



# Thoughts on the Journey

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When I had cable television, I used to enjoy watching wedding shows. They were mindless forms of entertainment that required very little thought. My favorites were *Say Yes to the Dress* which was a reality television series that followed the events at Kleinfeld Bridal in Manhattan. My other favorite was *Four Weddings*. It was another reality television series where four brides were competing to win a lavish honeymoon in an exotic location by being judged on who had the best wedding.

As entertaining as these programs were, nothing prepared me for my own reality in planning my eldest daughter's wedding. We worked on wedding plans for the year prior to the big day. Everything was going smoothly until June 29, 2012, the night of the wedding rehearsal, when the great Derecho storm hit central Ohio. The electric was knocked out across the area and everything was thrown into chaos. The reception was to be in the social hall of the Ministry Center after a week of Vacation Bible School. There were no lights and no electric anywhere and we, as a family, had to prepare for our guests under some adverse conditions.

More than anything, I wanted this celebration of my daughter's new start in life as a married woman to be perfect, not only for her and her husband-to-be, but for all of our guests. So, rolling up our sleeves, we strapped on some head lamps, gathered some brooms and dust shovels, decorated the tables, and spent the night getting things ready for a celebration.

Even though 120 people RSVP'd that they were coming, the concern was whether people would attend the wedding in lieu of storm damage.

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus speaks to the chief priests and elders in a parable. Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son." Jesus continues the parable by explaining that the king sent his servants out to deliver the invitations and summon the guests to come, but they refused. A second time, he sent out more servants telling them to announce that he has prepared a lavish banquet, everything is ready, please come. Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, the other to his business. The rest took hold of the servants and abused and killed them. The king was enraged and told the servants to invite whomever they could find.

The servants ended up filling the hall with guests. When the king came to meet the guests he saw a man who was not dressed in the proper wedding attire. Insulted by the guest's lack of respect, the king threw him out.

I'm happy to say, almost all of our guests attended my daughter's wedding. But as challenging as my daughter's wedding was, it was nothing compared to the frustration and chaos of the king in this parable. Like those who were invited to the king's wedding, we've all been extended the invitation to join Jesus. Some accept the invitation graciously, some refuse to come because they are preoccupied and distracted with other things, some reject Jesus altogether, and some may come to follow Jesus, but never put on the garment of Christ. We are called to the feast where Jesus gives us himself body, soul, and divinity. We are called to take the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation and not only consume it, but more importantly, become the sacrament that we eat and take it out in the world.