

Going to the Chapel

By

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“Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Revelation 19:7-8

Most everyone loves weddings. There is something about watching a couple in love, standing at the altar, dedicating their lives to each other, that stirs the romantic part of all of us. It is especially touching to see a young couple who have committed their lives to Christ and to staying pure until marriage, for their wedding ceremony becomes a true worship service, a celebration of obedience to God.

I've often pondered the significance of marriage as it relates to our relationship with Christ. It is clear from the Scripture above that we are to be the Bride of Christ and He our Groom. As a man, it is a little strange to be called a Bride, but as with many scriptures, you have to have spiritual eyes to see what we are to understand. God gave us marriage and intimacy and relationship as a beautiful gift. He wants us to understand that marriage is an earthly representation of the kind of relationship He wants with us. It's no wonder to me that Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding. He is a romantic to the core.

Paul teaches us about this connection between earthly marriage and heavenly marriage in Ephesians 5:25-26, *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”* He gives us a picture of marriage and how we should treat our wives, but he wants us to understand how much Christ loves us and cleanses us and sacrifices Himself for us, for without receiving His love, we will not be able to love our wives.

If you are acquainted with The Journey, you know the main goal of our ministry is to help individuals find an intimate, abiding relationship with Jesus Christ. It is only through an abiding relationship with Christ that we can understand love, how to receive it and how to give it. I believe Scripture is teaching us that this relationship is a Heavenly courtship. Jesus knocks at the door of our heart and proposes to us. He is

offering His life to us forever. If we say, "Yes," we commit our lives to Him forever. Then, we begin the lifelong process of getting to know Him and planning our wedding.

Like any engaged couple, we should be thrilled to spend time with our suitor, talking to Him for hours about His life and telling Him about ours. He wants to dream together with us about all that life holds in store. He has so much to give us, and He wants to take care of us. You probably remember when you first really fell in love with Jesus. You couldn't get enough of His Word, and you thought about Him all day long. Your eyes were open, and you could see Him everywhere.

But maybe some of you feel like you and Jesus are an old married couple. The romance seems gone out of your relationship. The excitement has waned. You've run out of things to say. You've lost sight of the wedding. You don't feel like you know Him anymore, and you're not quite sure it's going to work out. You've taken your eyes off Him and you've become enticed by many other suitors named Fame, Success, Pleasure and Significance. You're close to breaking off the engagement, if you haven't already done so.

Jesus, the One Who is called Faithful and True, still loves you with an everlasting love. He patiently waits for you to figure things out. He is still planning the wedding and has many things for you to do. Let Him back into your heart, for He is the only One for you. He is the only One Who can satisfy your deepest longings.

In the picture above about the wedding of the Lamb, it talks about the Bride's wedding clothes. Jesus spoke a parable about a wedding banquet in Matthew 22, as well, which talks about having the right wedding clothes. The verse above alludes to "righteous acts" as being the detergent which makes our clothes bright and white. Colossians 3:12 speaks to clothing, as well, saying, *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."* These may look familiar to you as some of the Fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22. In Romans 13:14, Paul says even more plainly, *"Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Some of you have received an invitation to the wedding, but you have RSVP'd "No." If you reject the invitation, you cannot just show up at the wedding and expect to be received. You cannot get into the wedding just by knowing the Bride. You have to have the right wedding clothes, which can only be given by the Groom. The only way to receive these clothes is to become engaged to the Lord. In His magnanimous way, He has enough love in His heart for ALL who will receive Him.

The wedding is drawing near, and all the preparations are in place. It will be a royal wedding like none other. The invitations have been sent, and all are invited. You are invited, not just to sit in the audience, but to stand at the altar. You are invited to the palace for an eternity of joy and companionship, where there will be no more pain and no more tears. He is anxiously awaiting on your answer. Will you say, "Yes?"