



Connect Group reflection and questions

Matthew 22:1-14 - Many Invited

Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple is reported to have said: "The most powerful person in the world is the storyteller because the storyteller sets the vision, values and agenda of an entire generation that is to come"

Ivan Illich, the Austrian philosopher, was asked whether it was more effective to change society through violent revolution or gradual reform. His answer: "Neither, if you want to change society you must tell an alternative story."

These two quotations are referred to a prayer and bible reading app called Lectio365 and they remind us that Jesus was the greatest storyteller of all time. His ability to tell stories was one reason he has changed the world. As believers we know that the stories of Jesus reveal God's truth to the world. What we don't always understand is that we are often deeply influenced by the stories of our culture and they are profoundly non-Christian. To bear witness to Jesus we need to live and tell his story well and we need to understand the story that surrounds us every day, in every advertisement, through media and social media and even in our schools, universities and political institutions.

In the end, we don't just want to celebrate the wedding banquet with the groom, we want others to do so too.

Questions for connect groups.

1. Discuss the biblical connection between marriage and the relationship between God and his people? What can we learn about God and what can we learn about marriage (compare Ephesians 5:21ff).
2. What can we say to those who do not have a partner and how do we make sure they are included when very often they can feel invisible.
3. How can we faithfully speak about the biblical teaching on judgement without appearing judgemental or harsh.
4. Read Gen 12:1-3 and explore how this might foreshadow the teaching of the parable. (clue: who is blessed).
5. What is the difference between self-righteousness and the need to wear the appropriate wedding garment.
6. Pray for each other and for our world. Pray that we might 'dress' appropriately for the wedding banquet living our lives as a church community that truly honours the bridegroom.