

# THE CHURCH GLORIOUS

## The Joy Set Before Him

Discussion Guide

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Sermon Title

**The Bride of Christ**

by Paul R. Martin

Ephesians 5:25-31; Revelation 19:6-9

**Introduction:** In this final image of the Church we learn that she is viewed in Scripture as the Bride of Christ. The imagery of the Jewish betrothal, wedding feast, and marriage ceremony are beautifully expressed in the anticipation of the second coming of Jesus Christ to this earth to be united with His Bride and to dwell together eternally.

### Sermon Outline

#### I. The Bridegroom and the Bride

- A. Jesus Himself presents Himself as the Bridegroom:  
Matthew 9:15, Mark 2:19, Luke 5:34
- B. John the Baptist references this concept as well: John 3:29
- C. Jesus alludes to the Church as a bridal party waiting for the Bridegroom  
Matthew 25:1

#### II. Rooms in the Father's House & the Parable of the Ten Virgins

- A. The custom of the Jewish wedding celebration with implications of a period of betrothal and waiting followed by the joyful arrival of the Bridegroom, rushing out to meet Him, and celebrating the eternal union are pictured in the preparation of the heavenly home and the readying of the Bride.
- B. John 14:1-6, "In My Father's house are many rooms...I go to prepare..."  
Jesus is *adding on* rooms in the Father's house for us
- C. Matthew 25:1-12, "The kingdom of heaven is like ten virgins..."  
The central message is to be prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom

#### III. The Bride of Christ & the Marriage Supper of the Lamb

- A. Outside of Revelation Paul gives the only clear representation of the Church as the Bride of Christ, but it is unmistakably clear as a picture of the Church's unique relationship to Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:25-32)
- B. Throughout the Old Testament the relationship of Israel to God is frequently expressed as the relationship between a husband (God) and a wife (Israel, an *unfaithful* wife for the most part). This imagery is transferred to Jesus Christ in the New Testament and the Church becomes His pride and joy (Hebrews 12:2).
- C. In Revelation 19, at the end of the age, we see the anticipation of Jesus Christ being united with His Bride forever and the great celebration of the Marriage Supper. Chronologically, this takes place at His return and the Church rushes out to meet Him along the way (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:51-52) as we go to the wedding feast: Jesus and His Bride the Church together forever.

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup> So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; <sup>29</sup> for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of His body. <sup>31</sup> FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. <sup>32</sup> This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.*

Ephesians 5:25-32 (NASB)

*"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."*

Revelation 19: 7 (NASB)

*Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."*

Revelation 21: 9 (NASB)

**Conclusion:** Wherefore, comfort one another with these words! (I Thess 4:18)

## Discussion Questions

- 1) In what ways is the marriage relationship (as God originally designed it) very much like His relationship with us?
- 2) As you consider Ephesians 5:22-32, what parallels can you draw between the relationship of marriage and our relationship to Jesus Christ.
- 3) Are we “married” to Christ at this present time? What does Ephesians 5 say about our relationship to Christ right now? How is it that believing Jews from the OT era are now folded into the Body of Christ, no longer the wife of God but the Bride of the Son?
- 4) Did God explain His relationship to us in terms of marriage, or did He design marriage after the pattern of His relationship with us?
- 5) Can you discern the differences between the nature of being a person made in the image of God, being male or female, and being husband or wife?
- 6) Is being a husband or wife a role which we choose when we marry? How do you who are men relate to being the bride/wife of Jesus Christ? How does that work?
- 7) While we are going down this narrow winding road, if there is no marriage or giving in marriage in heaven, will we still be male and female people. Think carefully now! (Hint: Is sexuality a part of personhood or merely a convenience for procreation?)

**Use This Space for Sermon Notes**

## Notes & Prayer Requests:

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### God's Vision and Mission for the Alliance Bible Church

The Alliance Bible Church is a multi-cultural church celebrating the life of Christ in us by:

- Proclaiming the full message of God's Good News to the diverse cultures of McHenry and surrounding communities,
- Discipling believers in living the deeper Christian life,
- Equipping His people for the work of ministry, and
- Demonstrating the unconditional love of Jesus to our community through meaningful acts of service.