
“Everyone’s Invited!”

Sunday School Lesson on the Wedding Feast in Matthew 22:1-14



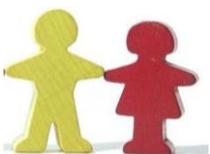
“Many are called, but few are chosen...” This statement, directly following the scene of throwing guests out into the darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth, might seem a little harsh and selective in terms of God’s love and acceptance. However, the parable of the marriage feast is not one of sadness or devastation, but an opportunity to highlight the loving King who welcomes all that are open to His invitation. Just as the guests at the wedding feast had only to put on a garment, we have only to “put on” Jesus. Some will refuse this free gift, but it is available to all who accept God’s calling.

Lesson focus: God welcomes all people into His family, if only we are willing to believe and accept the free gift of salvation. We might make silly excuses for neglecting or rejecting faith, but in the end it’s as easy as putting on a piece of clothing. We are clothed in Christ, washed in His blood and welcomed to God’s Heavenly “party”! We can rejoice in that celebration, and also spread the word to “invite” others to join His loving family, as well.

Passage: Matthew 22:1-14

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (or whoever you might have around!)

Materials Needed: Construction paper, decorative materials, glue, scissors, markers, pencils, pipe cleaners, tape, string, felt, paper bags, magazines, noisemakers, balloons, Bible (all optional, depending which activities you choose to use—except for the Bible, you need that for sure).



Lesson Introduction: Games and Activities

Lesson Opening: This lesson has to do with a party of sorts, and includes themes of gifts and feasts. To kick off the conversation, try some introductory activities. These could actually be sprinkled throughout the lesson, or completed after it, as well, depending on preference.

Here are some activities to get kids thinking...(select the best ones for your audience and age group):

- Food collage...the story has to do with a feast, a large banquet full of food and celebration. Have students cut out pictures of food using magazines or newspapers, and attach them to a larger sheet of paper or “invitation.”
- Dressing up...discuss different types of clothing that are worn for different activities, such as sports, fancy events, or church. In this story, an item of clothing plays a special symbolic role.
- Noisemakers: make or provide some fun noise maker materials, such as kazoos, party shakers, or clappers. Enjoy making a joyful noise and establishing a party atmosphere!
- Excuses...in the story Jesus told, several people made up excuses for why they “couldn’t” go to the king’s wedding feast. Talk about excuses that we make and things we do to get out of chores or attending parties, or even doing fun things.

Explain that today we’ll look at a Gospel parable that Jesus told to explain how God wants all people to be saved, and all we have to do is accept His free gift in Christ. As we listen to the story, pay attention to the different reactions that the “invited guests” in the parable have to the king’s invitation.

Ask: Who is able to be part of God’s family? What does it take to be saved by Jesus?



Parable of the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-14) Sunday School Lesson

Bible Lesson: As always, how you choose to experience the story will vary according to the ages and abilities of your children (and how many are participating). This passage could work with dramatic presentation, re-telling the story in a modern way (for younger audiences particularly), acting out with puppets/skits, or simply reading the parable.

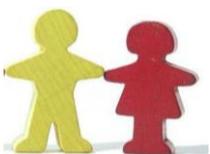
And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ² “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, ³ and sent his servants^[a] to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. -Matthew 22:1-3

In this parable, Jesus is describing another way of thinking about God’s Heavenly Kingdom, and how we can be part of it. Here, He compares it to being invited to a special party or banquet. What is a wedding feast? In the time of Jesus, weddings could be celebrated for days after the actual ceremony. This invitation was to a large party that the king wanted to have to honor his son. He invited several people, but they turned him down.

Ask: have you ever been invited to a party? Did you accept the invitation?

Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵ But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷ The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. -Matthew 22:4-7

When the first people rejected the king’s generous invitation, he went out and invited others, generously enticing them by explaining the sumptuous feast he had prepared. But they still made excuses and refused to come to the celebration! They even killed the messengers that had been sent to extend the warm welcome. (If you have recently looked at the parable of the wicked tenants in the vineyard, you may reference it for comparison). Explain that the king was angry, and destroyed those ungrateful people, offering his invitation instead to anyone who would take it:



Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' ¹⁰And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. -Matthew 22:8-10

Since the people the king had invited to the feast wouldn't come, he invited everyone. How might this relate to God's kingdom? In the Old Testament, participation in God's family required special sacrifices, and credentials as part of His chosen race of Israel. After Jesus, the good news was given and the invitation extended to anyone and everyone. In this parable, everyone came to the wedding celebration after the initial invitees rejected the news.

"But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. ¹²And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen."
-Matthew 22:11-14

Ask: What do you think this means? How do we know if we are "chosen"?

This final portion of the story might seem a little challenging or confusing, and might even have a feel that indicates we have to do something to be "chosen" for God's kingdom. However, something else is going on here. Explain that God does want everyone to be in His kingdom, and offers salvation to all people. However, we do have to enter through Jesus, the "way and the truth and the life." Only through Him are sins covered and removed.

If you go to a birthday party that passes out goody bags or party favors, all you have to do to get one is be willing to accept the party invitation and the favor. If you turn it down, you won't get one. Well, the gift of God's mercy is much better than a goody bag! And all we have to do to get it is believe and receive. Once we do, we should be so excited that we can't help but "invite" others to the party, as well!

Close with a prayer thanking God for his invitation and for Jesus, who clothes us and allows us to "enter" the Heavenly family.

Crafts: "Special invitation"; "Party pinata"; "Clothed with Christ"; food collage, prayer request "gift box" (decorated goody box).





These teaching ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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“You’re Invited” Bible Craft Ideas on the Parable of the Wedding Feast



The parable of the marriage feast is a great opportunity to include party-like elements in craft and story-telling. The message we hope to convey to kids with this story is that God invites and accepts all people to be part of His family, and all we have to do is choose His gift of salvation. With these crafts, celebrate that fact with a decorative “invitation,” a “pinata,” and a reminder that we are clothed not with wedding garments, but with the blood of Jesus.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
-Romans 6:23*

To him (Jesus) all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” -Acts 10:43

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. -Romans 8:16-17

Clothed with Christ...part of His family!

All are invited...to God’s Heavenly party!

You are invited into God’s family! Just believe!

No excuses...accept God’s free invitation!

More Teaching Ideas for the Parable of the Wedding Feast

- Watch the [video version of this children’s sermon](#) on our [YouTube channel](#)
- See the [related craft ideas](#) and more [Sunday School Crafts](#) on YouTube channel
- Compare our full [Sunday School lesson on Matthew 22:1-14](#)



Craft one: Party Pinata

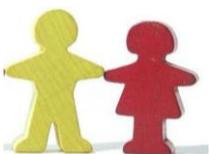
You will need:

- Scissors
- Paper bags
- Markers or crayons
- Verse caption or extra decoration (optional)
- Small treats or toys
- Pipe cleaners, glitter, or other extra decorations.



Procedure:

1. Decorate the paper bag with pictures, verse captions, or stickers.
2. Add small toys, trinkets, or verses inside the bag.
3. Tie a ribbon or pipe cleaner around one end of the bag to secure.
4. Hang the pinata...use it as a decoration or whack at it with a stick to open it up for the treats!



Craft Two: “Clothed with Christ” decoration

You will need:

- Glue and/or tape
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- Caption or verse (Optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Felt or foam
- Additional decorations as desired



Procedure:

1. Draw a person-shaped figure on construction paper or card stock.
2. Decorate your “person” and cut it out.
3. Attach the person to another piece of construction paper.
4. Add decorations: felt or foam “clothing,” bows and ribbons, etc.
5. If desired, attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang as decoration.



Craft Three: “Invitation to God’s Party”

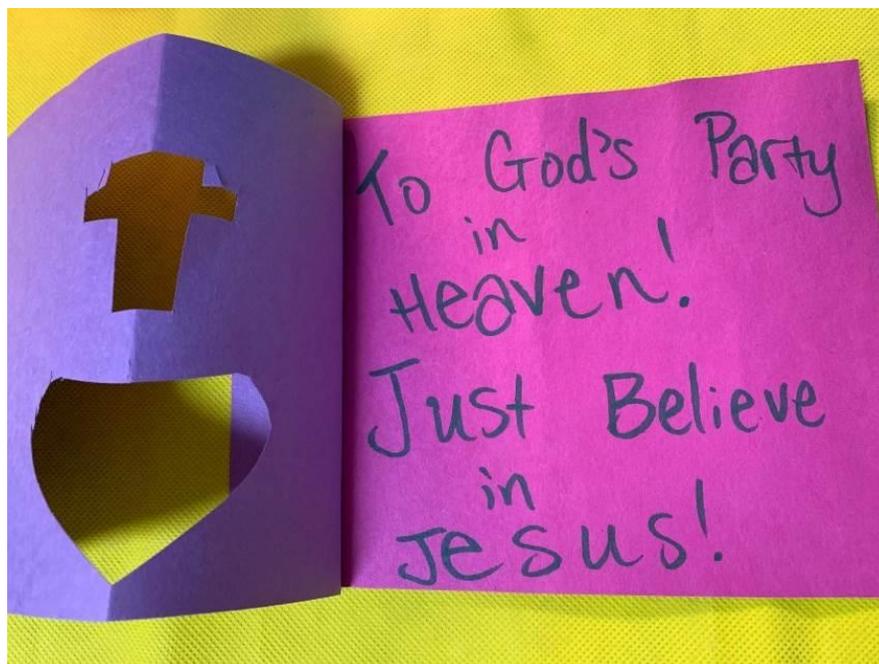
You will need:

- Construction paper/cardstock
- Cardboard tube (Optional)
- Balloons (optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Glue or tape



Procedure:

1. Choose one or two pieces of construction paper, and attach together with staples or glue.
2. If desired, cut shapes out of the top sheet for added decoration.
3. Decorate the paper like a party invitation. Add stickers, pictures, balloons, ribbons, and more.
4. Add captions and verses. Hang for decoration or use as a prayer request reminder.





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

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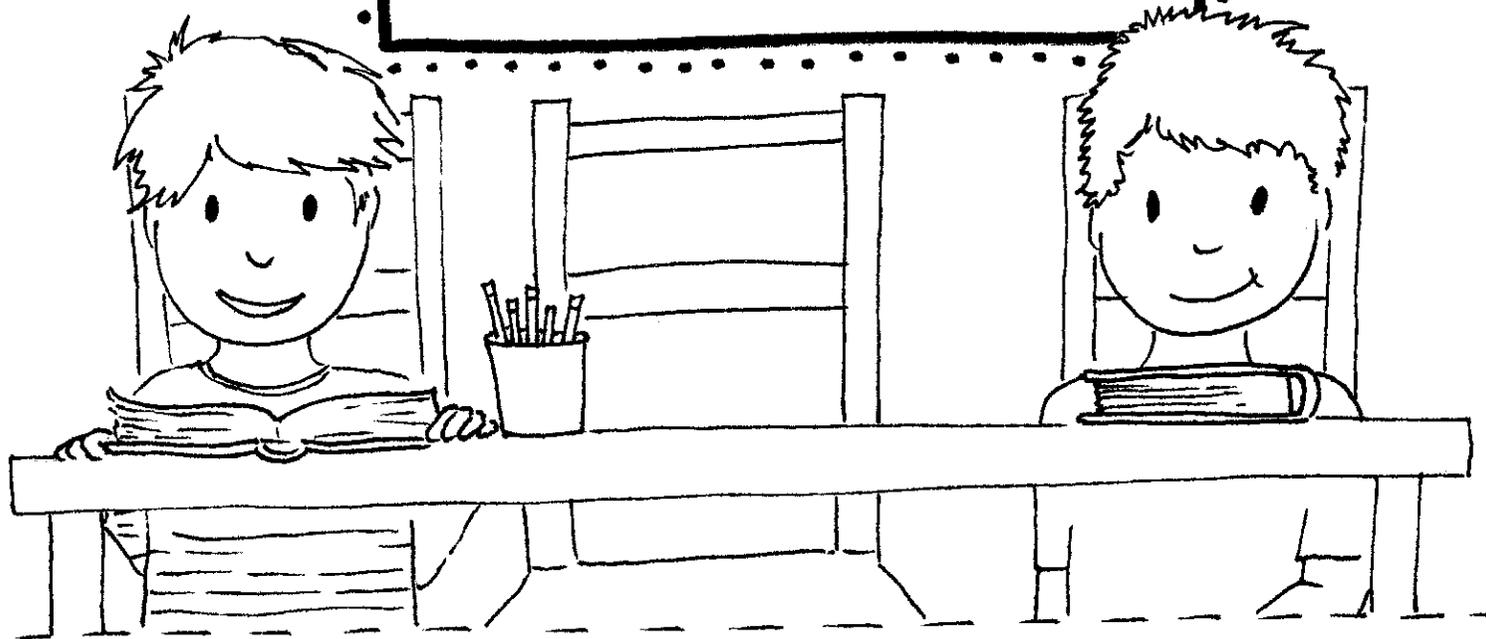
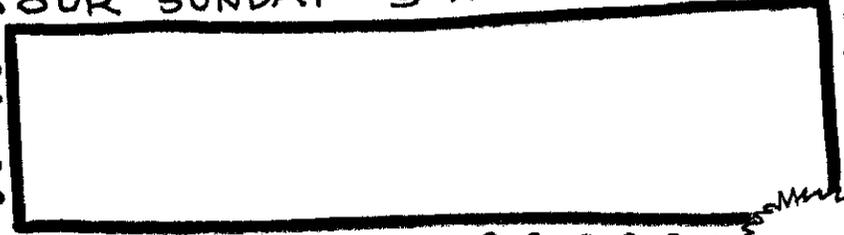


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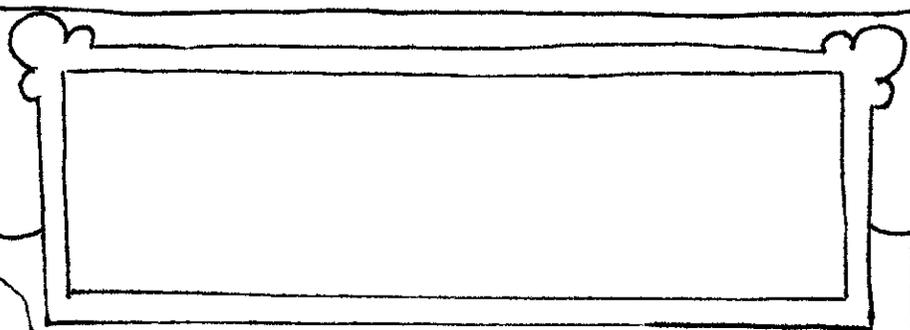
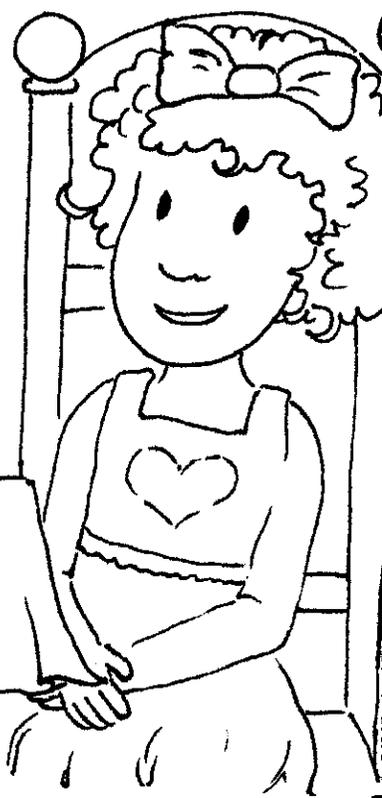
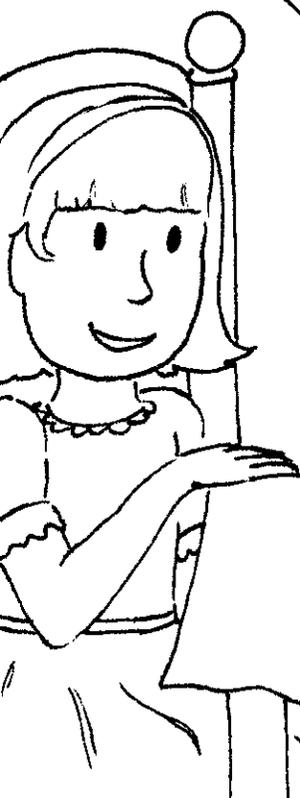
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Join Us!

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