events in my life, and say without reserve, “Not my will, but Your will, be done.” Thomas Barclay

**Stay with God’s people.** “Let us not give up meeting together...but let us encourage one another..” Hebrews 10:24ff

Why do Canadian geese always fly in a “V” formation. It has been discovered that the flapping of each goose’s wings provide an upward lift for the goose that followed. When all the geese are flying in formation each was dependant on the other to reach its destination.

Don’t fly alone. Fly with the flock.

May we enter the wedding feast together as the Body of Christ with all of us wearing the white robe of Christ’s righteousness.

May we grow in our faith and salvation. II Peter 3:18; I Peter 2:2

“You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.”  
Psalm 73:24