

**Introduction:**

- *"Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself."* (Revelation 19:7, NLT)
- Have you ever noticed in the Bible that it begins with a marriage in the Garden of Eden and finishes with the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. Jesus first miracle was at a wedding in Cana of Galilee and his last public teaching was on Wedding in Mt 22.
  - In the NT we are introduced to some new language: Jesus is called the Bridegroom God. John the Baptist refers to himself as a friend of the Bridegroom. The church is called the Bride of Christ. And we are instructed to love as Christ loved the church. Many of the parables involved wedding language. Wedding is all through scripture as it relates to our relationship with God.
- God's design for marriage was that it would be a reflection of the love that Christ has for the church. Marriage is about love. It is about love and covenant. It is about sharing life. Marriage is what God had in mind in the beginning. It literally was a purpose set forth before the beginning began. Your life, my life, the plan of God, it is all about the wedding.
- One thing I know about weddings: There is a lot of planning that goes into them! I speaking having lived it. I speak pastorally having married many, many people now. A lot of planning goes into a wedding. It is not different with our heavenly Father. A lot of planning is has gone into the planning of this Wedding of the Marriage of the Lamb of God.

**I. It's All About The Wedding!**

- A. God's ultimate purpose for His creation is to provide for Himself a family and a Bride for His Son as an eternal companion to reign with Him forever. This puts the church, the Bride of Christ right at the center of God's eternal purpose.
  1. God loves people and has always wanted a family around him. His desire was to join the natural and supernatural realms together on earth. This is how it was at first in the Garden of Eden. This is where everything is heading. That once again the natural and supernatural realm would be joined on the earth.
  2. He wanted to fellowship with us like no other creature he had created. In fact we were created in His image so that we could govern with Him!
  3. God has chosen marriage to be the reflection of the relationship of Christ to the Church.
    - a) God created us with a free will so that we would be able to love him with our whole heart.
    - b) God has orchestrated history in such a way that the bride would voluntarily be ready and prepared! *"his bride has prepared herself."* God did not force her. He wooed her and she said, "Yes!" IE. Wooing Kelly. She said, "Yes!" The bride willingly responded out of her own free will.
- B. The guiding principle of the Father's activity throughout history has been to raise up a prepared Bride for His most worthy Son! Only God could think like that!
  1. Ps 2:8 The Father promised the Son an inheritance. *"I will give you the nations, just ask."*
  2. These nations will be His, totally His! Totally, fully His!
- C. Jesus loves us with the Father's intensity! *"As the Father has loved me that is the same intensity with which I have loved you!"* Jn 15:9 (Tims paraphrase)

1. We cannot be loved by Jesus any more than that. He then tells these weak broken disciples who He knew would betray Him. My love is bigger than that!!! Bigger than all your issues!
2. Then look what He says, *“I have revealed you to them, and I will continue to do so. Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them.”* (John 17:26, NLT) God puts His intense love in His followers in order that we would love Jesus with the same intensity!!! Can you say, “IT’S ALL ABOUT THE WEDDING!!!”
3. Eph 4:13 says that the church would reach the full measure of Christ, fully mature like Jesus! That is a bride that is worthy of the Lamb! Equally yoked!
4. That is why we love praying Eph. 1:17,18. The more revelation we receive of Him the more we can become like Him by voluntarily choosing to love Him like He loves.
5. God created a plan before the beginning began that His Son would have a Bride made holy by the grace of God, blameless in their love for Him. The blueprint was set before he started: there would be a wedding at the end of the natural history! This is the plan for which God is moving all of human history towards.

## II. The Wedding Plans

- A. Before creation: Jesus agrees to the plan of the Father! “I understand your plan. I love your plan. I will implement your plan. I want My eternal companion. That where I am, there she would be also! I want her to share in My glory!”
  1. It was this desire in the heart of Jesus that gives us Hebrews 12:2 *“who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.”* He was going to have a bride equally yoked to Him.
  2. He was going to die. But he was going to come again, so that, *“where I am there you may be also.”*
- B. The Word. When we look at scripture we see redemptive history begin in the Garden of Eden and continue right up to the second coming. History was planned around a wedding. It was planned around preparing a bride for the Son. A bride worthy of the Son. This is blueprint we find from start to finish.
  1. Adam and Eve in the garden were a picture of Jesus and the church. Note:
    - a) It is not good for man to be alone. Gen 2:18
    - b) I will make him a suitable companion. Gen 2:18
    - c) Adam fell into a deep sleep. Gen 2:21 Jesus died upon a cross. The sleep of death.
    - d) God took a rib from Adam and created Eve. Jesus side was pierced and blood and water flowed. Out of that wound came a bride! A bride suitable and worthy to the Son.
    - e) At the end of history will be the Wedding of the Son and His bride.
    - f) Just as the Father brought Eve to Adam, the Father will present the glorious bride to His Son, Jesus. Moses recorded this story.
  2. Paul picks up on this theme at creation in Eph 5:31-32. He gives an interpretation of it.
    - a) Yes, it is about Adam and Eve but it is more about the relationship of Jesus and the church.
    - b) Paul declares that Moses is talking about Jesus and His bride. Jesus is leaving the Father to cleave to His bride. Moses is talking about Jesus and His eternal companion!

3. Not only does natural history begin in a garden with bridegroom and bride. Natural history ends with a bridegroom and a bride in the New Jerusalem. Something amazing is happening as this age comes to a close.
  - a) The Spirit and the bride say, "COME!" The Spirit and the Bride of Christ are saying, "Come Lord Jesus!"
  - b) At the end of the age the Holy Spirit will begin to reveal to the church that she is the bride of Christ and there will be such unity in this revelation that prayer globally will begin to ride from this bridal identity say, "Come Lord Jesus!"
  - c) I believe this is already happening. This revelation is being preached globally and people are beginning to pray "Come Lord Jesus!"

### **III. Living The Eternal Plan**

- A. We will not see ourselves as the cherished bride until we see Him as the bridegroom God. We spend lots of time meditating on who we are before God. When actually we should spend more time and focus on who He is...as the Bridegroom God.
- B. The message of the Bridegroom God has been in the Word all along but it has never been brought to the forefront. It will be at the forefront of what God is doing as we reach the end of the age. It is clearly in the OT. Jesus spoke about it. And the apostle also taught it. Must be important!!!
- C. When we see how much we mean to Jesus and all the plans He has made to involve us with Himself, forever, then there will be no cost to great in light of that.
- D. Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding in Cana. He finished his public teaching in Mt 22 using a wedding for a Son.
  1. Jesus began his ministry to His apostles in, Mt 9:15, by stating "*I am the Bridegroom and you are friends of the Bridegroom.*"
  2. In Mt 25:6-13 He was again teaching them in private that it was important for them to have oil in their lamps as they waited for Him, the Bridegroom God.
  3. The Holy Spirit is the oil. You must have Him in your heart as you maintain connecting with me the Bridegroom God.
  4. John the Baptist introduced Jesus ministry and he spoke of Jesus as the Bridegroom and of seeing the Bridegroom and hearing the voice of the Bridegroom. John the Baptist is known as friend of the Bridegroom.
  5. In Rev 22:17 Jesus is revealed and the Bride and Bridegroom are together.
- E. All of this was intentional in the Father's plan. The plan was clear. He has not deviated from it.
  1. You have heard the phrase "Training for Reigning"? We are being trained to rule and reign with Him. We are not just helpers, a workforce, evangelists. We are His bride equally yoked with the King of kings!
- F. Church, It Is All About The Wedding!