

***For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He adorns the humble with salvation. Psalm 149:4***

As we turn the page on September and continue with the season of Pentecost, how appropriate it is to have the church's heart firmly focused on our Lord's working in the life of the church—even with all its implications for the Christian life in this present age. With that said and looking at this specific Psalm, it reminded me of my hectic schedule last year. Not only did I have a detailed calendar of where I stayed to when I would be picked up and dropped off, but I also had precise timing and location along with a strict dress code.

You know, family, people are often advised to "dress for success," to dress appropriately for the occasion, perhaps for an important business meeting or a job interview. Some charitable organizations provide donated business-style clothing to people in need, giving them a better chance at success in job interviews and new employment. Appropriate clothing may allow a job candidate to make a good first impression and may also provide a little extra confidence. Even in my situation, I wore a suit and tie when it came to banquets, and/or if I was the main speaker at these various special events. Furthermore, by knowing the event as well as the audience, I would even plan what suit I would wear and especially the accompanying tie!

Jesus' parable of the wedding feast ends with the downfall of a guest who may have been confident but was *not* dressed properly for the occasion (see Matthew 22:1-14). In the parable, a king holds a wedding feast for his son. The king punishes the invited guests when they rudely reject his invitation and murder his servants. There is still a wedding to be celebrated, so other servants are then sent out to gather everyone they can find to fill the king's hall with guests to share in the joyful and generous feast. During the celebration, the king notices that one man has entered the celebration without the required festive wedding garment (which the king himself would have been

happy to provide). Unable to answer for his fashion gaffe, the guest is thrown out.

God is the King who invites everyone to the wedding feast of His Son, the eternal "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:9b). Only by God's grace, through faith in Jesus, are we appropriately dressed for that wonderful occasion. Baptized, we have "put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27b). In the words of the prophet Isaiah, we rejoice in the Lord, who has clothed us "with the garments of salvation" and covered us "with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10b). Our own ragged and very inappropriate dress, that is, our efforts to impress God with our own works and attempted holiness, will always fall short. It's God Himself who "adorns the humble with salvation." In humility we repent of our sins and receive the forgiveness that Jesus won for us at the cross. God graciously clothed us in the shining robe of Jesus' righteousness.

Now, in the sight of God, we are dressed for success, but we are not clothed in our own achievements. We are dressed in the success of our Lord, the success of His suffering and death and His victorious resurrection. With robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, now and forever we praise God our King, who is pleased with us because He is pleased with His Son, who adorns the humble with salvation. At the eternal wedding feast, with all the well-dressed guests we will cry out in praise: "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb!" (Revelation 7:10b).

Let's continue our Pentecost growth!

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