



■ † Fourteenth Sunday of St. Matthew

**We have been called, but are we faithful?\***  
**Examine yourselves**

**A** king arranges a wedding for his son. He sends once for those who were bidden, sends twice, but because of earthly cares they do not come—one was busy at home, another with his affairs.

A new invitation is made to other people and the wedding chamber is furnished with guests. Among them is found one not dressed for a wedding, who is therefore cast out.

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**The meaning** of this parable is clear: The wedding is the kingdom of Heaven; the invitation is the preaching of the Gospels; those who turned down the invitation are those who did not believe at all; and the one who was not dressed for a wedding believed, but did not live according to faith.

Each of us must discern for ourselves to which category we belong. That we are bidden is clear, but are we faithful believers? Indeed it is possible to be counted among believers, to be called Christians, and yet completely lack faith.

Some give no thought to the faith, as if it did not exist.

Others know something or other about it, and are satisfied with that.

Others still interpret the faith in a distorted way.

And there are those who are completely hostile to the faith.



All of these people are somehow considered Christians, even though there is nothing the least bit Christian about them.

If you believe, examine whether your feelings and deeds are in accordance with your faith—these are the “garments” of the soul, by which God sees whether you are dressed for the wedding or not.

It is possible to know the faith well and be zealous for it, but in one's actual life to serve the passions; that is, to dress in the shameful clothes of a sin-loving soul. Such people speak one way, but have something else in their hearts. On their tongue is, “Lord, Lord!” but within they are saying, “Count me out.”

Examine yourself, whether you are in the faith and wearing the wedding clothes of the virtues, or wearing the shameful tatters of sins and passions.



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(\*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God*.