



SERVICE ORDER

WEEK 1: What Shall I Wear?

NOTES: Print out Series Summary and hand a copy to each SG leader. Meet with SG leaders before the service and go over the big themes of the series, how to discipline, tickets/candy, offering.

GAME TIME:

- **(A/V)** Have an upbeat song ready to go
- "Choco-Chucka Bucket": See game for supply list

TUNE TIME: (Sample: Change to reflect real song set)

- Song 1
- Song 2
- Song 3

REMIND TIME:

- **(A/V)** Opening series video, Powerpoints, and 1 video clip
- **(A/V)** Display the Trait-N-Tagline Powerpoint
- Go over UNITE – I can connect Jesus to every part of my life.

TEACH TIME:

- **(A/V)** Bring up first Powerpoint on screen
- **Engage Them:** Talking about how we dress for certain parties
- **Teach Them:** Teaching the story of the wedding banquet in relation to the kingdom of heaven
- **Challenge Them:** Spotlight verse, close in prayer

GIVE TIME: (Sample: Change to reflect whatever campaign you're working on)

- Ex. Malaria nets in Africa
- **(A/V)** Bring up goal Powerpoint on screen

CLOSE TIME:

- Announcements, up-coming events, hand out flyers
- Ticket Drawing: Incorporate the giving away of the bags of candy from the group game
- Closing Song: ??
- Keep Groups together: Do Relate Time Sheets until parents come

EXIT: Distribute Parent Take-Away card directly to parents

TEACH them

2nd Segment: (15 min. – Then turn over to small groups)

The intent with this section is to **tell the Bible story** in a compelling, animated, and interesting way. A good communicator uses the following script only as a guideline to speak, but never reading from it, as children can lose interest. Make the story come alive with voice inflections, funny anecdotes and noises, and passionate emotion. We intentionally give great latitude for the speaker to make it 'their own', using props, involving kids...whatever you can do to help the kids remember the Bible lesson.

BIBLE text

Matthew 22:1-14 – The Wedding Banquet

PROPS n things

- PowerPoints from UNITE_PP_NewThreads_wk1 file in Speaker_Materials folder
- The Bible
- A pair of roller skates with laces tied to throw over your shoulder

BEGIN speaking

Show slide (“Part 1: What Shall I Wear?”)

Today is Palm Sunday. Can someone tell me why we call it Palm Sunday? **(Wait for answers.)** That's right. Today we remember Palm Sunday, because that was the day Jesus came into Jerusalem in what we remember as the “triumphal entry,” the week before the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The story of the triumphal entry appears in all four Gospel books (*Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19*). Putting the four stories together, there is no doubt that the triumphal entry was a humungously important event, not only to the people of Jesus' day, but to Christians throughout history. We celebrate Palm Sunday to remember that amazing day. We get the term “Palm Sunday,” because crowds and crowds of people came out to welcome Him, laying before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees.

SETUP OF BIBLE STORY:

Our Bible story today takes place right after the Triumphal Entry. Immediately, Jesus made His presence known in Jerusalem. He drove out all of the buyers and sellers in the temple and said, **"It is written that the Lord said, 'My house will be called a house where people can pray.'** (Isaiah 56:7) **But you are making it a den for robbers."** (Jeremiah 7:11) Boy, did *that* upset the religious leaders of that time!

Jesus performed miracles and He taught with great authority. While He was teaching there, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him. **"By what authority are you doing these things?"** they asked. **"Who gave you this authority?"** So, Jesus started telling them stories; one story after another to not only help them understand by what authority He was speaking from, but what the kingdom of heaven was like.

MATTHEW 22:1-14:

All of that took place in Matthew, chapter 21 which is a great lead-in to our story today, which takes place in the very next chapter. If you have your Bibles ready, let's find chapter 22. If you did not bring your Bibles, we'll show everything on the screen so you can follow along too.

Show slide ("Teach Time: Matthew 22:1-14")

Jesus was a great storyteller. When He spoke, people would travel for miles from all over the region just to hear Him speak. Many of Jesus' stories began with the words, "The kingdom of heaven is like..." And, it's just my opinion, but it's possible Jesus would start his stories that way not just because He wanted people to know what the kingdom of heaven was like, but He wanted them to know what it was going to take to get there.

You see, God created everything! He created the heavens and the earth and everything in it. But most of all, He created us, and He wants to have a relationship with us – forever! Heaven is where we all want to be, because heaven is where God is, and if we are going to spend eternity somewhere, let's make sure we spend eternity with God!

THE WEDDING BANQUET:

In Mathew 22, Jesus chooses to help people understand heaven by telling a story about a wedding banquet. How many of you have ever been to a wedding? **(Take a show of hands)** Weddings are so fun because they are cheerful, happy, and festive - a celebration of two people who have found each other and want to spend the rest of their lives together!

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding dinner for his son. Because there were no cell phones back then, the king sent his servants on foot to spread the word to those who had been invited to the dinner.

INVITATIONS:

It's always nice to be invited to a party and you should feel honored when you get invited to a party! When someone from your class is having a party, he or she will typically send out invitations to the people they want to attend, giving the date and time of the party, the location, and what kind of party it is.

Some of you may have received an invitation to a party, but you had something else scheduled for that same day and time. Maybe it was another party. Maybe it was a soccer game. Maybe you were planning on being out of town. For whatever reason, you just couldn't come to the party.

But in Jesus' story about the wedding banquet, this was not just any party. This was a party that the king was putting on. It would be like you getting an invitation from the president of your country. He personally wants you to sit at the same table as his son and him to have dinner with him. It could have chosen anyone among thousands, if not millions, of other people. But he chose you. Would you find a way to get there? I sure would, no matter what else was on my calendar for that day! But that was not the case in the story Jesus told.

THE WEDDING INVITATION:

Show slide ("Matthew 22:1-3")

Here's how the story begins:

(Jesus) said, "Here is what the kingdom of heaven is like. A king prepared a wedding dinner for his son. He sent his slaves to those who had been invited to the dinner. The slaves told them to come. But they refused."

Show slide ("Who's Who?")

We have to stop for a moment and understand the players in the story so far. The king in the story is God, and the son, whom the king is throwing the party for, is Jesus. The banquet is heaven. The invited guests are God's chosen people, the Israelites.

Because the guests chose not to come after the king's first invitation, the king sent out his servants again with instructions to tell those who were invited that his finest meat is prepared and everything is ready for them. It's going to be awesome!

THE GUESTS REJECTED THE INVITATION:

Show slide ("Matthew 22:5-7")

Let's continue to read what happened in Jesus' story in verse 5:

"But the people paid no attention. One went away to his field. Another went away to his business. The rest grabbed his servants. They treated them badly and then killed them. The king became very angry."

What Jesus is saying here is that the invited guests rejected the king's invitation and chose not to come. More than that, they killed the king's innocent messengers. In the same way, most of the Jewish people rejected Jesus as the son of God. As we'll learn more next week, they not only rejected Jesus, but killed Him even though He was innocent.

I think if I sent out invitations to my party and no one chose to come, I certainly would be upset, and very disappointed and sad. God's chosen people, the Israelites, were invited to the banquet – that is, heaven – and yet, many rejected a forever relationship with Him, because they rejected the idea of Jesus being God's Son, whom He sent to save the world. They didn't want to believe that is was true; they were looking for someone else. I'm sure that is very disappointing to God. Though many, many Jewish people today believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior, many other Jews still do not believe that, which makes God very sad.

In the story of the wedding banquet, it doesn't stop the king from making different plans. Let's read on in verse 8:

“Then the king said to his slaves, ‘The wedding dinner is ready. But those I invited were not fit to come. So, go to the street corners. Invite to the dinner anyone you can find.’ So, the slaves went out into the streets. They gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good. Soon the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Show slide (“Who’s Who?”)

Now Jesus introduces another player in the story; us! That's right! In the story, because none of the king's invited guests would come, He extends the invitation to everyone else in the town. In the same way, God has extended the invitation to live with Him in heaven to the Gentiles, which is everyone who is not Jewish. All of us are now invited to the great banquet in heaven! The story says that the king invited both the good and the bad to the banquet. In the same way, God invites both good and bad people to join Him in heaven (Rom 3:23). But there's a catch! You have to be wearing the right clothes. Let's finish our Bible story and see what I mean:

Show slide (“Matthew 22:11”)

“The king came in to see the guests. He noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.

In our story of the wedding banquet, the king knew in advance that when the people from the street came to the banquet, they would not have the proper wedding clothes. But He was ready for them anyway. He provided the wedding clothes for the guests to put on. In the same way, when we come before the Holy God, we are not

dressed correctly. The Bible says, **“All the good things we do are like dirty rags (to God).”** (Isaiah 64:6) We have to be dressed right in order for God to see us as holy, righteous and good.

Show slide (“Jesus is our Clothing”)

That's where Jesus comes in. Just like in the story where it was important that the guest wore the right wedding clothes to be at the banquet, believing in Jesus as God's Son and the Savior of the world is the clothing we need to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Look at this verse from Roman 13:14:

“Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ as if he were your clothing. Don't think about how to satisfy sinful desires.”

And in John 14:6, Jesus exclaims, **“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”** Kids, God is the King, and He is throwing a big, bash – a banquet in heaven for everyone. But unless He sees Jesus between Himself and you – unless He sees Jesus in you and working through you – unless you “put on” Jesus as if He were your clothing - you cannot enter the kingdom heaven. We must clothe ourselves with Jesus to come to the banquet in heaven.

Show slide (“Matthew 22:12-14”)

Jesus shows us this at the end of His story. The king looks at the man not dressed in wedding clothes. Since the king was the provider of the wedding clothes, we can assume here that the person is refusing to wear the wedding clothes. He wants to wear his own clothes. In other words, he wants to come to the banquet on his own terms and ignore the king's terms. But his clothes are not appropriate for the event. The king asked the man a question:

‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man couldn't think of anything to say. “Then the king told his slaves, ‘Tie up his hands and feet. Throw him outside into the darkness. “Many are invited, but few are chosen.”

The king addresses the man as ‘friend,’ which means that the king was compassionate to the man, and approached him with kindness, but probably with a sense of sadness for the man. He would have liked to have seen the man accept his wedding clothes, but the man refused to wear them.

That would be like you being invited to a Spiderman theme party, but you dress as the Hulk. Instead of playing the games prepared, you start making up your own games. Instead of eating the cake that is provided, you bring your own cake with your name on it. Instead of honoring the birthday boy or girl, you decide to make the party all about you.

(Pick up the roller skates and throw them over your shoulder) Again, it would be like you bringing roller skates to an ice-skating party. Everyone is telling you, 'Dude, this is an ice-skating party, but you have roller skates.' Instead of being humble, admitting you were wrong, and exchanging them for ice skates, you shoot back, 'Hey, get off my case. I've got the right skates. I'm good bro.'

That is what is happening in this story. If we approach God and say, "God, I want to be in heaven with You, but oh, by the way... You have to do things my way. I'm not going to change – You have to change." I can assure you that such an approach is not going to go well for you.

There is a famous fast-food restaurant whose motto says, "Have it your way." Well, that is great for fast-food, but when God invites you to a banquet in heaven, you can't have it your way. It's God's way, or it's no way. He's looking for a heart change. He's looking for those who want to wear the clothing of Jesus. For those that clothe themselves with Jesus, they will be invited to enter into the kingdom of heaven, and dine with the King at His banquet table!

Show slide ("Take-Away Point")

Our action hero, Unity, wants us to remember this Take-Away Point from today's lesson. Say it with me: **"When I have the right clothes, God sees me as He sees His Son."**

As you can see, Unity holds a flashlight in her hand to remind her that she has the light of Jesus inside of her. Where ever she goes, people don't just see her; they see Jesus.

EVALUATE their understanding

Okay kids...let's huddle up and face your small group leaders. Small group leaders, go through the **STEP 2 - EVALUATE** section on your small group leader sheet with your kids.

(While small groups are going, use this time to check your notes, reset your props, and walk around to some of the groups and listen to how it's going.)

CHALLENGE them

3rd Segment: (5 min. – Then turn over to small groups)

The intent with this section is to **encourage and challenge the kids** to take a spiritual step forward this week. We want them to stop and think, make better choices, form new habits and bring God into their everyday world. This is a great time to speak from your heart and then pray for them.

PROPS n things

- PowerPoints from UNITE_PP_NewThreads_wk1 file in Speaker_Materials directory

BEGIN speaking

Hey, next week is Easter! Easter is when we remember and celebrate the fact that Jesus rose from the dead! There is no day in the year that is more important in the life of a Christian than Easter. For those of you that are visiting, we not only hope you come back next week, but we encourage you to bring a friend that normally does not come to church. We talk about the story of Jesus and His resurrection as the “Good News,” and it would be great to see you bring a friend to hear the Good News of Jesus and the life-changing, free gift He offers to all of us.

Oh, and one more thing: I encourage you to dress up in your best clothes next week in honor of the King and His Son, Jesus! Dressing up looks different for all of us, but the point is to make a good effort to look your best. If you make an effort to look your best in order to honor God, I can assure you, the King will be pleased!

Show slide (“Spotlight Verse”)

Over the next two weeks, your small group leaders will be working on this verse with you in your small group time, but let’s say our Spotlight Verse together from Romans 13:14: **“Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ as if he were your clothing.”**

Great job guys! Well, before I pray for you, I want to invite you one more time to come next week for Easter! Come with your new threads, all decked out in your best clothes! I’d like to see all of your cool duds, and it’s totally appropriate to dress your best for Easter. And more importantly, come with a friend who needs to hear the story of Jesus’ finished work on the cross. It’s going to be a great celebration together! Okay? Okay!

Let's Pray: ***"Dear God, thank You for each and every one of these kids who have come today. Many of them are hearing about You for the first time. Others know about You and have tried You on for size, but they haven't committed to wearing their new threads of Jesus for all to see. I pray that no matter what is going on in their world – good, bad, happy, or sad – that they clearly understand from today's lesson what it takes to be invited to enter into the great banquet that you are throwing in heaven. Bless them this week. Plant in them the desire to come back and hear the amazing story of what Jesus did on the cross for us. In Jesus Name, Amen."***

Great job! See you next week in your new threads for Easter!

ENCOURAGE their walk

Okay kids...let's huddle up and face your small group leaders. Small group leaders, go through the **STEP 3 - ENCOURAGE** section on your small group leader sheet with your kids.



GRADES
4-6

E
3
EXPLORE
their opinion
EVALUATE
their understanding
ENCOURAGE
their walk

WEEK 1: What Shall I Wear?

E EXPLORE – their opinion

What was a party or event you attended where you had to dress up in fancy clothes?
(Perhaps share a personal story to get the conversation going.)

Have you ever had a birthday party, or been invited to a birthday party, where there was a theme? *(Describe what a theme party is if they don't understand)* What kinds of things did you do at the party?

Next week is Easter. I'm going to dress up in nice clothes to honor the celebration of Jesus being raised back to life and conquering death. Dressing up nice is different for everyone. I'd like to challenge you dress up in your nicest clothes next week as one way to treat the day special.

What do you like most about being at a wedding?



I CAN CONNECT JESUS TO EVERY PART OF MY LIFE.

Stop at the Stop Sign, and wait for further instruction before moving to next segment.

Don't rush it! Remember, the goal is not to just get through it, but to **get it through.**

Your 2 goals: **relate** with them, **reinforce** the lesson.

E EVALUATE – their understanding

Today is Palm Sunday. Why do we remember Palm Sunday, and what were some of the events that happened on that day from the Bible? *(Triumphal Entry, people laid down their cloaks and palm branches, Jesus cleared out the temple, He did miracles.)*

See if you can identify some roles played out in the story of the wedding banquet:

- The king was throwing a wedding banquet. Who does the king represent? **(God)**
- The banquet was being thrown for the king's son. Who is the son in this story? **(Jesus)**
- Who did the invited guests represent? **(The Israelites or the Jewish people)**

When the invited guests would not come to the party, what did the king do next?

- A. He cancelled the party B. He cried **C. He invited everyone from the town**

In real life, who do the towns people represent? **(The Gentiles or everyone who is not Jewish)**

Good job! That means that God's free gift of salvation **(the opportunity to spend eternity in heaven with Him)** is available to all of us. That's what this story is all about! But even though all are invited, what is required to enter into the banquet? **(Wedding clothes)**

In the story, who supplied the wedding clothes? **(the king)** What happened to the man who refused to wear the king's wedding clothes? **(He was kicked out of the party)** The Bible says that we must wear Jesus as if He is our clothing. When we put on Jesus, God sees us as holy.

Let's say our Take-Away Point for today: **"When I have the right clothes, God sees me as He sees His Son."**





GRADES
4-6

E
EXPLORE
their opinion
E
EVALUATE
their understanding
E
ENCOURAGE
their walk

ENCOURAGE – their walk

In our story, today, the king, which is God, has invited all of us to His big wedding banquet in heaven. But it also said in verse 14, **“Many are invited, but few are chosen.”** It’s important to remember that the king supplied the wedding clothes. In the same way, God supplies the desire for you to believe in Jesus as the Son of God, and, like someone helping you to put on your coat, God holds out Jesus for you to put on. The fact that He’s holding out the coat means that He has chosen you, but like the man who refused to wear the king’s wedding clothes, we can choose to accept or reject God’s offer to dine with Him in heaven.

Let’s pray that the Lord will shine His grace upon each of us, and that we will accept His invitation to dine with Him in heaven: **“Dear God, there is no better time than the Easter season to think about our spiritual lives and be honest with ourselves in where we stand with You. I pray for each of these kids that they will consider the subject of eternal life with You, or eternal separation from You, to be of most importance in their minds and hearts. I pray that if any of them are feeling the tug to put on Jesus as their Lord, Savior and boss of their life, they will hold out their arms and let You dress them for the banquet. In Jesus’ name, amen.”**



Encourage the kids to take a practical **ACTION** step in their faith journey this week.

Help them memorize this month’s **Spotlight Verse.**

Prepare to Give is for children’s programs that take an offering.



To help us unite our hearts with God, we have a new set of UNITE Action Cards to take home. Action Card #10 says, “Invite someone to come to church that doesn’t know God, or doesn’t usually come to church.” What better time to invite someone to church than Easter next week? Take one home and talk with your parents on who you can invite to church next week.

MEMORIZE – God’s Word



SPOTLIGHT VERSE:
“Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ as if he were your clothing.” ~Romans 13:14 (NIRV)

To “put on Jesus” means that He is a part of you now. He is with you everywhere you go, guiding you, shaping you, and most importantly, God now sees you as holy – not by anything that you have done, but by your friendship with Jesus. Putting on Jesus is not like a coat that you take off when you are too warm. Once you put Him on, He’s on you and stays you.

PREPARE TO GIVE – (take cue from host or storyteller)

It’s such a privilege to be able to give in order to help people. Let’s pray for today’s offering:

“Dear God, thank You for the privilege of giving. Giving opens our hearts, and opens our eyes to the needs around us in our daily lives. Give us big hearts that we may give generously in all occasions. In Jesus name we pray, amen.”