

UNDRESSING OURSELVES

FASTING 2025

“The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited.

But they all refused to come! So he sent other servants to tell them, ‘The feast has been prepared. The bulls and fattened cattle have been killed, and everything is ready. Come to the banquet!’ But the guests he had invited ignored them and went their own way, one to his farm, another to his business. Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them. The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. And he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren’t worthy of the honor. Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see.’ So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests, he noticed a man who wasn’t wearing the proper clothes for a wedding. ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how is it that you are here without wedding clothes?’ But the man had no reply. Then the king said to his aides, ‘Bind his hands and feet and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Matthew 22:2-14 NLT

Jesus uses the parable of the wedding banquet to illustrate entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Although many are invited to this great celebration, not everyone is prepared to enter. This parable calls us to reflect on how we present ourselves spiritually before God and what we must leave behind in order to be worthy participants in His Kingdom.

The key to participating in the banquet is not only accepting the invitation but also being dressed appropriately. Isaiah 61:10 describes the ‘clothing of salvation’ and the ‘robe of righteousness’ that God provides for us. These garments symbolize the inner transformation that occurs when we align ourselves with God’s will.

Revelation 19:8 explains that our garments are the good deeds we carry out as God's people, reflecting a life of righteousness and obedience to His Word. Therefore, our preparation to enter the Kingdom begins with shedding our old nature and clothing ourselves with the new.

Shedding Old Nature

The apostle Paul exhorts us in Ephesians 4:22-24 to "take off the clothing of the old nature," which is corrupted by deceitful desires. This act of shedding is essential for putting on the clothing of righteousness and holiness that God offers us. We must undergo a renewal of our mind, aligning our thoughts and actions with the truth of God.

So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds.

Colossians 3:5,8-9 NLT

Here we see clear instructions on how to undress practically. We are called to eliminate sexual immorality, impurity, lust, greed, anger, rage, malicious behavior, and foul language. By dying to these aspects of our old life, we create space to put on the new identity that God wants to form in us.

The parable of the wedding banquet serves as a reminder of the precious invitation extended to us all. However, Scripture is clear that we cannot enter the Kingdom of God wearing the old garments of sin and corruption. The shedding of the old nature and the covering of a new identity in Christ are essential for those who wish to be part of the eternal celebration with our King, and begin enjoying the eternal and abundant life that He offers us—even now.

Application

Take time each day to evaluate your life in light of God's Word. Ask yourself which aspects of your old nature are still present, and pray that God will help you let go of them.

Confession and repentance are crucial to the process of shedding or removing old garments. Do not cling to areas of sin; instead bring them to light, asking for God's forgiveness and help so that they may be transformed by Him.

Reflection

What are the 'old garments' that I need to shed in order to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God? How can I commit daily to putting on the righteousness of Christ?