



**FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH**

# **“The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 43”**

**April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Pastor Darryl R. Curtis**

Family Life Baptist Church  
909 West Saginaw Street  
Lansing, Michigan 48915  
Phone: (517) 882-0921  
Email: [info@familylifebc.com](mailto:info@familylifebc.com)  
Website: <http://www.familylifebc.com>

***Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.***



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**Matthew 22:11-14**

**11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.**

**12 So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless.**

**13 Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’**

**14 “For many are called, but few are chosen.”**

Thank you very much for coming to hear the message for today. Before we begin our next lesson, let us reiterate our reason for attending Church.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In this last week of Jesus’ ministry, His purpose was to make it perfectly clear to His friends and opponents alike that they were in the position of making an eternal choice. A good example of that which I mean is the confrontation between Jesus and His disciples over the issue of His betrayal. **Matthew 26:20-24** records:

**20 When evening had come, [Jesus] sat down with the twelve.**

**21 Now as they were eating, [Jesus] said, “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”**

**22 And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to [Jesus], “Lord, is it I?”**

**23 [Jesus] answered and said, “He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me.**

**24 The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”**

It is not a good idea to spend time in close proximity of Jesus Christ, see the miraculous results of His ministry, but then reject or betray Him. To say that it would be better if someone had not been born is pretty clear, isn't it? The point is that although salvation is the free gift of God, we who would receive salvation have the responsibility to accept, not just the gift, but the ramifications of the gift. The gift of salvation does not come with strings, meaning, that there is nothing that we can do to earn the gift, however, if we receive the gift, we do have to develop an allegiance to Jesus Christ.



**Romans 6:23** tells us:

**23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Paul specifies that the gift of God, this gift of salvation, is the gift of eternal life. Paul does not say that the gift of God is success, power or position in earthly life. Having eternal life may bring us challenges in this life, as **Hebrews 11:32-12:2** tells us:

**32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:**

**33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,**

**34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.**

**35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.**

**36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.**

**37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—**

**38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.**

**39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,**

**40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.**

**1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

Some that received the salvific gift of God subdued kingdoms, while others were stoned, sawn in two or slain with the sword. Who decides whether we subdue kingdoms or are stoned or sawed in two? God does. Does God love those whom He makes successful more than those for whom He decrees a more difficult path? I would say no, because of the example of Jesus Christ, who died an ignominious death on the Cross of Calvary, but of whom God spoke, as **Matthew 3:16-17** records:



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; Matthew 3:16-17**

**16 and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and [Jesus] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.**

**17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**

The point is that once we receive the free gift of eternal life through our faith in Jesus Christ, and because of our faith, we do the things that God asks us to do in the circumstance in which He puts us. Hebrews informs us that some of us are called upon to rule, others are called upon to give the ultimate sacrifice, but all of us are called to do that which we do in such a way that will bring honor and glory to God and to the name of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, everyone that Jesus invites to join the Christian band does not respond, as Jesus tells us in the parable of the wedding feast, recorded in **Matthew 22:1-10**, which says:

**1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:**

**2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,**

**3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and [the invited guests] were not willing to come.**

**4 Again, [the King] sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." '**

**5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.**

**6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.**

**7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.**

**8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.**

**9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'**

**10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.**

In the parable, the King represents God, the son represents Jesus Christ, the wedding feast represents the worship of God and the unwilling invited guests are the Jews, the twelve tribes of the Nation of Israel, who were rejecting the worship of God.

From the beginning of the nation of Israel, in the Ten Commandments, the founding document of the Nation of Israel, God commanded the Jews that He is to be the exclusive object of their worship. In **Deuteronomy 5:1-10**:



**Deuteronomy 5:1-10:**

**1** And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.

**2** The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

**3** The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.

**4** The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire.

**5** I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. He said:

**6** ‘I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

**7** ‘You shall have no other gods before Me.

**8** ‘You shall not make for yourself a carved image [that is, an idol]—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

**9** you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

**10** but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

The first king of Israel to introduce the worship of idols into Israel was Solomon, because of his many foreign wives from countries in which idols were worshipped and God was not. Solomon, after building the most magnificent temple in Jerusalem to worship God, then built lesser temples so that his wives could worship their idols. But to God, the worship of idols is analogous to sexual unfaithfulness of a husband or wife to their spouse. Unfaithfulness destroys relationships. **1Kings 11:9-13** records:

**9** So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice,

**10** and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded.

**11** Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.

**12** Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son.

**13** However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”



After the death of Solomon in 880BC, God, in keeping with his promise to Solomon, split the twelve tribes of Israel into two countries: the ten tribes living in the northern part of the Promised Land and the two tribes living in the southern part of the Promised Land. The northern tribes retained the name of Israel while the two southern tribes took on the name of Judah, the tribe from which David the King came. The Temple built by Solomon, which was the center of the Israelite worship of God, was geographically located in the southern kingdom of Judah, in Jerusalem. Jeroboam, the new king of the northern kingdom of Israel, was afraid that should his subjects make the annual pilgrimages to the magnificent Temple in Jerusalem to worship God, they might decide to reconsolidate the kingdom, which would end his kingship. **1Kings 12:26-31** records:

**26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David:**

**27 If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.”**

**28 Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!”**

**29 And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.**

**30 Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.**

**31 He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.**

Because of the insecurity of Jeroboam, the ten northern tribes of Israel began worshipping idols, beginning with the Egyptian golden calf, rather than worshipping the most High God. When the worship of God is taken away from a nation, morality and godliness deteriorate. Since the northern tribes forsook God, God gradually withdrew His protection from them. The northern kingdom of Israel was overrun by the Assyrians in 660BC and the inhabitants of the land were deported to other places through eastern Europe.

Neither Rehoboam or Abijah, the first two kings of the southern kingdom of Judah, did anything about the worship of idols in Judah. God sent a prophet to Asa, the third king of Judah, to tell him that Judah would be improved by forsaking idolatry and returning to God. **2Chronicles 15:8-9** records:

**8 And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had taken in the mountains of Ephraim; and he restored the altar of the LORD that was**





before the vestibule of the LORD.

**2Chronicles 15:8-9:**

**9** Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those who dwelt with them from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, for they came over to him in great numbers from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

Unfortunately, Jehoram, Asa's successor as King, had Solomon's problem, a wife that worshipped idols. **2Chronicles 21:5-7** records:

**5** Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

**6** And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for he had the daughter of Ahab as a wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

**7** Yet the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever.

Judah suffered because of the reintroduction of idolatry into the land, and the succeeding kings alternated between worshipping God or idols. Ahaziah, who succeeded Jehoram, was an idolatrous king, as was his mother Athaliah, who succeeded him. Her successor, Jehoash, was a reformer who reinstituted the worship of God. **2Kings 12:1-3** records:

**1** In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba.

**2** Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

**3** But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

The high places in verse three of **1Kings 12** were the idol temples, and although Jehoash followed God, idolatry still existed in Judah. Idolatry reached its' height in Judah during the reign of King Manasseh, of which the Bible says, in **2Kings 21:2-6, 10-15**:

**2** [Manasseh] did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

**3** For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a wooden image, as Ahab king of Israel had done; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them.

**5** And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

**6** Also he made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

**2Kings 21:2-6, 10-15:**



10 And the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets, saying,  
11 “Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols),  
12 therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle.  
13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.  
14 So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies,  
15 because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.’ ”

Of the five kings that reigned in Judah after Manasseh, there was only one good king, Josiah. Josiah destroyed the physical structures that Manasseh built for the worship of idols and stopped idolatry in Judah. Although Josiah restored the worship of God to Judah, the damage caused by Manasseh was fatal.

**2Kings 23:25-27** records:

25 Now before [Josiah] there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

26 Nevertheless the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him.

27 And the LORD said, “I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ‘My name shall be there.’ ”

The last three kings of Judah all did evil in the sight of the Lord, and, in 476 BC, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Babylonians, deported the inhabitants of Judah into captivity, in which they stayed for seventy years. Four hundred and ninety years after the end of the Babylonian captivity, the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem, and the reoccupation of the Promised Land, God sent His son to make a new covenant with the Israelites. Using the parable, Jesus said to them, in **Matthew 22:2-3**:

**2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,**

**3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding;**

God, the King in the parable, is inviting Israel to return and reunite with Him, through His Son Jesus Christ. But the Bible goes on to tell us, in the “b” part of verse 3:





### **3 and [the invited guests] were not willing to come.**

The lack of devotion to God that the Jews had five hundred and seventy years earlier at the fall of Judah is still in the hearts of their leaders. Solomon messed up his relationship with God in order to please his wives, and Jeroboam messed up his relationship with God in order to do that which he thought was necessary to keep his kingdom.

The problem that most people have with God is a lack of faith; they think that to do what which God requires will cause them to have problems rather than to solve their problems. You see, worship is one thing, and the way that we live our lives is another. Many folk will attend a service, and maybe even donate money to the Christian cause, but having a relationship with God means adopting a Christian lifestyle, and many folks are unwilling give up their pagan lifestyle. You may remember our review of the remarks of the Pharisees after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, as recorded in **John 11:49-53**:

**49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all,**

**50 nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”**

**51 Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,**

**52 and not for that nation only, but also that [Jesus] would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.**

**53 Then, from that day on, they plotted to put [Jesus] to death.**

The Jewish religious leaders found the death of God to be expedient; often we may find devotion to the Living God socially inconvenient. How many times have we debated whether or not to speak out for the cause of Christ or to remain silent to please those with a worldly perspective and chosen to say nothing? How many times has compromise with the world seemed more expedient than standing on a godly principle? Our problem is the same as that of the Jews: eventually God sees our cowardice or rejection as adultery and rejects the one-sided relationship that we wish to have with Him; acknowledging Him only when we find it convenient to do so.

Just imagine how a person whom you were dating would feel if you found them socially inconvenient; if you chose to ignore him or her in public when you were with your other friends, but expected them to pick up the check or give you sex when you agreed to meet them in a secret rendezvous.

God, in this parable, is inviting the Jews to declare their devotion to Him in a public celebration, a wedding. **Matthew 22:4-6** says:

**4 Again, [the King] sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.” ’**



### Matthew 22:4-6

**5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.**

**6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.**

God, however, does not need us. We need Him. In the case of Israel and Judah, God withdrew His protection from them, as **Matthew 22:7** records:

**7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.**

But, although the Jews, the chosen people, rejected God, God did not have to celebrate the wedding of His Son by himself. He could always invite people other than the ones that He originally invited, as **Matthew 22:8-10** says:

**8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.'**

**9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'**

**10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.**

God rejected Israel and Judah because of their recalcitrance. The Jews are no longer God's chosen people, but now God has chosen the Church of Jesus Christ his son, which consists of those that are grateful to have received an invitation to the wedding and are overjoyed to attend. **John 3:16** is our invitation:

**16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

So we are all invited to the wedding, but some of us will have a problem. Our text, **Matthew 22:11-14**, describes the problem:

**11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.**

**12 So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.**

**13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'**

**14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."**

God has the same standards for us that He had for Israel. He want us to remain faithful to Him, as He says, in **Deuteronomy 5:7-10**:

**7 'You shall have no other gods before Me.**

**8 'You shall not make for yourself a carved image [that is, an idol]—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;**



**Deuteronomy 5:7-10:**

**9 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,  
10 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.**

How do we avoid idolatry? Paul tells us, in **Romans 10:8-13:**

**8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach):**

**9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

**10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

**11 For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”**

**12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.**

**13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”**

The wedding garment is faith in Jesus Christ. Our faith in Jesus Christ must supersede all other concerns, including all secular concerns that we have. If we don't have faith in Jesus, we will be bound hand and foot and be cast from the wedding into the outer darkness. Being in church does not make you a Christian any more than being in a garage makes you a car. Christians are those that have faith in Jesus Christ, to the exclusion of faith in anything else. If we do not have enough faith in God to jeopardize our secular success by doing the will of God, we will find ourselves in trouble with God even as was Solomon, Manasseh, and the Jewish religious leaders that administered the Temple in Jerusalem at the time of Christ.

In this last week of Jesus' ministry, His purpose was to make it perfectly clear to His friends and opponents alike that they were in the position of making an eternal choice. Jesus made His choice; He gave His life on the Cross of Calvary that we might have a right to enter the wedding. 1.8 million Christians during the first three centuries of the existence of the church entered the wedding through the doorway of suffering and execution.

We live in a time and country in which the Church is not being persecuted physically, but the message of the Church is being watered down in favor of a more morally lax perspective. Homosexuality and abortion are now considered approved parts of our society, and the Christians that campaign against the acceptance of these abominations are ridiculed as being unintelligent and out of step with the society.

But, the society notwithstanding, you can't stay in the wedding feast without a wedding garment. You cannot bring abominations to God and expect



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

Him to accept you because you don't want to be embarrassed in front of your peers. Jesus Christ died in front of His disciples and His enemies; He gave His life rather than knuckle under to the peer pressure, and we have to have the same mindset if we want to stay at His wedding. Jesus tells us, in **Revelation 21:6-8**:

**6 And [Jesus] said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.**

**7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.**

**8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."**

Let us make sure, by thought, word and deed, that we have on our wedding garments,

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis  
Family Life Baptist Church