

Our national election day is just a few weeks away, and the results for many of the contests are not clear. But there is one result you can count on. Not too many Americans will go out and vote. We like our democracy, and we tell the rest of the world they should have democracy too. But the rest of world shakes its head and wonders why we squander the rights we have. Even in our presidential elections, very few people actually vote.

It would disappoint our founding fathers to see the voting habits of Americans today. We do not take advantage of our opportunity. It disappointed Jesus to see the religious habits of his day. People did not take advantage of their opportunity. God had sent the only begotten Son into the world so people might believe. But some did not.

Jesus tells this rather bizarre parable in Jerusalem during the last week of his life to bemoan the situation. He tells the tale of a king who offers a wedding feast for his son, but those invited decline when dinner is served. They all have excuses. They have to work. But some of them kill the servants who arrived with the news that the soup is on.

Jesus applies this parable to his audience, the religious leaders - the people invited to hear the Son, to come to the banquet of eternal life - but who said no. They were busy. They had to work. Some of them would kill the son.

God invites us to share the good news in many ways. But we do not always accept it. God is ready to receive our prayers at all times, but we do not always pause to say them. God is ready to forgive, but we do not always say we're sorry. Some mornings God gives us an unusually beautiful day. But we do not always go out to enjoy it. God gives us the people we love. But we do not always share our thoughts and our hearts with them. God even gives us the freedom to vote, but we do not always exercise it.

At the end of this strange parable, someone does accept the invitation but shows up improperly dressed for the banquet. The king throws him out. Some people respond to God with the wrong intent. They vote against rather than vote for. They exploit the people who love them. They rest too much on a beautiful day. They take advantage of forgiveness. They demand from God the things they want, rather than what God wants.

Life is filled with opportunity waiting for us to believe and enjoy.