Introduction

- God's grace had come near,
- but busyness, self-interest and hardness of heart led people to reject the invitation to his kingdom

The Wedding Clothes of Justification

1. The invitation of grace: God prepares the heavenly banquet for his Son

- The wedding banquet points to the salvation God has accomplished through Christ.
- The gospel is not the privilege of a chosen social few. Gentiles, overlooked people and those who know they are unworthy may all enter by grace.
- Being called to the banquet does not give us permission to disregard the King's will.
- Those who accept the invitation must respond with a life worthy of it.

The Wedding Clothes of Justification

2. The Wedding Clothes of justification: freely receiving grace and responding with a righteous life

- This Wedding Clothes is first of all the righteousness Christ gives us, not an outfit we sew for ourselves.
- The Wedding Clothes is both a free gift and a new way of life that we put on each day through repentance, trust and obedience, bearing the fruit of righteousness and love.
- Good works are not the price of salvation; they are the evidence of a life transformed by grace.
- Philippians 4:1–9 shows us what this Wedding Clothes looks like in practice - “stand firm in the Lord” & “to be of the same mind in the Lord”
- It shapes the way we repair relationships within the Christian community.

The Wedding Clothes of Justification

3. Putting on Christ: living out the gospel in church and daily life

- does not mean that life will be free from difficulty. It means that fear no longer rules us.
- When the gospel renews our minds, it also reshapes our conduct.
- This is the visible texture of the Wedding Clothes: inwardly justified by faith, and outwardly living with love, righteousness and holiness.

The Wedding Clothes of Justification

Conclusion

- The question is not only, “Have I accepted the invitation?”
- but also, “Am I wearing the Wedding Clothes of justification?”

The Wedding Clothes of Justification

The Wedding Clothes of Justification

Brothers and sisters, in Matthew 22 Jesus tells a parable about the wedding banquet of the kingdom of heaven. A king prepared a wedding banquet for his son and sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they refused to come. The king sent other servants to announce that everything was ready. Yet some people were preoccupied with their farms and businesses, while others mistreated and killed the servants. God's grace had come near, but busyness, self-interest and hardness of heart led people to reject the invitation to his kingdom.

1. The invitation of grace: God prepares the heavenly banquet for his Son

The wedding banquet points to the salvation God has accomplished through Christ. The king represents God, the son is Jesus Christ, and the servants remind us of the prophets and messengers of the gospel. Even after repeated rejection, God still sent the servants into the streets to invite anyone they could find. The hall was filled with "the bad as well as the good" (Matthew 22:10, NIV). The gospel is not the privilege of a chosen social few. Gentiles, overlooked people and those who know they are unworthy may all enter by grace.

Yet the parable does not end with everyone being invited. The king noticed a man who was not wearing wedding clothes and asked how he had entered. The man was speechless and was finally thrown outside, into the darkness. Jesus concludes, “For many are invited, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14, NIV). Being called to the banquet does not give us permission to disregard the King’s will. Those who accept the invitation must respond with a life worthy of it.

2. The Wedding Clothes of justification: freely receiving grace and responding with a righteous life

What, then, is the “Wedding Clothes of justification”? We are not justified by earning enough merit to qualify for the kingdom. Rather, God accepts those who trust in him because of Christ’s redeeming work. This Wedding Clothes is first of all the righteousness Christ gives us, not an outfit we sew for ourselves, much less a false god, the golden calf, created by human hands as depicted in today's Old Testament lessons. Yet those who truly receive grace allow that grace to renew their lives. The Wedding Clothes is both a free gift and a new way of life that we put on each day through repentance, trust and obedience, bearing the fruit of righteousness and love. Good works are not the price of salvation; they are the evidence of a life transformed by grace.

Philippians 4:1–9 shows us what this Wedding Clothes looks like in practice. Paul urges believers to “stand firm in the Lord” and pleads with Euodia and Syntyche “to

be of the same mind in the Lord" (Philippians 4:1–2, NIV). Justification is not merely a status we confess; it shapes the way we repair relationships within the Christian community. When we set aside rivalry, practise gentleness and seek reconciliation, Christ's righteousness becomes a visible witness in the church.

3. Putting on Christ: living out the gospel in church and daily life

Paul also says, "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4, NIV). He tells believers not to be anxious, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, to present their requests to God. Wearing the Wedding Clothes of justification does not mean that life will be free from difficulty. It means that fear no longer rules us. Because we know that we belong to Christ, we can entrust our burdens to God. Then the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, Paul calls believers to think about whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy, and to put into practice what they have received. When the gospel renews our minds, it also reshapes our conduct. What we value, discuss and practise should increasingly reflect Christ. This is the visible texture of the Wedding Clothes: inwardly justified by faith, and outwardly living with love, righteousness and holiness.

Conclusion

Today, the King's invitation still comes to us. The banquet is ready, and Christ has accomplished salvation. The question is not only, "Have I accepted the invitation?" but also, "Am I wearing the Wedding Clothes of justification?" We must not substitute busyness, achievement or religious identity for genuine trust, nor treat grace as a cheap entry pass. May we put on Christ each day, stand firm in the Lord, and answer his call with unity, gentleness, prayer, peace and righteousness. When the King comes to see his guests, may we not boast in Wedding Clothess of our own making. Instead, clothed in Christ's righteousness, may we enter the banquet with confidence and share with all God's people in the everlasting joy of his kingdom. Amen.