

# James Rafferty-2025-Q1-L1-Many are called but few are chosen - Jan 1

Lesson 1: God Loves Freely (Wednesday)

December 28-January 3

**Wednesday** *January 1*

## **Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen**

**EXCELLENT!**

God not only loves people of His own free will, but He also invites them to love Him in return. That God grants them the ability to freely choose whether they will accept or reject His love is apparent in (among other places) Christ's parable of the wedding banquet.

**Read Matthew 22:1–14. What is the meaning of this parable?**

**“And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The**

wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.” Matthew 22:1-14 KJV

In Christ’s parable of the wedding banquet, a king arranges a marriage for his son and sends out his servants to “ ‘call those who were invited to the wedding,’ ” but “ ‘they were not willing to come’ ” (*Matt. 22:2, 3, NKJV*). More than once the king sent out his servants to call them, but they ignored his call and, even worse, seized his servants and killed them (*Matt. 22:4–6*).

Later, after dealing with those who had murdered some of his servants, the king told his servants, “ ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding’ ” (*Matt. 22:8, 9, NKJV*). After another episode of a man without a wedding garment being cast out, signifying the need to receive a wedding garment from the king to attend the wedding banquet, Jesus closes the parable with the cryptic but highly meaningful phrase, “ ‘Many are called, but few are chosen’ ” (*Matt. 22:14, NKJV*).

What does this mean? Those who are finally “chosen,” the “elect,” are those who have accepted the Lord’s invitation to the wedding. The term translated “call” and “invite” throughout the parable is the Greek term *kaleo* (*to call, invite*), and what determines who is finally “elect” (*eklektos*) is whether one has freely accepted the invitation.

In fact, God calls (that is, invites) *everyone* to the wedding feast. However, any one of us can refuse God’s love. Freedom is essential to love. God will never force His love on anyone. Sad to say, we can reject having a love relationship with God.

The “elect” are those who accept the invitation. For those who love God, God has prepared things more wonderful than anything that we could possibly imagine. Once again, it all comes down to the question of love and the freedom inherent in love.

**What about your life reveals that you have accepted the wedding invitation and have come appropriately clothed?**

SE-1Q-2025, *God’s Love and Justice*, by John C. Peckham

We love God because.... He first loved us 1 John 4:19

The Bible describes God’s love for us in various ways:

Matchless love (see Romans 5:6-8).

Boundless love (see Ephesians 3:19).

Infinite love (see Luke 23:34).

Unmerited love (see Luke 15:20).

Everlasting love (see Jeremiah 31:3).

Changeless (see Malachi 3:6).