

Sunday 4th October 2020

Wedding days are a time of great happiness and joy and are often described by the couple at the centre of the celebrations as – “the happiest day of their lives.” If you are married I wonder if you can recall your happy day. From the weather point of view, I remember that it was not very nice, the day Tricia and I got married.

I also recall that while our reception was taking place, England were losing to France in the then “5” nations, which meant that France claimed the title. But we didn’t know that until later, as there wasn’t any mobile phones or internet in those days!!

Weddings, certainly before Covid-19 reared its ugly head, took an awful amount of time and money to organise. Venue, reception, flowers, photographer, cars, outfits and then the invitations.

We were due to attend a family wedding in June for which we received our invitations twelve months beforehand, such was the need to be well organised, if the couple wanted the wedding they were hoping for. Obviously, the wedding didn’t take place during the lovely summer weather and is now scheduled for early March next year.

Couples that have been planning to tie the knot must wonder whether they are coming or going with the constant changing of Covid guidelines. It started with just witnesses, then 30 guests at a social distant, including at the reception, now that has been reduced to 15. I do feel for those who are trying to plan for their “special” day.

In Matthew’s gospel, we read in chapter 2 that Jesus and His disciples were guests at a wedding. Now we are not told anything about the happy couple, but we know that Jesus’ mother was also in attendance, and the festivities were now in the 3rd day. It is little wonder therefore, they had run out of wine!! Jesus saved the blushes of the hosts by producing the finest wine the guests had tasted!!

A few years later, as Jesus’ earthly ministry was drawing towards its end He tells a parable concerning a wedding banquet that was prepared by a king for

his son. He sent his servants out with the invitations together with the menu, which included meat from his own stock.

Despite having a mouth-watering meal prepared and waiting for them, those invited gave their excuses and some even attacked the messengers. More servants were dispatched and issued an invitation to anyone they found on the streets and the wedding hall was eventually filled, we are told in Matt22:10.

There is an eternal banquet waiting for you and me, if we accept Jesus' invitation. We have a responsibility to help make sure all the seats are taken by inviting those we meet on the streets of our communities.

After all everyone loves a wedding banquet, don't they!!

Paul Barker
Hampton Mission Partnership