

Daily Walk on the Rock

Date: November 5, 2023

Text: Isaiah 25:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14

Theme: Restoration

Restoring Community: All Are Welcome



St. Paul Lutheran Church

"Your Refuge from the Storm"

Day 1: Monday—Sitting at His Feet; Dwelling in His Presence

Read Luke 10:38-39 and 24:13-32. Notice how Mary and the men on the road to Emmaus long to be in Jesus' presence. Observe Jesus' awareness of their spiritual hunger; see how he fills it with himself. He listens to their words and their hearts, and he feeds them with the bread that truly satisfies (*Deuteronomy 8:3; John 6:35*). Tell Jesus you want to experience his presence with you as you read Psalm 119:18 and Matthew 22:1-14. Embrace and treasure Jesus' every word; ask him questions if you desire; know that he wants you to know him better and love him more. Thank him for being a loving, gentle teacher (*Matthew 11:29*). Intentionally share his love with others.

Day 2: Tuesday—The Wedding Feast

Recall weddings to which you have been invited. Were you quick to respond; did you dress carefully; did you bring a gift? Scripture describes Jesus (the Lamb) as the bridegroom (*Matthew 9:15; 25:1ff; John 3:29*) and the church as his bride (*Revelation 19:7; 22:17*). In Matthew 22:1-14, Jesus tells a parable about a wedding; we are among those invited. Spend time in the parable. Consider the audience to whom this parable was initially spoken. Who are the servants? What was Jesus telling his listeners? What is he saying to us? Should our Lord have to beg us to accept his invitation? Have you responded? Pray as you meditate on the wonder of the invitation.

Day 3: Wednesday—Who Is Invited?

Read Matthew 22:1-14. Glance at the texts that precede and follow it. What groups of people have gathered around Jesus? Look at the parable again: have you identified the king, the son, the servants, and the invited guests? Did you notice the correlation between the people in the parable and God the Father, Jesus, the prophets, Jewish religious leaders, the Jewish crowd, Gentiles? Consider the vastness of God's love as you ponder the list of those invited: Isaiah 49:3,6; John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:3-6a; Titus 2:11; and 2 Peter 3:9. Bow in worship and gratitude.

Day 4: Thursday—Who Will Attend?

Read Matthew 22:1-14. Imagine the lavishness of a wedding banquet for the son of a king; can you fathom any refusing to attend? Yet in Jesus' parable, some contemptuously spurn the invitation; others are so preoccupied they ignore it. Notice 22:14; could the

'chosen' be those who have responded to the invitation? Ponder the parable, your response to the King's invitation, and what it means to be chosen as you read Matthew 7:13-14; John 1:12-13; 6:29; 10:7-9; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 2:4-5,9-10; and Revelation 3:20. Run to Jesus in prayer.

Day 5: Friday—What Will We Wear?

In ancient times, kings sometimes provided guests with proper wedding attire. Consider that those who filled the wedding hall in Jesus' parable, Matthew 22:1-14, needed such a gift. Perhaps the man who was thrown out (22:11-13) refused the king's attire. We, like the guests in the parable, need clothing we do not own and cannot buy. What is it? Read Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:3-5; and Revelation 7:13-14; 19:6-9. Praise and pray as you ponder Edward Mote's lyrics, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness; no merit of my own I claim, but wholly lean on Jesus' name... clothed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne..."

Day 6: Saturday—What Gift Can We Bring?

When invited to a wedding, we assume we must bring a gift. But in our Matthew 22:1-14 parable, those who came to the feast had no time to dress, practice rules of etiquette, or select a gift. They came empty handed. The host supplied all they needed; they simply responded to the invitation and came to the feast. Ponder this outrageous, extravagant grace! Yet, how often do we vainly attempt to add to Jesus' finished work of salvation? It is God who clothes us with Jesus' righteousness, gives us gifts to use in service and for God's glory, and teaches us to live as the cherished bride of Christ. Augustus wrote, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling; naked, come to Thee for dress; helpless, look to Thee for grace..." (Rock of Ages). Read Ephesians 2:8-9; pray.

Day 7: Sunday—Feasting at His Table

In Jesus' day and perhaps in ours too, the most extravagant abundance many experience is at a wedding celebration. With this in mind, read Matthew 22:1-14. How is the picture of the wedding feast amplified as you read Psalm 23:5-6; 36:5-9; Isaiah 25:1,4a,6-9; Zephaniah 3:17; 1 Corinthians 2:9; and Revelation 19:6-9; 22:17,20? How do we respond to the exceeding generosity of such promises? Pray you will delight in knowing you are invited to the King's table, and let your RSVP be offered with faith, gratitude, and a commitment to love God and others deeply.



Deuteronomy 6:7 is a call for parents/grandparents/adults to talk about faith issues throughout the day. We have a chance to be facilitators of intentional connect conversations with our children. Here is what the verse says about faith matters...

"Impress them upon your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." -Deut 6:7

Mealtime

...when you sit at home...

Verse:

How priceless your faithful love is!
Look up Psalm 36:7-8

Finish one of the phrases:

- I feel loved when...
- I feel important when...
- I feel ordinary when...
- I feel safe when...

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for the invitation to eat and drink at your table; for your faithful love for everyone, both insiders and outsiders alike. Help us find safety in the shadow of your faithful love! Amen.

Morningtime

...when you get up...

The Bible tells us that the three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love. Begin your day by reading God's love note to you in 1 Corinthians 13! Write a heart in the margin of your Bible to remind you that God is Love!

The three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.
- 1 Corinthians 13:13



Drivetime ...along the road...

Key Verse:

But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. -Joshua 24:15

Questions:

If the King of all kings invited you to a party how would you respond? What are some reasons someone wouldn't respond to this invitation? How is our household serving the King?

Prayer:

King of all creation, thank you for the love and hope we have in you! Give us the faith we need to put you before everything else. Forgive us for being distracted and busy. We love you! Amen.



Nighttime

...when you lie down...

Read:

Read: Matthew 19:13-14 and the poem by Edwin Markham, "They drew a circle that shut us out, heretic, rebel; a thing to flout. But Love and I had the wit to win; we drew a circle that took them in."

Say:

God restores our relationship in his kingdom as we learn to come to him like children, not holding anything back. He welcomes every child. No one is unwelcome or excluded.

Share:

Share a time you felt unwelcome or excluded. Share a time you were not welcoming or inclusive.

ConnectTip:

Traditions... Think of a tradition that your family did that was not associated with a holiday. These are things we remember doing as a part of our 'family life'. Consider these connect times as a tradition your child will remember.

Night Time Prayer:

Dear Lord, thank you for welcoming us into your loving arms. Help us to be welcoming and inclusive. Amen!

Parents are the #1 influence in the lives of their children. 6:7 is a tool to help families engage in those meaningful conversations. St. Paul Lutheran Church, Kodiak, Alaska

LifeGroup Study

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Belong

How can we ever imagine the breadth and depth of the grace and mercy of God? There is nothing on earth as wonderful, nothing that can compare. What can we know about someone so amazing? How can we fathom God's greatness? Let us begin together with what we know. We know that it is the grace of God that has set us free from death due to sin. We know that we are all invited to join Jesus if we open our hearts and believe. We know that we have the opportunity of eternity—not of merely this lifetime—to live grandly in the mighty kingdom of God. We know a lot about our amazing relationship with God and what it takes to be the people chosen to represent God on this earth and join God for an eternity. As you read today's selected Scripture, think about what you can do to share God's invitation with others who may not be ready.

Prayer...

Jesus, be with us as we join together in the reading of your Word. Help us to understand the real meaning behind living our lives for you. Teach us to live a life of joy due to the abundance of your love. Feed us and provide the security we need so that we can help others know you better. We are weak and in need of the strength only you can provide. Give us an open mind and faithful heart. Guide us so that we can learn from you and from each other as we grow deeper in our faith and strengthen your kingdom on earth. Our love for you is great, our desire to be your chosen people, immense. Take us in your loving grace, have mercy on us for our weaknesses, guide us so that we can grow in faith to bring you joy. In your name we pray. Amen.

Believe

Isaiah speaks of God's judgment and salvation. We will enter the Book of Isaiah to learn of God's planned restoration fulfilled by Jesus' first coming and his glorious return.

Read Isaiah 25:1-5. Isaiah chapter 25 begins with praise due to God's forgiveness of Israel's past.

• *Isaiah speaks to the weaknesses of his chosen Israel. What are some of the ways that we can compare the weaknesses and influences of those around us today to those of days gone by?*

• *Contrast the differences between faithfulness in the days of Israel and love of God to Christians today.*

Read Isaiah 25:6-9. Deliverance and blessing are coming to those who love their God shown in the undying faithfulness of their heart.

• *The day will come when God invites you to the great banquet. What*

one thing can you strengthen or change to prepare for that glorious day?

Jesus, teaches the Pharisees of God's amazing grace. In Matthew we will learn that our outward actions are not what really matters unless they are driven by a faithful core.

Read Matthew 22:1-14: the Parable of the Wedding Banquet.

- *What is Jesus teaching the Pharisees in this parable?*
- *How does the timeless message of this parable relate to us today?*
- *What can you do to ensure you are properly dressed and ready to receive our Lord when entering his kingdom?*
- *Jesus freed us from death due to sin. What does he desire from us in return? How can we live up to his expectations, providing joy to him and to his children?*

Become

We are given an opportunity to live for an eternity. We were given the most incredible gift, one that will never compare to all the wealth and prestige found on this earth. None of the small stuff we sweat really matters. It is our response to the gift, our faith, that allows us to accept the invitation. Commit to move from where you are to a place closer to God. How can you open your heart to receive Christ? Prioritize your life to allow you to set aside time each day to pray and read God's Word. Let your actions come from your heart. Let the light of God's love shine through you to touch others. We are here to help each other as we ready ourselves. We are all invited to join the feast; come.

Prayer...

Lord, please find us ready to receive the love you offer. Remove the hardness of our hearts so that our faithfulness to you comes from the depth of our very core. Let us be the people you desire us to be and the people needed in this world to show others the greatness of your love, mercy, and grace. Be with us as we move from this place of unity with other Christians, to other places in our lives and let the light of your love shine through us to touch others. Help us introduce you to those who do not know you, being the hands and feet that you intended us to be. We provide you thanks for the gifts of love, abundance, mercy, and grace. In return we provide you with faithfulness and love. Let us show the world your greatness, grace, and mercy with the actions that come from a heart that belongs to you. In your name we pray. Amen.



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