



Getting to Know You...



Has there ever been a time when many people backed out on an invite last minute? Share the story!

Or

Describe the fanciest banquet you have ever attended.

Opening Prayer:

*Recognizing that even if you aren't enjoying refreshments at your growth group, you are nevertheless feasting on God's Word in the company of fellow believers and so we pray... **May this feast be an echo of that great Supper of the Lamb, a foreshadowing of the great celebration that awaits the children of God. Where two or more of us are gathered, O Lord, there you have promised to be. And here we are. And so, here are you. Take joy, O King, in this our feast.**¹ Amen!*

Digging In: Please review Jesus parable from Matthew 22:1-14.

- **Note:** In the previous parable, the son was murdered by the wicked tenants (foreshadowing Jesus' death). Now, this new parable speaks of a wedding banquet (foreshadowing Jesus' resurrection and the eternal banquet of heaven).

¹McKelvey, Douglas. *Every Moment Holy*. Rabbit Room Press. Pg. 115

- ***Agree or Disagree:*** This parable demonstrates that God our heavenly Father experiences a full range of human emotions (joy, disappointment, anger, etc.) just as we do.
- Who was the original target audience of this parable and what truth was Jesus conveying to them?
- Compare this parable to the First Lesson from Sunday (Isaiah 25:6-9). How does this reading add to the rich imagery of the wedding banquet?

Application:

- As you apply Jesus' parable to yourself, do you find it to be:
 - a. A warning?
 - b. An encouragement?
 - c. An invitation?
 - d. All of the above?
 - e. Other?
- In the parable, the king repeatedly sent out his servants to invite guests to the wedding banquet. What are the best ways for us to persistently extend God's gracious invitation in today's context?
- How does this parable display that ***in heaven there will be great diversity yet perfect unity.***
- Reread Matthew 22:10. Is there a group of individuals among us who are perhaps overlooked? How can we extend the invitation to them in our personal lives and collectively as a congregation?
- Why do you think heaven is so often described as a feast? What aspects of the eternal banquet in heaven excite you the most?

Closing Prayer Suggestion: Hymn 141 (Christian Worship)