

Tuesday

Authorized Personnel Only

Today's Scripture Matthew 22

You can go into almost any store, restaurant, airport, or public facility and see this sign: Authorized Personnel Only. Behind that door may be something dangerous like an electrical panel, or it may be something as simple as a break room for employees. Regardless, almost every place has some place to which everyone should not have access. You may have had occasion to have passed into such areas, maybe when delivering something or to talk to someone specific. Even in such instances where technically you were authorized to be there, you probably still had the feeling that you really did not belong.

Jesus gave a parable to the chief priests and Pharisees in Matthew 22. In this parable He described a king who gave a wedding feast for the prince. The guests who were invited to the wedding not only chose not to come, but utterly rejected the invitations. Therefore, the king sent out into the streets and invited strangers to come in to celebrate the marriage of his son. These were people who otherwise would not have belonged there—except for the invitation extended by the king. As the king went among the guests he spotted one who was there, yet without the proper attire. Jesus did not specify how the man got there, whether he entered mistakenly, whether someone snuck him in, or whether he brazenly waltzed right in. Regardless, he was somewhere he was not authorized to be.

Think about this. If you are in the Lord's kingdom, the church, you do not really belong. The church is where the saints are, the holy ones of God (1 Corinthians 1:2). No one of their own merit, wealth, health, strength, beauty, wit or charm is worthy, for none of those things can overcome the stain of sinfulness that all wear. Except for the Lord's invitation, none would be authorized to enter! And no one will be allowed to enter or remain without authorization.

Today I will live...worthy of the invitation I have received into the kingdom of God in my dress, my speech, my manners, and my attitude, and I will praise the King of Kings, His Son, and His bride, the church.